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LEGAL STATUS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District was established in 1969 by the towns of Berlin, Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough and the city of Marlborough through an agreement entered into pursuant to the General Laws of Massachusetts.

The district is governed and operated under terms of the agreement and subsequent amendments adopted by the member municipalities and under pertinent laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The latter include laws applying to all regional school districts and laws pertaining to vocational education.

The official name of the district is Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.

The official name of the school is Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School.

The regional district school shall be a vocational high school consisting of grades 9 through 12, inclusive. The Committee is authorized to establish and maintain such kinds of education, acting as trustees therefore, as may be provided by municipalities under the provisions of Chapter 74 of the General Laws and its amendatory acts, including courses beyond the secondary level.

Historical note: Massachusetts has the oldest public school system in the nation. Dating back to 1647, the laws of the Massachusetts Bay colony required towns to provide for a program of public education. The first meeting of the initial Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District Committee was held on April 24, 1968. The Assabet Valley Regional Technical High Schools opened its doors in Marlborough on September 5, 1973.

THE PEOPLE AND THEIR SCHOOL DISTRICT

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

The School Committee therefore affirms and declares its intent to:

- Maintain two-way communication with citizens of the community. The public will be kept informed of the progress and problems of the school system, and citizens will be urged to bring their aspirations and feelings about their public schools to the attention of this body, which they have chosen to represent them in the management of public education.
- Establish policies and make decisions on the basis of declared educational philosophy and goals. All decisions made by this Committee will be made with priority given to the purposes set forth, most crucial of which is the optimal learning of the children enrolled in our schools.
- Act as a truly representative body for members of the community in matters involving public education. The Committee recognizes that ultimate responsibility for public education rests with the state, but individual School Committees have been assigned specific authority through state law. The Committee will not relinquish any of this authority since it believes that decision-making control over the children's learning should be in the hands of local citizens as much as possible.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

The Assabet Valley School Committee and Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members. that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of AVRVD from or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements. The School Committee commits to:

1. Promoting the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encouraging positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Working toward a more integrated society and enlisting the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Using all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and address the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school district, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations.
6. Initiating a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school district in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy. It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

LEGAL REFS: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 7905 (The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)

CROSS REF: ACE, Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity
IJ, Instructional Materials
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

SOURCE: MASC December 2021

PROPOSED: 4/12/22

APPROVED: 5/10/22

REVISED:

APPROVED:

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX

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

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

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

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

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED: 10/9/19

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 11/12/19

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Assabet Valley School Committee and Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity it also, includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes conduct by an employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, often called quid pro quo harassment and, sexual assault as the Federal Clery Act defines that crime. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstance).

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment, depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances—whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating an *Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District*

environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, to male, female, or gender non-conforming students or employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

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

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

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

The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The regulations require a school district to respond when the district has actual notice of sexual harassment. School districts have actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstances). Schools are required to investigate every formal complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment.

The regulation highlights the importance of supportive measures designed to preserve or restore access to the school's education program or activity, with or without a formal complaint. Where there has been a finding of responsibility, the regulation would require remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity.

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Due process protections include the following:

- 1) A presumption of innocence throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
- 2) A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
- 3) The clear and convincing evidence or preponderance of the evidence, subject to limitations;

- 4) The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through cross examination, subject to “rape shield” protections;
- 5) Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence;
- 6) Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
- 7) Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where schools offer appeals;
- 8) Upon filing a formal complaint the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools a hearing is optional but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other’s credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying either the preponderance of the evidence or the clear and convincing standard; however, a school can use the lower preponderance standards only if it uses that standard for conduct code violations that do not involve sexual harassment but carry the same maximum disciplinary sanction. As long as the process is voluntary for all parties, after being fully informed and written consent is provided by both parties, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

A district may establish an informal investigation process that may, upon the request of the complainant be followed by a formal process.

The Superintendent in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator shall designate the principal of each school in the district, or their designee (or some other appropriate employee(s)) as the initial entity to receive the sexual harassment complaint. Also, in a matter of sexual harassment, the district shall require that the Title IX Coordinator be informed, as soon as possible, of the filing of the complaint. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting the prohibited conduct to someone other than those above designated complaint recipients. The investigating officer may receive the complaint orally or in writing, and the investigation shall be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and in compliance with applicable law. The investigation will be prompt, thorough, and impartial, and will include, at least, a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. Also, the alleged harasser will be interviewed. When the investigation is completed, the complaint recipient will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Schools must create and maintain records documenting every Title IX sexual harassment complaint. This could include mediation, restorative justice, or other models of alternative dispute resolution. Schools must keep records regarding the school’s response to every report of sexual harassment of which it becomes aware even if no formal complaint was filed, including documentation of supportive matters offered and implemented for the complainant.

This policy, or a summary thereof that contain the essential policy elements shall be distributed by the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District to its students and employees and each parent or guardian shall sign that they have received and understand the policy.

Alyssia Berghaus, District Title IX Coordinator and Director of Pupil Personnel Services, 508-485-9430 x1419

Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District

Please note that the following entities have specified time limits for filing a claim.

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

- The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108.
Phone: 617-994-6000.
- Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education)
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109.
Phone: 617-289-0111.
- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,
John F. Kennedy Bldg.
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BESE 603 CMR 26:00
34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

Note: A summary of the attached Policy, as adopted, must be sent to parents/guardians, students, employees, unions, and prospective employees of the school district including Title IX Coordinator(s), investigator(s) and the decision-maker. The above referenced employees must attend training sessions on the implementation of the Policy.

SOURCE: MASC December 2021

PROPOSED: 4/12/22
REVISED:

APPROVED: 5/10/22
APPROVED:

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the District or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the District exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

Definition: A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the District.

Reasonable Modification: The District shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the District can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

Communications: The District shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the District shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the District. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the District shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

Auxiliary Aids and Services: "Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

Limits of Required Modification: The District is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the District shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. A written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion shall accompany the decision.

Notice: The District shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American With Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the District. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

Compliance Coordinator: The District shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under ADA. The District shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified handicapped person solely on the basis of handicap is unfair; and
2. To the extent possible, qualified handicapped persons should be in the mainstream of life in the school community. Accordingly, employees of the school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of handicap.

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504
 Education For All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
 M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
 Title n, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992
 Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through
 3/28/78

CROSS REFS.: IGB, Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

AVRVSD will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights, pursuant to our detailed response protocol. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, AVRVSD will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally- appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against another member of the school community, will be subject to consequences determined appropriate by the administration. Such consequences may include restorative measures and corrective action, and/or student discipline or staff disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Definitions

"Discrimination" and "Harassment" are defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on any individual's actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law, Discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of, an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group described above to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of AVRVSD; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or working environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, and that has the intent or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district's programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual's education or work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile educational or work environment.

"Title IX Sexual Harassment" (effective August 14, 2020) means verbal, physical or other conduct that targets a person based on their sex, and that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A school employee conditioning educational benefits or services on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo);
- Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively

offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's educational program or activity;

- Any instance of "sexual assault", "dating violence", "domestic violence", or "stalking", as those terms are defined by the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)) and the Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), (10) & (30)).

Allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment shall be reported and investigated pursuant to the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District Protocol for Investigating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Pursuant to Title IX.

Resources

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District, and can be reached at:

Alyssia Berghaus, Director of Pupil Personnel Services
215 Fitchburg Street
Marlborough, MA 01752
508-485-9430 x1419

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District. In addition, the Director of Special Education is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

Dr. Charla Boles, Director of Special Education
215 Fitchburg Street
Marlborough, MA 01752
508-485-9430 x1418

Inquiries concerning the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District's policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may also be directed to the Director of Human Resources. Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109; (617) 289-0111; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov; Website: www.ed.gov/ocr

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
Rehabilitation Act of 1973
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975
No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 20 U.S.C. § 7905 (The Boy Scouts of America Equal Access Act)
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)

CROSS REF: ACE, Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability
ACAB, Sexual Harassment
GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity
IJ, Instructional Materials
JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure
Civil Rights Grievance Procedure

SOURCE: MASC December 2021

PROPOSED: 4/12/22
REVISED:

APPROVED: 5/10/22
APPROVED:

Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District

MISSION STATEMENT

Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School is a dynamic and supportive school system that prepares students to meet the challenges of the future by providing a rigorous and relevant education in a safe and secure environment resulting in academic, career and technical proficiency.

Approved by the School Improvement Management Team and District School Committee 11-15-05

SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES

Use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds, off-campus work sites or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

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

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

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

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

Assabet Valley accepts and agrees to enforce Marlborough Board of Health Regulation XI and designates the Principal and Superintendent as enforcement officers.

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

BACKGROUND CHECKS

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

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

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

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

Requesting CHRI (Criminal History Record Information) checks

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

Access to CHRI

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

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

Storage of CHRI

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

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

Retention and Destruction of CHRI

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

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

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

CHRI Training

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

Determining Suitability

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

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

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

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

Relying on Previous Suitability Determination (Fingerprinting)

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

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

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

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

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

Adverse Decisions Based on CHRI

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

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

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

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

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

Secondary Dissemination of CHRI

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

The following information will be recorded in the log:

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

Reporting to Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

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

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

C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records which the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: "An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commission of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any

applicant for employment may answer 'no record' with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a compliant transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution."

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

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

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

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REVISED: 2/1/22

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 11/12/19
APPROVED: 2/15/22

DCJIS MODEL CORI POLICY

This policy is applicable to the criminal history screening of prospective and current employees, subcontractors, volunteers and interns, and professional licensing applicants.

Where Criminal Offender Record information (CORI) and other criminal history checks may be part of a general background check for employment, volunteer work, licensing purposes, the following practices and procedures will be followed.

CONDUCTING CORI SCREENING

CORI checks will only be conducted as authorized by the DCJIS, state law, and regulation, and only after a CORI Acknowledgement Form has been completed.

If a new CORI check is to be made on a subject within a year of his/her signing of the CORI Acknowledgement Form, the subject shall be given seventy two (72) hours notice that a new CORI check will be conducted.

ACCESS TO CORI

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential, and access to the information must be limited to those individuals who have a "need to know". This may include, but not be limited to, hiring managers, staff submitting the CORI requests, and staff charged with processing job applications. The district must maintain and keep a current list of each individual authorized to have access to, or view, CORI. This list must be updated every six (6) months and is subject to inspection upon request by the DCJIS at anytime.

CORI TRAINING

An informed review of a criminal record requires training. Accordingly. All district personnel authorized to review or access CORI will review, and will be thoroughly familiar with, the educational and relevant training materials regarding CORI laws and regulations made available by the DCJIS.

USE OF CRIMINAL HISTORY IN BACKGROUND SCREENING

CORI used for employment purposes shall only be accessed for applicants who are otherwise qualified for the position for which they have applied.

Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on background checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

VERIFYING A SUBJECT'S IDENTITY

If a criminal record is received from the DCJIS, the information is to be closely compared with the information on the CORI Acknowledgement Form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant to ensure the record belongs to the applicant.

If the information in the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, a determination is to be made by an individual authorized to make such determinations based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant.

INQUIRING ABOUT CRIMINAL HISTORY

In connection with any decision regarding employment, volunteer opportunities, or professional licensing, the subject shall be provided with a copy of the criminal history record, whether obtained from the DCJIS or from any other source, prior to questioning the subject about his or her criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history record is also to be disclosed to the subject.

DETERMINING SUITABILITY

If a determination is made, based on the verification of identity information as provided in this policy, that the criminal record belongs to the subject, and the subject does not dispute the record's accuracy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to, the following:

- (a) Relevance of the record to the position sought;
- (b) The nature of the work to be performed;
- (c) Time since the conviction;
- (d) Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- (e) Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
- (f) The number of offenses;
- (g) Whether the applicant has pending charges;
- (h) Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof; and
- (i) Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the organization.

The applicant is to be notified of the decision and the basis for it in a timely manner.

ADVERSE DECISIONS BASED ON CORI

If an authorized official is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of a criminal history background check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The subject shall be provided with a copy of the organization's CORI policy and a copy of the criminal history. The source(s) of the criminal history will also be revealed. The subject will then be provided with an opportunity to dispute the accuracy of the CORI record. Subjects shall also be provided a copy of DCJIS' *Information Concerning the Process for Correcting a Criminal Record*.

SECONDARY DISSEMINATION LOGS

All CORI obtained from the DCJIS is confidential and can only be disseminated as authorized by law and regulation. A central secondary dissemination log shall be used to record *any* dissemination of CORI outside this organization, including dissemination at the request of the subject.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District promotes healthy schools, by supporting wellness, good nutrition, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning environment. The District supports a healthy environment where children learn and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices. Schools contribute to the basic health status of children by facilitating learning through the support and promotion of good nutrition and physical activity. Improved health optimizes student performance potential and ensures that no child is left behind.

A. Provide a comprehensive learning environment for developing and practicing lifelong wellness behaviors.

The entire school environment, not just the classroom, shall be aligned with healthy school goals to positively influence a student's understanding, beliefs and habits as they relate to good nutrition and regular physical activity. A healthy school environment should not be sacrificed because of a dependence on revenue from high-added fat, high-added sugar, and low nutrient foods to support school programs.

B. Support and promote proper dietary habits contributing to students' health status and academic performance.

All foods available on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities during the instructional day should meet or exceed the nutrition standards for schools per the USDA. Emphasis should be placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. To ensure high quality, nutritious meals, foods should be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety, and packaging.

C. Provide more opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.

A quality physical education program is an essential component for all students to learn about and participate in physical activity. Physical activity should be included in a school's daily education program from grades 9 through 12. Physical activity should include regular instructional physical education, in accordance with the Massachusetts Health Curriculum Framework and the National Standards for Physical Education (NASPE), as well as co-curricular activities, and recess.

D. The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District is committed to improve academic performance in high-risk groups so that no child is left behind.

Educators, administrators, parents, health practitioners and communities must consider the critical role student health plays in academic stamina and performance and adapt the school environment to ensure students' basic nourishment and activity needs are met. To ensure widespread understanding of the benefits to school environments where nutritious foods are provided and where students have an opportunity for physical activity, a public awareness campaign that highlights research demonstrating the positive relationship between good nutrition, physical activity, and capacity of students to develop and learn should be conducted.

E. Establish and maintain a District-wide Wellness Team with the purposes of:

- Developing guidance to explain this policy
- Monitoring the implementation of this policy
- Evaluating policy progress
- Serving as a resource to school sites, (e.g. providing lists of healthy incentives, snacks, birthdays, etc.)
- Revising policy as necessary

It is recommended that a District-wide Wellness Team would meet a minimum of four times annually with membership including, but not limited to:

- District Food Service Director/Manager, Co-Chair
- Dietitian
- Local Health Practitioner (e.g. pediatrician, dentist, or other appropriate, certified medical professional)
- School Nurse-Teacher(s)
- Parent representation
- Student representation
- Staff representation
- School Committee member
- District Administrative Representative, Co-Chair
- Physical Education and Health Program Leader
- Health Technologies Teacher
- Local Community Partners

Responsibilities of the Wellness Team may include, but not be limited to, oversight of the following:

- Implementation of District nutrition and physical activity standards
- Integration of nutrition and physical activity in the overall curriculum
- Assurance that staff professional development includes nutrition and physical activity issues
- Assurance that students receive nutrition education and engage in vigorous physical activity
- Pursuance of contracts with outside vendors that encourage healthful eating and reduction of school/District dependence on profits from foods of minimal nutritional value.
- Consistent healthful choices among all school venues that involve the sale of food.

The Wellness Team will be responsible for preparing a report twice annually that may include, but not limited to, the following information:

- Monthly District menus and meal counts
- Listing of all a la carte, vending, and competitive foods sold by school food service
- listing of all other sales of foods throughout the District including vending machines, school stores, special education programs, in-school and in-class fundraisers, etc.
- Listing of physical activity programs and opportunities for students throughout the school year.

PROPOSED: October 16, 2018

APPROVED: November 13, 2018

REVISED:

M.G.L Ref:

COMMITMENT TO ACCOMPLISHMENT

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

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

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

SECTION B

BOARD GOVERNANCE AND OPERATIONS

BA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS
BAA	EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE
BB	LEGAL STATUS – SCHOOL BOARD
BBA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES
BBAA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY
BBB	MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BBBA/ BBBB	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/ OATH OF OFFICE
BBBC	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION
BBBE	SCHOOL COMMITTEE VACANCIES
BCA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
BDA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
BDB	SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS
BDC	APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS
BDD	SCHOOL COMMITTEE / SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP
BDE	SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
BDF	GENERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BDFA	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

BDFA-E-1	SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
BDFA-E-2	SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN
BDFA-E-3	CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS
BDFB	PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BDFD	SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BDG	SCHOOL ATTORNEY
BE	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEC	EXECUTIVE SESSIONS
BEDA	NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEDB	AGENDA FORMAT
BEDB-E	ORDER OF BUSINESS
BEDD	RULES OF ORDER
BEDF	VOTING METHOD
BEDG	MINUTES
BEDH	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS
BEDL	REMOTE PARTICIPATION AND GUIDELINES
BEE	SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS
BG	SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT
BGB	POLICY ADOPTION

BGC	POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW
BGCA	REVIEW OF POLICIES AND RULES
BGD	SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES
BGE	POLICY DISSEMINATION
BGF	SUSPENSION OF POLICIES
BHC	SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
BHE	USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS
BIA	NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION
BIBA	SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS
BID	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES
BJ	SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM
BK	SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL GOALS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee is responsible to the people for whose benefit the school district has been established. The Committee's current decisions will influence the course of education in our school for years to come. The Committee and each of its members must look to the future and to the needs of all people more than the average citizen finds necessary. This requires a comprehensive perspective and long-range planning in addition to attention to immediate problems.

The School Committee's primary responsibility is to establish those purposes, programs, and procedures that will best produce the educational achievement needed by our students. The Committee is charged with accomplishing this while also being responsible for wise management of resources available to the school system. The Committee must fulfill these responsibilities by functioning primarily as a legislative body to formulate and adopt policy, by selecting an executive officer to implement policy, and by evaluating the results. It must carry out its functions openly, while seeking the comments of public, students, and staff in its decision-making processes.

In accordance with these principles, the technique will involve:

- Periodically setting performance objectives for the School Committee itself and evaluating their accomplishment.
- Setting objectives for performance for each position and function in the system.
- Allowing the people responsible for carrying out objectives to have a role in setting them.
- Establish practical and simple goals.
- Conducting a concrete and periodic review of performance against these goals.

EVALUATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee will establish realistic objectives related to Committee procedures and relationships by September of each year. At the end of the school year, the Committee will measure its performance against the stated objectives.

The following areas of School Committee operations and relationships are representative of those in which objectives may be set and progress appraised:

- Communication with the public
- School Committee - Superintendent-Director relationships
- School Committee member development and performance
- Policy development
- Educational leadership
- Fiscal management
- School Committee meetings
- Performance of subcommittees of the School Committee
- Interagency and governmental relationships

When the Committee has completed its self-evaluation, the members will discuss the results in detail and formulate a new series of objectives. At the same time, the Committee will set an approximate date on which the next evaluation will be conducted.

Implied in the concept of evaluation is an assumption that individuals and Committees are capable of improvement. The School Committee believes that its performance will be improved if evaluation is carried out systematically in accordance with good planning, conscientious follow-through, and careful assessment of results.

LEGAL STATUS – SCHOOL BOARD

State law, Chapter 330 of the Acts of 1960, provides that:

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District School Committee shall consist of seven members, one member each from the towns of Berlin, Hudson, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough and one member from the city of Marlborough. Members shall be elected at the regular city election or regular town elections. All members shall serve until their respective successors are elected and qualified.

The School Committee is the governing board of the district's public school system. Although it functions as a duly elected committee of district government, the School Committee has, unlike other boards, autonomous and absolute authority within limitations established by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to carry out the educational policies of the state and guide the educational process.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:1 and 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the General Laws of Massachusetts Relating to School Committees

CROSS REFS.: AA, School District Legal Status
BBA, School Committee Powers and Duties

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POWERS AND DUTIES

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee has all the powers conferred upon it by state law and must perform those duties mandated by the state. These include the responsibility and right to determine policies and practices and to employ a staff to implement its directions for the proper education of the students of the district

The Committee takes a broad view of its functions. It sees them as:

- **Legislative or policymaking.** The Committee is responsible for the development of policy as guides for administrative action and for employing a Superintendent-Director who will implement its policies.
- **Appraisal.** The Committee is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation.
- **Provision of financial resources.** The Committee is responsible for adoption of a budget that will enable the school system to carry out the Committee's policies.
- **Public relations.** The Committee is responsible for providing adequate and direct means for keeping the local citizenry informed about the schools and for keeping itself and the school staff informed about the needs and wishes of the public.
- **Educational planning and evaluation.** The Committee is responsible for establishing educational goals and policies that will guide the Committee and staff for the administration and continuing improvement of the educational programs provided by the School District.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37 specifically, but powers and duties of School Committees are established throughout the Massachusetts General Laws.

CROSS REF.: BB, School Committee Legal Status

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER AUTHORITY

Authority

Because all powers of the School Committee derived from state laws are granted in terms of action as a group, members of the School Committee have authority only when acting as a Committee legally in session.

The School Committee will not be bound in any way by any statement or action on the part of an individual member except when such statement or action is a result of specific instructions of the Committee.

No member of the Committee, by virtue of his/her office, will exercise any administrative responsibility with respect to the schools or command the services of any school employee.

The School Committee will function as a body and all policy decisions and other matters, as required by law, will be settled by an official vote of the Committee sitting in formal session.

Duties

The duties and obligations of the individual Committee member may be enumerated as follows:

- To become familiar with the General Laws of the Commonwealth relating to education and School Committee operations, regulations of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, policies and procedures of this School Committee and School Department.
- To keep abreast of new laws and the latest trends in education.
- To have a general knowledge of the goals, objectives, and programs of the district's public school.
- To work effectively with other Committee members without trying either to dominate the Committee or neglect his/her share of the work.
- To respect the privileged communication that exists in executive sessions by maintaining strict confidentiality on matters discussed in these sessions, except that which becomes part of the public record, once it has been approved for release.
- To vote and act in Committee impartially for the good of the students.
- To accept the will of the majority vote in all cases, and to remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
- To represent the Committee and the schools to the public in a way that promotes interest and support.
- To refer questions and complaints to the proper school authorities.
- To comply with the accepted code of ethics for School Committee members.

MEMBERSHIP AND ELECTION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee shall consist of seven (7) members, one representative from each member municipality. The members shall be elected at regular city elections and town elections except that the Interim School Committee members shall be appointed as provided in the Agreement. The addition of a new member municipality shall add one representative from that municipality, and the withdrawal of a member municipality shall reduce the number of members on the Committee by the one representative from that municipality.

The term of office for the first elected members shall be as directed by the Agreement, Section 1 C. Thereafter, in every year in which the term of office of an elected member expires, the member town or city involved shall elect one member to serve for a term of four (4) years.

The term of office of any member from a member town shall begin immediately after the election and qualification of said member and the term of office of any member from the City of Marlborough shall begin on January 1 following the election and qualification of such member.

LEGAL REFS.: Agreement, Section 1 and amendment to Section (E) 1983

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS/OATH OF OFFICE

In order to serve on the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee, an individual must be a registered voter in the municipality from which he/she is elected or appointed and must take an oath of office as required by law.

Each new member will present to the Committee secretary official certification of having sworn the oath before an officer duly qualified to administer oaths prior to entering on his/her official duties as a member of the Committee. From the Town or City Clerk, newly qualified Committee members, by law, receive, and sign a receipt for, a copy of the Massachusetts open meeting law governing the conduct of Committee meetings in general and executive sessions in particular.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:20; 41:1; 41:107
 M.G.L. 76:5 Amended 1993

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER RESIGNATION

A current School Committee member who submits a resignation to the appropriate certifying authority terminates school committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a later time is stated in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the town or District in which he or she holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:2; 41:109

SCHOOL COMMITTEE VACANCIES

A current School Committee member who submits a resignation to the appropriate authority terminates school committee duties at the time of such resignation unless a letter time is stated in in the resignation.

Should a School Committee member move out of the town or District in which she or he holds office, that member shall be deemed to have vacated the office.

If a vacancy occurs among the elected members of a town, the selectmen and the local School Committee, acting jointly, shall appoint a member to serve until the next annual town election, at which election a successor shall be elected to serve for the balance of the unexpired term, if any. If a vacancy occurs from the City of Marlborough, the City Council and School Committee of the city of Marlborough, acting jointly, shall appoint a member to serve for the balance of the unexpired term.

LEGAL REFS.: Agreement establishing District

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ETHICS
(Massachusetts Association of School Committees Code of Ethics)

Preamble

The acceptance of a code of ethics implies the understanding of the basic organization of School Committees under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The oath of office of a School Committee member binds the individual member to adherence to those state laws which apply to School Committees, since School Committees are agencies of the state.

This code of ethics delineates three areas of responsibility of School Committee members in addition to that implied above:

- Community responsibility
- Responsibility to school administration
- Relationships to fellow Committee members

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her community should:

- Realize that his/her primary responsibility is to the children.
- Recognize that his/her basic function is to be policy making and not administrative.
- Remember that he/she is one of a team and must abide by, and carry out, all Committee decisions once they are made.
- Be well informed concerning the duties of a Committee member on both a local and state level.
- Remember that he/she represents the entire community at all times.
- Accept the office as a Committee member as means of unselfish service with no intent to "play politics," in any sense of the word, or to benefit personally from his/her Committee activities.

A School Committee member in his/her relations with his/her school administration should:

- Endeavor to establish sound, clearly defined policies which will direct and support the administration.
- Recognize and support the administrative chain of command and refuse to act on complaints as an individual outside the administration.
- Give the chief administrator full responsibility for discharging his/her professional duties and hold him/her responsible for acceptable results.
- Refer all complaints to the administrative staff for solution and only discuss them at Committee meetings if such solutions fail.

A School Committee in his/her relations with his/her fellow Committee members should:

- Recognize that action at official meetings is binding and that he/she alone cannot bind the Committee outside of such meetings.
- Realize that he/she should not make statements or promises of how he/she will vote on matters that will come before the Committee.
- Uphold the intent of executive sessions and respect the privileged communications that exists in executive sessions.
- Not withhold pertinent information on school matters or personnel problems, either from members of his/her own Committee or from members of other Committees who may be seeking help or information on school problems
- Make decisions only after all facts on a question have been presented and discussed.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

For the purpose of organizing, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee, at its first meeting in June will elect from its membership a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary, all of whom will hold their respective offices for a term of one year or until a successor is elected.

In the event the Chair and Vice-Chair are no longer members of the School Committee, the senior member (years served) will act as the Chair Pro-Tem.

A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum. The election will proceed as follows:

1. Nominations for the office of chairperson will be made from the floor. The Chair will be elected by a majority roll-call vote of the members present and voting. If no nominee receives a majority vote, the election will be declared null and void and nominations will be reopened.
2. Upon election, the new Chair will preside, calling for the election of a Vice-Chair and Secretary, in order. The procedure used for their election will be the same as that for electing the Chair.

Any vacancy among the officers occurring between organizational meetings will be filled by a member elected by the School Committee. The election will be conducted as described above. Following election of officers at its organizational meeting, the School Committee may proceed into such regular or special business as scheduled on the agenda.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE OFFICERS

Duties of the Chair

The Chair of the School Committee has the same powers as any other member of the Committee to vote upon all measures coming before it, to offer resolutions and to discuss questions. He/she will perform those duties that are consistent with his/her office and those required by law, state regulations, and this Committee. In carrying out these responsibilities, the Chair will:

- Sign the instruments, acts, and orders necessary to carry out state requirements and the will of the Committee.
- Consult with the Superintendent in the planning of the Committee's agendas.
- Confer with the Superintendent on crucial matters that may occur between Committee meetings.
- Appoint subcommittees, subject to Committee approval.
- Call special meetings of the Committee as found necessary.
- Be public spokesperson for the Committee at all times except as this responsibility is specifically delegated to others.
- Be responsible for the orderly conduct of all Committee meetings.

As presiding officer at all meetings of the Committee, the chairperson will:

- Call the meeting to order at the appointed time.
- Announce the business to come before the Committee in its proper order.
- Enforce the Committee's policies relating to the order of business and the conduct of meetings.
- Recognize persons who desire to speak, and protect the speaker who has the floor from disturbance or interference.
- Explain what the effect of a motion would be if this is not clear to members.
- Restrict discussion to the question when a motion is before the Committee.
- Answer all parliamentary inquiries.
- Put motions to a vote, stating definitely and clearly the vote and result thereof.

Duties of the Vice-Chair

The vice-chairperson of the Committee will act in the absence of the chairperson as presiding officer of the Committee and will perform such other duties as may be delegated or assigned to him/her.

Secretary

The secretary will keep or cause to be kept an accurate journal of all Committee meetings; will comply with state law and Committee policy regarding notification of meetings; and will render such reports as may be required by the state or the town.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36

APPOINTED COMMITTEE OFFICIALS

The Superintendent-Director shall be appointed by the Committee as provided by law and perform all the duties that are prescribed by law and such other duties, not inconsistent there to, as a majority of the Committee may direct.

The Committee shall appoint a Treasurer who need not be a member of the Committee, length of term specified at time of appointment. The Treasurer shall receive and take charge of all money belonging to the District, and shall pay any bill of the District, which shall have been approved by the Committee. The Treasurer may, by vote of the School Committee, be compensated for his/her services. The Treasurer shall be subject to the provisions of Sections 35, 52 and 109A of Chapter 41 of the General Laws, to the extent applicable.

The Committee may appoint an Assistant Treasurer, who need not be a member of the Committee, who shall act to assist the Treasurer in carrying out his/her functions.

In compliance with Chapter 44, Section 4 as amended by Chapter 210 of the Acts of 1990, authorizes the District Treasurer to borrow in anticipation of revenue up to a total of the prior tax levy, rates and services. Such notes shall be payable and shall be paid, not later than one year from their date and said one-year term may occur with the span of two separate fiscal years.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE / SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR RELATIONSHIP

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee will leave to the Superintendent-Director all matters of decision and administration that come within his/her scope as executive officer or as professional leader of the school system. While the Committee reserves to itself the ultimate decision of all matters concerning general policy or expenditures of funds, it will normally proceed in these areas after receiving recommendations from its executive officer. Further:

1. The Superintendent=Director will have the privilege of asking guidance from the Committee with respect to matters of operation whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to make exceptions to an established policy, he/she will submit the matter to the Committee for advice and direction.
2. The Superintendent-Director will assist the Committee in reaching sound judgments and establishing policies, and will place before the Committee all relevant facts, information, and reports necessary to keep the Committee adequately informed of situations or business at hand.

SUBCOMMITTEES OF THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee will have no standing committees. It may, however, establish special subcommittees at its annual organizational meeting. These subcommittees may be created for a specific purpose and to make recommendations for Committee action.

- The subcommittee will be established through action of the Committee.
- The Committee Chair, subject to approval by the Committee, will appoint the subcommittee chair and its members.
- The subcommittee will be provided with a list of its functions and duties.
- The subcommittee may make recommendations for Committee action, but it may not act for the School Committee.
- All subcommittees of the School Committee are subject to the provisions of the Open Meeting Law.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

GENERAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee shall appoint a single General Advisory Committee for all vocational programs under its control. Such a committee shall include, but not be limited to, chairpersons of the Program Advisory Committees. The General Advisory Committee shall meet at least semi-annually, provided that one such meeting is with the School Committee, prior to the end of each school year. It shall be the responsibility of the General Advisory Committee to advise the School Committee, based on adequate and timely information, as to the planning, operation and evaluation of vocational instruction provided by programs under School Committee control.

The Director of Career and Technical Education Programs shall act as liaison and secretary to the General Advisory Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. Chapter 74, Sec. 6
 Regulations of Mass. Dept. of Education Sec. 4.1a and 1b

PROPOSED: 6/5/18 APPROVED: 6/26/18
REVISED: 10/9/19 APPROVED: 11/12/19

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COUNCIL

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee believes that the school is the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school District.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school council shall be established to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent-Director and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the school council: The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

- Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.
- Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
- Review of the school building budget.
- Formulation of a school improvement plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent-Director.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38Q, 71:59C

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The Principal, in conjunction with the school council, shall be responsible for preparing a written school improvement plan annually. This plan shall be written with the advice of the school council and submitted for approval to the Superintendent-Director and presented to the School Committee. The plan should be drafted with the following in mind:

1. The educational goals for the school consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards, as adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and by the School Committee.
2. An assessment of the needs of the school in light of the proposed educational goals.
3. The means to address student performance.
4. Professional development for the school's professional staff.
5. The enhancement of parental involvement in the life of the school, safety, and discipline.
6. The development of means for meeting the diverse learning needs of every child.
7. Any further subjects as the Principal, in consultation with the school council, shall consider appropriate, except that:
 - a. The council shall have no authority over matters that are subject to Chapter 150E, the collective bargaining law, and
 - b. The council may not expand the scope of its authority beyond that established in law or expressly granted by School Committee policy.

SUBMISSION AND APPROVAL OF THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

The written school improvement plan shall be submitted by the Principal to the Superintendent-Director for review and approval by February 1st of each year.

Because the implementation of the plan is dependent on School Committee approval, it is important that the school council be aware of certain expectations of the School Committee regarding the school improvement plan. The school improvement plan should:

1. Focus on improvement of student learning.
2. Specify expected student outcomes and measurable/observable results.
3. Align with the mission of the School District and any goals and policies of the School District.
4. Be consistent with state and federal law, School District policy, established curriculum and negotiated agreements.
5. Clearly identify actions to be taken on how changes will be implemented.
6. Include a plan on how to solicit community support for the changes being developed.
7. Indicate anticipated costs and available funding sources.
8. Delineate the method of evaluating and reporting progress and results.

If the school improvement plan is not approved by the Superintendent-Director, it shall be returned to the Principal with specific comments as to the reason(s). The Principal shall revise the plan in cooperation with the school council, and resubmit it for approval. If the Superintendent-Director does not review the school improvement plan within 30 days of its receipt, the plan shall be deemed to have been approved.

CONDUCT OF SCHOOL COUNCIL BUSINESS

The Principal shall, by law, serve as co-chair of the council. The second co-chair will be elected annually by the council members at its first meeting of the school year subsequent to the elections of new council members. The co-chairs will be responsible for the preparation of the agenda for the council meetings.

The school council shall meet at least once monthly during the school year. Meetings will be held outside of school hours. At its first meeting of the school year, the council will set its calendar of regular meetings for the year. Where circumstances warrant, the council may choose to call additional meetings.

School councils shall use consensus as the primary method to resolve issues and to formulate recommendations. Votes by majority may be taken at the discretion of the Principal and Robert's Rules of Order shall prevail if there are questions of procedure.

All meetings of the school council shall conform to the Open Meeting Law, Chapter 30A, Sections 18-25, which stipulate that all meetings be open to the public, that meetings be posted at least 48 hours in advance, and that minutes of the meeting shall be maintained as required. The scope of the school council does not require, and therefore does not qualify for, executive session.

The Superintendent-Director shall receive agendas and minutes of all school council meetings. The Superintendent-Director shall provide copies of these materials to members of the School Committee upon request.

PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee shall establish a Program Advisory Committee for each program under its control. Such Program Advisory Committees shall consist of representatives of local business and industry related to the program, organized labor (where applicable), a parent, and a student; provided however, that no member of the School Committee or other school official shall serve thereon. The program lead teacher or department head may serve as a non-voting liaison and secretary to the committee.

The Program Advisory Committees shall meet at least semi-annually.

It shall be the responsibility of the Program Advisory Committee to advise, assist, and support the department head, program lead teacher, guidance personnel, and other school officials in order to improve planning, operation, and evaluation in its program area. Such advice shall be based on adequate and timely information as to manpower and job development demands or job market trends, technological developments, training alternatives, and other factors affecting the quality of the program.

The Superintendent-Director is authorized on behalf of the School Committee to appoint student, parent and business & industry members to the Advisory Committees in conformity with Chapter 74 regulations.

The Superintendent-Director shall inform the School Committee the names and address of these appointments.

Role of Program Advisory Committees: The most common role of the Program Advisory Committees shall include, but not be limited to, advising the instructional program, placement and recruitment of students, public relations, and student/teacher assistance.

Instructional Program:

- Review course content, goals, and objectives.
- Provide ongoing assistance in recommending modifications of course content in order to meet current and future needs/requirements of industry.
- Advise on long-range planning of curriculum, equipment and facilities including assistance in federal funding proposals.
- Provide, make available, or recommend instructional materials, equipment, and facilities that can play a vital role in the program's effectiveness.
- Assist in conducting surveys of educational trends.

Placement of Students:

- Assist in local surveys of industrial needs.
- Provide information for cooperative work contacts and full-time placement of graduates.
- Provide information on the specific requirements for entry-level employment in the trade, including the duties, responsibilities and tasks expected.
- Serve as a liaison person between the commercial industrial community and Assabet Valley.

Student/Teacher Assistance:

- Evaluate existing equipment, make recommendations for updating and/or replacement.
- Recommend guest speakers in the trade and assist in arranging plant and educational tours.
- Show a willingness to participate in special projects that may occur on an occasional basis.
- Provide names of vendors or their representatives so that the most current specification manuals and materials may be obtained by our students for reference purposes.

Public Relations:

- Support federal and state legislation which promotes the best interest of vocational education.
- Disseminate and/or help publicize the occupational programs being served and the vocational concept through all available media to those who can profit from this type of education.
- Assist in defining and explaining the philosophy and objectives of Assabet Valley programs to the public and to civic organizations.

Recommendations of the Program Advisory Committee:

Recommendations of the Program Advisory Committees shall be forwarded to the department head or lead teacher. Recommendations of school-wide concern shall be forwarded to the General Advisory Committee by the chairperson.

Appeal of Recommendation

Program Advisory Committee:

Advisory recommendations considered and voted by a Program Advisory Committee are to be forwarded to the administration by the liaison person. Advisory recommendations that are made in conformity with this policy shall be considered by the administration and the administrative response shall be communicated to the Program Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee may appeal a policy recommendation to the School Committee after first meeting with the Superintendent-Director.

General Advisory Committee:

Voted advisory recommendations by the General Advisory Committee, which have school-wide implications, are made directly to the School Committee at the annual meeting. Such recommendations are made through the Chairman of the School Committee.

Decisions of the School Committee are final.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. Chapter 74, Sec. 6
 Regulations of Mass. Dept. of Education Sec. 4.1a and 1b

SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Under provisions of Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972 and the regulations promulgated by the State Department of Education, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee shall appoint a Special Education Program Advisory Committee consisting of ten (10) members appointed to three (3) year terms.

Appointment: The Coordinator of Special Education shall recommend for appointment to this committee those persons who, in his/her judgment, would actively and productively participate, and who have indicated an interest in serving in such a capacity. The Superintendent-Director is authorized on behalf of the School Committee to appoint members to the SPED PAC in conformity with Chapter 71B:3. The Superintendent-Director shall inform the School Committee the names and addresses of these appointments

Composition of the Committee: This Advisory Committee shall be composed of:

Parents - Five (5) parents of special needs students enrolled in the Assabet Valley program at the time of their appointment.

Employer - One (1) personnel or employment person representing local industry.

Professional - One (1) special needs professional who lives within the District, but not employed in the District public school setting. This may be a special needs teacher, rehabilitation counselor, or an employee of mental health.

Social Service - One (1) professional in the area of social worker, recreational director, mental health employee, or some other person functioning in an area associated with the above.

Ex-Officio Member - One (1) ex-officio member would be the Superintendent-Director or his/her designee, who would be a member of the Assabet Valley Special Needs staff. This member would be responsible for committee organization and operation and serve as liaison to the Superintendent-Director for the committee.

Student Member - One (1) Assabet Valley student who is currently being serviced under a Special Needs Individual Educational Plan.

Role of Special Needs Advisory Committee: The Special Needs Advisory Committee must meet quarterly. The minutes, including recommendations of the committee, are to be submitted to the Superintendent-Director for transmittal to the School Committee.

The Advisory Committee shall:

- investigate the existence of realistic or appropriate job placements available to special needs students completing the programs at Assabet.

- suggest agencies that may be called upon to support and enhance the objectives of the courses offered at Assabet.
- assist in the job placement of special needs student upon completion of the programs.
- annually review the need for and services provided in occupational education for special needs students from the District.
- commend or recommend modifications of occupational programs operated both under the aegis of the Assabet Valley District, or available to students at the secondary level with the District.
- review the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District's Annual Special Needs program Plans before School Committee adoption.
- through the Chairperson, advise and assist the General Advisory Committee, as how their actions may impact on Special Needs students.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee will transact all business at official meetings of the Committee. These may be either regular or special meetings, defined as follows:

1. **Regular meeting**: the usual official legal action meeting, held regularly once each month
2. **Special meeting**: an official legal action meeting called between scheduled regular meetings to consider specific topics.

Every meeting of the School Committee, regular or special, will be open to the public unless an executive session is held in accordance with state law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REFS.: BEC, Executive Sessions
BEDA, Notification of School Committee Meetings

EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

All meetings of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee are open to attendance by the public and media representatives. However, the Committee has the right to convene in a closed executive session when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The Committee will first convene in an open session for which due notice has been given.
2. The Chairperson (or, in his/her absence, the presiding member) will state the purpose for the executive session by stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.
3. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.
4. The Chairperson or presiding member will state before entering the executive session whether the Committee will reconvene in open session after the executive session.

The law puts specific limitations on the purposes for which executive sessions may be convened. The Committee may enter executive sessions only to deliberate:

1. The reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of a single individual, or the discipline or dismissal, including the hearing of charges against, a member of the committee, a school department employee or student, or other individual. The individual has certain rights enumerated in the law including requiring the Committee to hold an open session should the individual so request.
2. Strategy with respect to non-union negotiations or to conduct collective bargaining sessions with non-union personnel.
3. Strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation, if an open meeting might have a detrimental effect. Collective bargaining may also be conducted.
4. The deployment of security personnel or devices.
5. Allegations of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.
6. Transactions of real estate, if an open meeting might be detrimental to the negotiating position of the committee or another party.
7. To comply with the provisions of any general or specific law of federal grant-in-aid requirements.
8. And to consider and interview applicants for employment by a preliminary screening committee (The only position that the school committee would be involved in that might qualify would be for the position of Superintendent-Director.) This exemption only applies if it can be determined that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants. This shall not apply to applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.

9. To meet or confer with a mediator with respect to any litigation or public business.
10. To discuss trade secrets or confidential competitively-sensitive or other proprietary information conducted by a governmental body as an energy supplier.

(In the first case, an open meeting will be held if the individual involved so requests.)

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in executive session will be kept and may remain confidential only so long as their publication would defeat the purpose of the session.

The School Committee Chair and the Superintendent-Director will review executive session minutes for possible declassification on, at least, a quarterly basis and, if necessary, will consult with legal counsel. The School Committee Chair will bring minutes recommended for declassification to the School Committee for a vote either as part of a consent agenda or for individual action. In either case, there shall be an announcement of the declassification of minutes.

When a specific set of executive session minutes, not yet declassified, is requested by a member of the public, the School Committee shall render a decision on declassification at its next meeting or within 30 days after the request, whichever occurs first.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:21; 30A:22

CROSS REFS.: BDE, Subcommittees of the School Committee
BE, School Committee Meetings
KEB, Public Complaints about School Personnel

NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

As required by law, a minimum of 48 hours' advance notice (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and legal holidays) will be given for any meeting of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee, including all subcommittee meetings. The only exception permitted is in case of emergency, which the law defines as "a sudden, generally unexpected occurrence or set of circumstances demanding immediate action."

Notification of the dates, times, and places of regular meetings will be accomplished by periodic publication of the schedule for the ensuing months. Notification of a change in a regular meeting time or place and notification of a special meeting will be filed with the clerks of member communities at least 48 hours in advance, as required by law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25

CROSS REF.: BE, School Committee Meetings

AGENDA FORMAT

The Superintendent-Director, conferring with the Chair of the School Committee, will arrange the order of items on meetings agendas so that the Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.

The Committee will follow the order of business established by the agenda except as it votes to rearrange the order for the convenience of visitors, individuals appearing before the Committee, or to expedite Committee business.

Any School Committee member, staff member, or citizen may suggest items of business. The inclusion of such items, however, will be at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Committee. A staff member who wishes to have a topic scheduled on the agenda should submit the request through the Superintendent.

The agenda will also provide for time when any citizen who wishes may speak briefly before the School Committee.

The agenda, together with supporting materials, will be distributed to School Committee members no less than three business days prior to the meeting to permit adequate time to prepare for the meeting.

Agendas will be posted and made available to the press.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

At regular meetings, the order of business shall be as follows:

- Pledge of Allegiance
- Approval of Minutes
- Bills and Payroll
- Audience
- Superintendent-Director's Report
- Policy Development
- Assistant Superintendent's Report
- Principal Post
- Personnel Matters
- Communications
- New Business
- Old Business
- Advisory Committees
- Executive Session

The Committee shall annually determine, before October 1st of each year, and may revise the order of business to be conducted. The Superintendent-Director, acting as the Chief Executive Officer of the Committee, shall prepare the agenda.

Each agenda shall include a portion of time designated by the Committee to hear from any individual, recognized by the Chairman, to express an opinion or position on matters before the Committee.

RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the proceedings of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee, except when those rules are in conflict with the Committee's approved policies and regulations.

In accordance with Robert's Rules, the Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

Votes of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee will be taken by voice vote or a hand count and shall be recorded in the minutes. If the vote is unanimous only that fact need be recorded. No vote taken at an open session shall be by secret ballot.

All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

A two-thirds vote will be required to suspend parliamentary rules of order.

Executive Session

A majority of the members of the School Committee must vote to enter into executive session, with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

All votes taken in executive session will be recorded roll call votes, and will become part of the minutes of executive sessions. Any votes taken to ratify employment contracts or collective bargaining agreements shall be taken in open session.

Accepted Voting Responses

For open and/or executive session voting, only the following responses will be permitted: aye, no, or abstain.

Abstentions do not count in tallying the vote negatively or positively. When members abstain, they are in effect attending only to contribute to a quorum. If a member abstains, the definition of majority defaults to "those present and voting." This policy supersedes the voting section of Robert's Rule of Order.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25; 71:42; 71:50

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED: 10/9/19

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 11/12/19

VOTING METHOD

Open meeting

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All actions will require a majority vote of all members present and voting except as state law, Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, or policies of this Committee require a larger majority. A majority of the members of the School Committee will constitute a quorum.

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LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:18-25; 71:42; 71:50

MINUTES

The minutes of a School Committee meeting constitute the written record of Committee actions; they are legal evidence of what the action was. Therefore, the secretary of the School Committee will be responsible for reporting in the minutes all actions taken by the Committee.

Minutes will include:

1. A statement on the nature of the meeting (regular or special), the time, the place, and the approval of the last regular and each subsequent special meeting.
2. Names of the members present or absent, annotated as to arrival and departure times, if during the meeting.
3. A complete record of official actions taken by the Committee relative to the Superintendent's recommendations, to communications, and to all business transacted. Resolutions and motions will be given in their exact wording, accompanied by the names of members moving and seconding and a record of the results of the vote. Reports and documents relating to a formal motion may be omitted if they are referred to and identified by title and date.
4. Notation of formal adjournment.

Copies of the minutes will be sent to all Committee members at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting at which the minutes are to be approved.

The approved minutes will become permanent records of the Committee. Minutes of public meetings and minutes of executive sessions that have been declassified will be in the custody of the Superintendent who will make them available to interested citizens upon request.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 30A:22; 66:10

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

All regular and special meetings of the School Committee shall be open to the public. Executive sessions will be held only as prescribed by the Statutes of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The School Committee desires individuals to attend its meetings so that they may become better acquainted with the operations and the programs of our local public schools. In addition, the Committee would like the opportunity to hear public comment.

Public comment is not a discussion, debate, or dialogue between individuals and the School Committee. It is an individual's opportunity to express an opinion on issues within the School Committee's authority.

To ensure the ability of the School Committee to conduct the District's business in an orderly manner, the following rules and procedures are adopted:

1. At the start of each regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, individuals will sign in for an opportunity to speak during public comment. The public comment segment shall not exceed 15 minutes. All speakers are encouraged to present their remarks in a respectful manner.
2. Speakers will be allowed up to three (3) minutes to present their material and must begin their comments by stating their name and city/town. The presiding Chair may permit extension of this time limit.
3. Topics for discussion should be limited to those items within the School Committee's scope of authority. The authority of the School Committee primarily concerns the review and approval of the budget of the district's public schools, the performance of the Superintendent, and the educational goals and policies of the district's public schools. Comments and complaints regarding school personnel (apart from the Superintendent) or students are generally prohibited unless those comments and complaints concern matters within the scope of School Committee authority.
4. The Chair of the meeting, after a warning, reserves the right to terminate speech which is not constitutionally protected because it constitutes true threats that are likely to provoke a violent reaction and cause a breach of the peace, or incitement to imminent lawless conduct, or contains obscenities.
5. Written comments longer than three (3) minutes may be presented to the presiding Chair before or after the meeting. All remarks will be addressed through the Chair of the meeting. Comments made during the public comment portion of the meeting do not necessarily reflect the views or positions of the AVRSD School Committee.
6. Sign up instructions will be provided for those who wish to participate in Public Comment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c. 30A: 18-25

CROSS REFS: BE, SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

BEC, EXECUTIVE SESSIONS

BEDA, NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

SOURCE: MASC
Revised January 2020

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED: 3/10/20

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 6/2/20

REMOTE PARTICIPATION AND GUIDELINES

The Assabet Valley RVSD School Committee has adopted remote participation under 940 CMR 29.10(5) to allow School Committee members to participate remotely in meetings. The intent of this regulation was to allow participation under the auspices of Open Meeting Law when School Committee member(s) are unable to physically attend a public meeting. This document will help establish the guidelines by which remote participation can occur here at Assabet Valley RVSD.

Statement of Policy: It is the expressed intent of the Assabet Valley RVSD School Committee that remote participation in meetings be an infrequent event for individual School Committee members and only seen as a means of access due to extenuating circumstances. The Chair(s) of the School Committee are encouraged to interpret these rules in a strict fashion and encourage all members to attend meetings in person as a general rule, due to the inherent benefits of physical presence in a meeting. An individual School Committee member may not participate remotely more than three times in any fiscal year.

School Committee members who are participating remotely and those who are physically present must be clearly audible to each other. (Video feed is acceptable; however, telephonic connection will be the current standard.) A quorum of the School Committee, including the Chairperson of the School Committee, must be physically present at any meeting during which a School Committee member participates remotely. If the Chairperson of the School Committee is not physically present, a person authorized to chair the meeting (generally a vice chairperson) must be physically present. School Committee members participating remotely may vote and will not be deemed to be absent. Again, the person or persons calling in do not contribute toward a quorum but may vote. The Chairperson (or in his/her absence, the Vice Chairperson or a designated appointee) must be physically present at the meeting.

The regulations set forth permissible reasons for remote participation. [See 940 CMR 29.10(5).]

The School Committee Chair must determine that the guidelines of 940 CMR 29.10(5) have been met and that one or more of the factors makes the School Committee member's physical attendance unreasonably difficult. The reason for a School Committee member's remote participation, location, method of participation and the determination that the absence is permissible under the Attorney General regulations must be stated during the meeting and reflected in the School Committee minutes.

The regulations also contain the procedure to be used for School Committee members wishing to remotely participate. Any School Committee member who wishes to participate remotely shall complete the Authorization to Utilize Remote Participation Form and, as soon as reasonably possible (within 24 hours) prior to a meeting, notify the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, the person chairing the meeting, of his or her desire to do so and the reason for and facts supporting the request. The Remote Participation Request will be reviewed on a first come, first serve basis in the order in which the Chair receives the School Committee member request. At the start of the meeting, the Chair shall announce the name of any member who will be participating remotely and the reason under 940 CMR 29.10 (5) for his or her remote participation. This information shall be recorded in the meeting minutes.

The responsibility for calling into the meeting will rest with the absentee.

All votes taken during any meeting in which a School Committee member participates remotely shall be by roll call vote. The roll call votes will be reflected in the minutes. A School Committee member participating remotely may participate in an executive session, but shall state at the start of any such session that no other person is present and/or able to hear the discussion at the remote location, unless presence of that person is approved by a simple majority vote of the School Committee.

The Assabet Valley RVSD shall distribute to remote participants, in advance of the meeting, copies of any documents or exhibits that the Chair reasonably anticipates will be used during the meeting either in hardcopy or electronically. If used during the meeting, such documents shall be part of the official record of the meeting, and shall be listed in the meeting minutes and retained in accordance with G.L. C.30A, § 22 (agendas notwithstanding).

The regulations provide that a public body (School Committee) may adopt bylaws or policies that prohibit or further restrict the use of remote participation. If a School Committee is interested in adopting a more restrictive policy, it must be submitted to the School Committee prior to the enactment for review and approval pursuant to G.L. c. 32, § 21 (4). Violations of 940 CMR 29.10 are investigated by the Attorney General and may be resolved by ordering the public body to temporarily or permanently discontinue its use of remote participation. May it also be known the School Committee reserves the right to revoke the Remote Participation Policy, as it deems appropriate, at any time.

So, to summarize the major rules:

- Audio input that is clearly audible to all parties
- A quorum must exist without the participation of the remote party.
- The Chairperson (or his/her designee) needs to be present at the meeting.
- A roll call vote is required for any and all votes.
- Any additional remote participation restrictions must be preapproved by the School Committee prior to the meeting.
- Assabet Valley RVSD will not be responsible for meeting space audio requirements except for those designated areas within the District's buildings. (Cell phone with speaker phone capability is acceptable if audible by all parties.)
- All minutes should reflect remote participation.
- The Assabet Valley RVSD reserves the right to revoke the Remote Participation Policy.

LEGAL REFS.: 940 CMR 29.10(5)

SPECIAL PROCEDURES FOR CONDUCTING HEARINGS

In conducting all public hearings required by law, and others, as it deems advisable, the School Committee will:

1. Give due and public notice in line with statutory requirements and seek to publicize the meeting in all local media.
2. Make available printed information on the topic of the hearing.
3. Give all persons an equal opportunity to be heard in accordance with the Committee's policy.

The Chair of the Committee will preside at the hearing.

The public will be informed at the beginning of the hearing the particular procedure that will be followed in regard to questions, remarks, rebuttals, and any time limitations or other rules that must be followed to give everyone an opportunity to be heard.

In conformance with customary hearing procedures, statements and supporting information will be presented first by the Committee, or by others for the Committee; to comment, citizens must be recognized by the Chair, and all remarks must be addressed to the Chair and be germane to the topic. To assure that all who wish get a chance to speak, the Chair will recognize persons who have not commented previously during the hearing before recognizing persons who wish to remark a second time.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY DEVELOPMENT

The School Committee will develop policies and put them in writing so that they may serve as guides for the discretionary action of those to whom it delegates authority.

The formulation and adoption of these written policies will constitute the basic method by which the School Committee will exercise its leadership in providing for the successful and efficient functioning of the school system. Through the study and evaluation of reports concerning the execution of its policies, the School Committee will exercise its control over school operation.

The School Committee accepts the definition of policy set forth by the National School Boards Association:

Policies are principles adopted by a School Committee to chart a course of action. They tell what is wanted; they may include why and how much. Policies should be broad enough to indicate a line of action to be followed by the administration in meeting day-to-day problems, yet be specific enough to give clear guidance.

The policies of the School Committee are framed, and are meant to be interpreted, in terms of state law, regulations of the Massachusetts Board of Education, and other regulatory agencies of the various levels of government.

POLICY ADOPTION

Adoption of new policies or changing existing policies is solely the responsibility of the School Committee. Policies will be adopted and/or amended only by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the School Committee when such action has been scheduled on the agenda of a regular or special meeting.

To permit time for study of all policies or amendments to policies and to provide an opportunity for interested parties to react, proposed policies or amendments will be presented as an agenda item to the Committee in the following sequence:

1. Information item - distribution with agenda
2. Discussion item - first reading of proposed policy or policies; response from Superintendent-Director; report from any advisory Committee assigned responsibility in the area; Committee discussion and directions for any redrafting
3. Action item - discussion, adoption or rejection.

Amendments to the policy at the action stage will not require repetition of the sequence, unless the Committee so directs.

The School Committee may dispense with the above sequence to meet emergency conditions.

Policies will be effective upon the date set by the School Committee. This date will ensure that affected persons have an opportunity to become familiar with the requirements of the new policy prior to its implementation.

POLICY REVISION AND REVIEW

In an effort to keep its written policies up to date so that they can be used consistently as a basis for School Committee action and administrative decision, the Committee will review its policies on a regular basis.

The Committee will evaluate how the policies have been executed by the school staff and will weigh the results. It will rely on the school staff, students, and the community for providing evidence of the effect of the policies it has adopted.

The Superintendent is given the continuing commission of calling to the Committee's attention all policies that are out of date or for other reason appear to need revision.

The School Committee directs the Superintendent to periodically recall all policy and regulations manuals for administrative updating and Committee review.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE REVIEW OF PROCEDURES

It is expected that the Superintendent and administrative staff will need to issue procedures implementing policies of the School Committee. Many of these will be routine from year to year; others will arise in special circumstances; some will be drawn up under specific directions from the Committee.

The Committee may review the procedures developed by the Superintendent for the school system whenever they appear inconsistent with policy, goals, or objectives of the District, but it will revise or veto such procedures only when, in the Committee's judgment, they are inconsistent with policies adopted by the Committee.

The Committee will not officially approve procedures except as required by state law or in cases when strong community attitudes, or possible student or staff reaction, make it necessary or advisable for a regulation to have the Committee's advance approval.

Rules Pertaining to Staff and Student Conduct

Under Massachusetts law, the Superintendent is required to publish "rules and regulations pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students which have been adopted." Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education for information purposes only. Standards of conduct will be included in staff and student handbooks. These handbooks will be reviewed and approved annually by the School Committee.

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

POLICY DISSEMINATION

The Superintendent is directed to establish and maintain an orderly plan for preserving and making accessible the policies adopted by the Committee and the regulations needed to put them into effect.

Accessibility is to extend at least to all employees of the school system, to members of the Committee, and, insofar as conveniently possible, to all persons in the community. A policy concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to those groups prior to the policy's effective date.

All policy manuals distributed to anyone will remain the property of the Committee and will be considered as "on loan" to anyone, or any organization, in whose possession they might be at any time. They are subject to recall at any time deemed necessary for purposes of updating.

The School Committee's policy manual will be considered a public record and will be available for inspection at the Superintendent's office.

SUSPENSION OF POLICIES

The operation of any section or sections of School Committee policies not established by law or contract may be temporarily suspended by a two-thirds vote of Committee members present at any regular or special meeting. Any action to suspend policy must be reviewed at the next scheduled meeting and will be so noted on the agenda for that meeting.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Although the School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will, however, be through the Superintendent-Director.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principal, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent-Director. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent-Director has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand the Committee's deliberations on issues before the Committee.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent-Director. The Superintendent-Director will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's actions.

Visits to the School

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting classrooms will inform the Superintendent-Director of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the Principal. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

USE OF ELECTRONIC MESSAGING BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

As elected public officials, School Committee members shall exercise caution when communicating between and among themselves via electronic messaging services including, but not limited to, electronic mail (e-mail), Internet web forums, and Internet chat rooms.

Under the Open Meeting Law, deliberation by a quorum of members constitutes a meeting. Deliberation is defined as movement toward a decision including, but not limited to, the sharing of an opinion regarding business over which the Committee has supervision, control, or jurisdiction. A quorum may be arrived at sequentially using electronic messaging without knowledge and intent by the author.

School Committee members should use electronic messaging between and among members only for housekeeping purposes such as requesting or communicating agenda items, meeting times, or meeting dates. Electronic messaging should not be used to discuss Committee matters that require public discussion under the Open Meeting Law.

Under the Public Records Law, electronic messages between public officials may be considered public records. Therefore, in order to ensure compliance, the School Committee chairperson, in consultation with the Superintendent-Director, shall annually designate a member of the central office staff who shall be copied on all electronic correspondence between and among members of the School Committee. These copies shall be printed and retained in the central office in the same fashion as any other School Committee records. School Committee members who do not have a computer or access to these messages shall be provided copies on a timely basis.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.4:7; 30A:18-25, 66:10

NEW SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER ORIENTATION

In accordance with the requirements of law, each new School Committee member elected to the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee is required to complete, within one year of their election or appointment, at least eight hours of orientation training. This orientation shall include, but is not limited to, a review of School Finance, the Open Meeting Law, Public Records Law, Conflict of Interest Law, Special Education Law, Collective Bargaining, School Leadership Standards and Evaluations, and the Roles and Responsibilities of School Committee Members.

The School Committee and Superintendent-Director shall assist each new member to understand the Committee's functions, policies and procedures of the Committee as soon after election as possible. Each new member shall be given the following materials:

- A. A copy of the School Committee policy manual
- B. A copy of the Open Meeting Law
- C. A copy of the Conflict of Interest Regulations
- D. A copy of the district's budget
- E. Collective bargaining agreements and contracts
- F. Student and staff handbooks

Each new member shall also receive any other materials the Chair and/or the Superintendent-Director determine to be necessary.

The Chair and/or Superintendent-Director shall also clarify policy:

- A. arranging visits to schools or administrative offices
- B. requesting information regarding school district operations
- C. responding to community requests/complaints concerning staff or programs
- D. handling confidential information

Whether appointed or elected, new members should be advised that they are also members of the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, Inc. and should be encouraged to utilize the services and resources MASC provides by attending meetings or workshops specifically designed for new Committee members. Their expenses at these meetings or workshops will be reimbursed in accordance with established School Committee policy.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:36A

SCHOOL COMMITTEE CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, AND WORKSHOPS

To provide continuing in-service training and development for its members, the School Committee encourages the participation of all members at appropriate School Committee conferences, workshops and conventions. However, in order to control both the investment of time and funds necessary to implement this policy, the Committee establishes these principles and procedures for its guidance:

1. The secretary will maintain a calendar of School Committee conferences, conventions and workshops. The Committee will periodically decide which meetings appear to be most promising in terms of producing direct and indirect benefits to the school system. At least annually, the Committee will identify those new ideas or procedures and/or cost benefits that can be ascribed to participation at such meetings.
2. Funds for participation at such meetings will be budgeted for on an annual basis. When funds are limited, the Committee will designate which of its members would be the most appropriate to participate at a given meeting.
3. Reimbursement to Committee members for their travel expenses will be in accordance with the travel reimbursement policy.
4. When a conference, convention, or workshop is not attended by the full Committee, those who do participate will be requested to share information, recommendations and materials acquired at the meeting.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5

CROSS REFS.: BID, School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
DKC, Expense Reimbursements

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBER COMPENSATION AND EXPENSES

The School Committee shall serve without compensation, except that a member of a School Committee of a city, town, regional school district or superintendency union may be compensated for his/her services by a majority vote of the city council in a city having a Plan D or Plan E charter; in a city not having a Plan D or Plan E charter by vote of the city council, subject to the provisions of the charter of such a city; in a town by a majority vote at a town meeting; and in a regional school district or school superintendency by a majority vote of the voting member towns authorized at their respective town meetings, the amount of such compensation, in each case, to be set by the respective cities, towns or groups of towns. The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School Committee members serve without compensation except for the member representing the City of Marlborough. No member of a School Committee in any town shall be eligible to the position of teacher, or Superintendent of public schools therein, or in any union school or superintendency union or district in which his/her town participates.

Upon submitting vouchers and supporting bills for expenses incurred in carrying out specific services previously authorized by the Committee, members may be reimbursed from school funds.

Reimbursable expenses may include the cost of attendance at conferences of School Committee associations and other professional meetings or visitations when such attendance and expense payment has had prior School Committee approval.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:52

CROSS REF.: BIBA, School Committee Conferences, Conventions, and Workshops

SCHOOL COMMITTEE LEGISLATIVE PROGRAM

The School Committee, as an agent of the state, must operate within the bounds of state and federal laws affecting public education. If the Committee is to meet its responsibilities to the residents and students of this community, it must work vigorously for the passage of new laws designed to advance the cause of good schools and for the repeal or modification of existing laws that impede this cause.

To this end:

1. The Committee will keep itself informed of pending legislation and actively communicate its concerns and make its position known to elected representatives at both the state and national level.
2. The Committee will work with its legislative representatives (both state and federal), with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees, and other concerned groups in developing an annual, as well as a long-range, legislative program. One of the major objectives of the Committee's legislative program will be to seek full funding for all state and federally mandated programs.
3. The Committee will annually designate a person--who may or may not be a member of the Committee--to serve as its legislative representative. This person will be authorized to speak on the Committee's behalf with respect to legislation being considered by the Massachusetts Legislature or the United States Congress or their respective committees. In all dealings with individual elected representatives, the Legislature or Congress, the Committee's representative will be bound by the official positions taken by the School Committee.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS

The Committee may maintain memberships in the national, state and regional School Committees (boards) associations and take an active part in the activities of these groups.

It may also maintain institutional memberships in other educational organizations, which the executive officer and Committee find to be of benefit to members and personnel.

The materials and benefits of institutional memberships will be distributed and used to the best advantage of the Committee and the staff.

SECTION C

GENERAL SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

CA	ADMINISTRATION GOALS
CB	REGIONAL SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR
CBD	SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S CONTRACT
CBI	EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR
CCB	LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS
CE	ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS, AND COMMITTEES
CH	POLICY IMPLEMENTATION
CHA	DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS
CHC	REGULATIONS DISSEMINATION
CHCA	APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES
CHCA-E	APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES
CHD	ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE
CL	ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS
CM	SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

ADMINISTRATION GOALS

It is the intent of the School Committee that the District employ qualified personnel to administer the school system efficiently and to require the Superintendent-Director to organize the administration in a manner that will make clear the functions of each position and the relationships among them.

The Superintendent-Director will establish clear lines of communication, both vertically and horizontally, and will form any staff councils or committees needed to provide for efficient conduct of school business. In order to engage in this process in an orderly and effective fashion, each individual and group will be given particular, clear-cut responsibilities. Channels will be established so that the recommendations and decisions of each group can be heard and reviewed by the chief administrative officer concerned, and, where appropriate, by the Superintendent-Director and School Committee.

The organization and administration of the schools will balance responsibility with commensurate authority, subject to the reserved legal powers of the School Committee. This means that a staff member, when assigned a responsibility or a position, will be given the authority to make the decisions necessary to perform the assigned tasks.

For the schools to operate effectively, each administrative officer will be responsible and accountable for making a plan of development for all staff assigned to his/her area of operation.

REGIONAL SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

The Committee shall employ a Superintendent-Director of Schools and fix his/her compensation. The Superintendent-Director shall act in accordance with General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 59, and shall perform such other duties consistent with this section as the Committee may determine. He/she shall also prepare such reports as may be required by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and shall submit materials for the Committee's annual report to the mayors of member cities and the selectmen of the member towns in sufficient time for printing in the annual reports of the member municipalities.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 71:59, 72:3

SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR'S CONTRACT

The Committee, upon the election of a candidate or upon reelection of the incumbent Superintendent-Director, will enter into a written contract with the Superintendent-Director which will meet the requirements of law and will protect the rights of both the Committee and the Superintendent-Director.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:41; 71:42

EVALUATION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT-DIRECTOR

Evaluation can serve the purpose of helping educators and educational leaders continually improve their practice.

Through evaluation of the Superintendent-Director, the School Committee will strive to accomplish the following:

1. Ensure the efforts of the Superintendent-Director are focused on district goals and the standards of professional practice established by state regulation are met by the Superintendent-Director.
2. Ensure all Committee members and the Superintendent-Director are in agreement and clear on the role of the Superintendent-Director and the immediate priorities among his/her responsibilities.
3. Provide excellence in administrative leadership of the school district.
4. Develop a respectful and productive working relationship between the School Committee and Superintendent-Director.

The School Committee and Superintendent-Director will periodically develop a set of performance objectives based on the needs of the school district and in keeping with state regulations for evaluation of the Superintendent. The Superintendent-Director's performance will be reviewed in accordance with specified goals and standards. Additional objectives will be established according to the evaluation cycle agreed upon with the Superintendent-Director.

All School Committee discussion and deliberation related to the Superintendent-Director's performance evaluation shall be conducted in open session in accordance with the Open Meeting Law.

LINE AND STAFF RELATIONS

The School Committee expects the Superintendent-Director to establish clear understandings on the part of all personnel of the working relationships in the school system.

Personnel will be expected to refer matters requiring administrative action to the administrator to whom they are responsible. The administrator will refer such matters to the next higher administrative authority when necessary.

It is expected that the established lines of authority will serve most purposes, but all personnel will have the right to appeal any decision made by an administrative officer through established grievance procedures.

Additionally, lines of authority do not restrict in any way the cooperative, sensible working together of all staff members at all levels in order to develop the best possible school programs and services. The established lines of authority represent direction of authority and responsibility; when the staff is working together, the lines represent avenues for a two-way flow of ideas to improve the program and operations of the school system.

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCILS, CABINETS AND COMMITTEES

The Superintendent-Director may establish such permanent or temporary councils, cabinets, and committees as s/he deems necessary for assuring staff participation in decision making, for implementing policies and regulations and for the improvement of the educational program.

Functioning in an advisory capacity, all councils, cabinets and committees created by the Superintendent-Director may make recommendations for submission to the School Committee through the Superintendent-Director. Such groups will exercise no inherent authority. Authority for establishing policy remains with the Committee and authority for implementing policy remains with the Superintendent-Director.

The membership, composition and responsibilities of administrative councils, cabinets and committees will be defined by the Superintendent-Director and may be changed at his/her discretion. However, the School Committee wishes to be kept informed of the establishment and dissolution of these groups as well as their membership and their purpose.

Expenses incurred by such groups for consultative services, materials, and any investigative travel will be paid by the school system, but only within budgetary allotments and when approved in advance by the Superintendent-Director.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

The Superintendent-Director has responsibility for carrying out, through regulations, the policies established by the School Committee.

The policies developed by the Committee and the regulations developed to implement policy are designed to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the school system. Consequently, it is expected that all School Committee members, employees and students will carry them out.

Administrators and supervisors are responsible for informing staff members in their schools, departments, or divisions of existing policies and regulations and for seeing that they are implemented in the spirit intended.

DEVELOPMENT OF REGULATIONS

The Superintendent-Director will be responsible for specifying required actions and designing the detailed arrangements under which the school system will be operated in accordance with School Committee policy. These detailed arrangements will be designed to implement policies, goals, and objectives of the Committee and will be one of the means by which the school system will be governed.

In the development of regulations, the Superintendent-Director may involve at the planning stage those who would be affected by the regulations, including staff members, students, parents/guardians, and the public. He/she must weigh with care the counsel given by representatives of staff, student and community organizations. He/she will inform the Committee of such counsel in presenting pertinent reports of regulations and in presenting regulations for Committee approval.

As long as the Superintendent-Director operates within the guidelines of policy adopted by the Committee, he/she may issue regulations without prior Committee approval unless Committee action is required by law, or the Committee has specifically asked that certain types of regulations be given Committee approval, or the Superintendent-Director recommends Committee approval in light of strong community attitudes or probable staff reactions.

REGULATIONS DISSEMINATION

It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director to see that the regulations developed to implement Committee policies and administer the school system are appropriately coded and included as regulations in the School Committee's policy manual where advisable or appropriate.

A regulation concerning a particular group or groups in the schools will be distributed to the group(s) prior to the effective date of the regulation.

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

The law directs that in each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the Principal, in consultation with the School Council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to conduct of students. The school council shall review the handbook each spring to consider changes in the disciplinary policy to take effect in September.

It is essential that the contents of all handbooks conform to School Committee policies. It is also important that all handbooks bearing the name of the school be of a quality that reflects credit on the school department. Therefore, the Committee expects handbooks requiring approval to be approved prior to publication by the Committee and the Superintendent-Director.

Committee approval will be necessary for any handbooks that pertain to required standards of conduct for employees or students so that their contents may be accorded the status of Committee-approved policy or regulation. The Superintendent-Director will use his/her judgment as to whether other specific handbooks need Committee approval; however, all handbooks published will be made available to the Committee for informational purposes.

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

APPROVAL OF HANDBOOKS AND DIRECTIVES

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance, may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults any employee of the School District may be subject to expulsion from school by the Principal.
3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either (1) or (2) above shall be notified in writing of their opportunity for a hearing, provided, however that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing the Principal may decide to suspend rather than expel a student.
4. Any student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent-Director.
5. When a student is expelled under the provisions listed above and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent-Director of the sending school shall notify the Superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's expulsion.

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

ADMINISTRATION IN POLICY ABSENCE

When action must be taken within the school system where the Committee has provided no guides for administrative action, the Superintendent-Director will have the power to act. The Superintendent-Director's decisions, however, will be subject to review by the Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

The School Committee will require reports from the Superintendent-Director concerning conditions of efficiency and needs of the schools.

School building administrators will be required to keep such records and make reports as the Superintendent-Director may direct or require.

Upon receipt of the Superintendent-Director's reports, the Committee will take steps to appraise the effectiveness with which the schools are achieving the educational purposes of the school system.

Because statistical information often has a time value, each administrator will give careful consideration to all procedures related to reports, accounting, and general business matters that are required for the administration of the school program and will make accurate and prompt return on scheduled dates of all required statistical and other information.

REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ANNUAL REPORT

An annual report covering the diversified activities of the school system and the administration's recommendations for their improvement will be prepared by the Superintendent-Director and presented to the School Committee at the Public Hearing in February. Upon Committee approval, the report shall be submitted to each member municipality and will be made available to the public and used as one means for informing parents and citizens, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education, and others of the programs and conditions of the District's school. Said report shall contain a detailed financial statement, a statement showing the method which computes the annual charges against each town, and any other information regarding the operation of the School District as may be necessary.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 72:4
 M.G.L. 71:16(k)

SECTION D
FISCAL MANAGEMENT

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FISCAL MANAGEMENT GOALS

The quantity and quality of learning programs are directly dependent on the effective, efficient management of allocated funds. It follows that achievement of the school system's purposes can best be achieved through excellent fiscal management.

As trustee of local, state, and federal funds allocated for use in public education, the Committee will fulfill its responsibility to see that these funds are used wisely for achievement of the purposes to which they are allocated.

Because of resource limitations, there is sometimes a temptation to operate so that fiscal concerns overshadow the educational program. Recognizing this, it is essential that the school system take specific action to make sure education remains central and that fiscal matters are ancillary and contribute to the educational program. This concept will be incorporated into Committee operations and into all aspects of school system management and operation.

In the school system's fiscal management, it is the Committee's intent:

1. To engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and to guide expenditures so as to achieve the greatest educational returns and the greatest contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. To establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for the students.
3. To use the best available techniques for budget development and management.
4. To provide timely and appropriate information to all staff with fiscal management responsibilities.
5. To establish maximum efficiency procedures for accounting, reporting, business, purchasing and delivery, payroll, payment of vendors and contractors, and all other areas of fiscal management.

ANNUAL BUDGET

The annual budget is the financial expression of the educational program of the school department and it mirrors the goals and objectives of the School Committee to meet the needs of all students.

The budget then is more than just a financial instrument and requires on the part of the Committee, the staff and the member municipalities orderly and cooperative effort to ensure sound fiscal practices for achieving the educational goals and objectives of the school district.

Public school budgeting is regulated and controlled by legislation, state regulations and local School Committee requirements. The operating budget of the school district will be prepared and presented in line with state policy and will be developed and refined in accordance with these same requirements.

The Superintendent-Director will serve as budget officer but he/she may delegate portions of this responsibility to members of his/her staff as he/she deems appropriate. The three general areas of responsibility for the Superintendent-Director as budget officer will be budget preparation, budget presentation and budget administration.

LEGAL REFS: MGL 71:34; 71:37 and 71:38N

BUDGET DEADLINES AND SCHEDULES

Preparation of the annual budget will be scheduled in stages throughout the school year with attention to certain deadlines established by law and the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District agreement.

The calendar year for budget preparation will be determined by calculating backwards from the final adoption date as prescribed by law and the regional agreement. Dependent on the date thus set, the Committee will adopt a tentative operating and maintenance budget and will hold any public hearing on the budget that is required by law before adopting the final operating and maintenance budget.

BUDGET PLANNING

The major portion of income for the operation of the public schools is derived from local property taxes, and the School Committee will attempt to protect the valid interest of the taxpayers. However, the first priority in the development of an annual budget will be the educational welfare of the students in our schools.

Budget decisions reflect the attitude and philosophy of those charged with the responsibility for educational decision-making. Therefore, a sound budget development process must be established to ensure that the annual operating budget accurately reflects this school system's goals and objectives.

In the budget planning process for the school system, the School Committee will strive to:

1. Engage in thorough advance planning, with staff and community involvement, in order to develop budgets and guide expenditures in a manner that will achieve the greatest educational returns and contributions to the educational program in relation to dollars expended.
2. Establish levels of funding that will provide high quality education for all our students.
3. Use the best available techniques for budget development and management.

The Superintendent-Director will have overall responsibility for budget preparation, including the construction of, and adherence to, a budget calendar.

BUDGET ADOPTION PROCEDURES

The annual Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School budget, as adopted by two-thirds vote of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee, shall require the approval of two-thirds of the local appropriating authorities of the member municipalities.

In the event the regional school budget is not approved by at least two-thirds of the member municipalities as required, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee shall have thirty days to reconsider, amend and resubmit a budget on the basis of the issues raised.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. Ch. 71:16B

BUDGET TRANSFER AUTHORITY

In keeping with the need for periodic reconciliation of the school department's budget, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee will consider requests for transfers of funds as they are recommended by the Superintendent-Director.

The Committee wishes to be kept abreast of the need for these adjustments so that it may act promptly and expedite financial record keeping for the school district.

All funds in the general account not expended by the close of the fiscal year will be placed in an Excess and Deficiency fund not to exceed five percent of the operating budget of the upcoming fiscal year. Any added funds shall be returned to the member municipalities as outlined in M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 16B1/2.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 71:16B1/2

MANAGEMENT OF CAPITAL RESERVES

Investment Policy

The District Treasurer recognizes that the Assabet community has an investment tolerance for risk that ranges from conservative to moderate. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to consider this tolerance level whenever evaluating or assessing an investment opportunity. The District Treasurer recognizes the value of an investment program that is predicated on the premise of security, liquidity and yield. It is also the Treasurer's responsibility to constantly explore a variety of investment opportunities in order to maximize any current or future investments. All monies not required to be liquid shall be invested in such a manner that provides the highest possible rate of return reasonably available, taking account of safety and liquidity. The investment policy must be carefully crafted to insure that it is in compliance with State and Federal regulations. The District Treasurer will have the responsibility to oversee, manage, or execute the district's investment strategies.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 44:54 & 55

FUNDING PROPOSALS AND APPLICATIONS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School Committee will encourage the administration to seek and secure possible sources of state, federal, and other special funds that will enhance the educational opportunities for the students in our school.

The Superintendent-Director will keep informed of possible funds available to the school system under the various state and federal programs, and in what manner these funds can best be used in the school system.

The Superintendent-Director will be responsible for seeking out and coordinating the development of proposals for all specially funded projects and for submitting the proposals to the Committee for approval.

The Superintendent-Director is authorized to sign all reports for these projects and will be responsible for the proper expenditure of funds received for such projects.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 44:53A
 P.L. 874 Impact Aid
 Board of Education 603 CMR 32:00; 34:00

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURES

The Treasurer is authorized to sign check withdrawals and to sign the appropriate bank forms for the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:16A

BONDED EMPLOYEES AND OFFICERS

Each employee of the school district or School Committee member who is assigned the responsibility of receiving and dispensing school funds will be bonded individually or covered by a blanket bond. The cost of the bond will be paid by the District.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:16A

FISCAL ACCOUNTING AND REPORTING

The Superintendent-Director will be ultimately responsible for receiving and properly accounting for all funds of the school system.

The accounting system used will conform with state requirements and with good accounting practices, providing for the appropriate separation of accounts, funds, and special monies.

The School Committee will receive periodic financial statements from the Superintendent-Director showing the financial condition of the school department. Such other financial statements as may be determined necessary by either the Committee or the administration will be presented as found desirable.

LEGAL REF.: Board of Education 603 CMR 10:00

CAPITAL EQUIPMENT PURCHASES

Capital equipment is any one piece of equipment with a useful life of five years or longer and dollar value over \$5,000.

Capital equipment shall be purchased from the acquisition of fixed assets (7000) portion of the school district budget.

In the Spring of every school year, a capital equipment request form shall be distributed to every department from the Business Office. This form will require a listing of the department's five most important requests in order of priority.

The Business Office will review all requests with the Director of Academic Programs and the Director of Technical Programs.

The factors in granting capital requests shall be based on educational purpose, department priority and available funding.

All vocational capital equipment purchases over \$5,000 must be recommended by the department's Advisory Committee.

A five-year school wide capital list shall be prepared by the Business Manager, approved by the Superintendent-Director, and kept in the Business Office.

AUDITS

An audit of the school department's accounts shall be conducted annually.

Upon the completion of each audit, a report thereon shall be made to the School Committee, and a copy sent to the Chairperson of the Selectmen or City Council in the member municipalities.

The Committee will consider recommendations made by the auditor for maintaining an efficient system for recording and safeguarding the school department's assets.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:16E

UNDESIGNATED FUND BALANCE POLICY
(AKA EXCESS AND DEFICIENCY FUND)

In accordance with M.G.L. Ch:71 s. 16B ¹/₂ and 603 CMR 41.06, all regional school districts shall maintain an Excess & Deficiency Fund. The fund balance cannot exceed 5% of the upcoming fiscal year budget.

Such fund is held as a cash reserve for emergency-type expenses or to fund a portion of the upcoming fiscal year budget with approval of member municipal appropriating authorities.

It shall be the goal of this district to manage its finances in a way that targets an undesignated fund balance of between 4% and 5% to maintain an adequate cash reserve.

Each year, after certification of the district's Excess & Deficiency Fund by the Department of Revenue, the School Committee shall receive a report of the fund balance.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:16B ¹/₂
 603 CMR 41.06

PURCHASING

The School Committee declares its intention to purchase competitively without prejudice and to seek maximum educational value for every dollar expended.

The acquisition of materials, equipment and services will be centralized in the Superintendent-Director's office of the school system.

The Director of Business Operations will serve as purchasing agent. He/she will develop and administer the purchasing program for the schools in keeping with legal requirements and with the adopted school budget.

School purchases will be made only on official purchase orders approved for issuance by the appropriate unit head and signed by the Director of Business Operations, with such exceptions as may be made by the latter for emergency purchases.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 7:22A; 7:22B; 30B; 71:49A

INCOME FROM SCHOOL SHOP SALES AND SERVICES

Through certain vocational activities, students provide goods and services at a charge to the public. These activities are designed for educational purposes, not to make a profit or to be competitive with business in the community.

The money collected will be deposited in a special revenue revolving account and expended according to state law and regulation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:17A

BIDDING REQUIREMENTS

All purchases of materials and equipment and all contracts for construction or maintenance will conform to the requirements of MGL Chapter 30B.

An effort will be made to procure multiple bids for all purchases in excess that meet the bid threshold as outlined in MGL Chapter 30B. When recommending acceptance of a bid, the Superintendent-Director will inform the School Committee, whenever possible, of the competitive price of a reasonable substitute for the item specified.

When bidding procedures are used, bids will be advertised appropriately. Suppliers will be invited to have their names placed on mailing lists to receive invitations to bid. When specifications are prepared, they will be mailed to all merchants and firms who have indicated an interest in bidding.

All bids will be submitted in sealed envelopes, addressed to the Superintendent-Director and plainly marked with the name of the bid and the time of the bid opening. Bids will be opened in public at the time specified, and all bidders will be invited to be present.

The Committee reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to accept the bid that appears to be in the best interest of the school system. The Committee reserves the right to waive any informality in, or reject, any or all bids or any part of any bid. Any bid maybe withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for the opening of the bids. Any bid received after the time and date specified will not be considered. All bids will remain firm for a period of 30 days after opening.

The bidder to whom an award is made may be required to enter into a written contract with the school system.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [7:22A](#); [7:22B](#); [30B](#)

CROSS REF.: [DJA](#), Purchasing Authority

ACCESS POLICES FOR 403b VENDORS

The following policies are established to provide equitable and controlled access to Assabet staff by 403b vendors.

1. Only vendors who are on the district's *Approved Vendor List* are allowed controlled access. Vendors are approved by the Director of Business Operations.
2. All approved vendors will be invited to have a table at the district's annual benefits fair each spring.
3. Approved vendors are allowed to have a table in front of the Teachers' Cafe **twice per school year** from 10:30am to 1:00pm.
4. Approved vendors may meet on school property with staff members who are their customers **by appointment only** before or after school/work hours (before 7:45am or after 3:00pm). Vendors must sign-in at the Reception Desk and wear a visitor badge while in the building.
5. Vendors may not place any printed/marketing materials into teacher mailboxes nor will district staff do so. Vendors may not leave printed/marketing materials anywhere on school property.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

All claims for payment from the School District's funds will be processed in accordance with regulations developed by the Superintendent-Director. Payment will be authorized against invoices properly supported by approved purchase orders, with properly submitted vouchers, or in accordance with salaries and salary schedules approved by the School Committee.

As an operating procedure, the Committee will receive monthly lists of bills for payment from school department funds. The lists will be certified as correct and approved for payment by the School Committee. Actual invoices, statements, and vouchers will be available for inspection by the School Committee.

The Superintendent-Director will be responsible for assuring that budget allocations are observed and that total expenditures do not exceed the amount allocated in the budget for all items.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 41:41; 41:52 41:56

EXPENSE REIMBURSEMENTS

Personnel and school department officials who incur expenses in carrying out their authorized duties will be reimbursed by the school department upon submission of a properly completed and approved voucher and any supporting receipts required by the Superintendent-Director and/or his/her designee. Each individual request will be evaluated on the basis of its benefit to the school district.

When official travel by a personally owned vehicle is authorized, mileage payment will generally be made at the rate currently approved by the Internal Revenue Service.

Travel and expenses incurred by School Committee members must have prior approval of the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 44:58

SECTION E
SUPPORT SERVICES

EB	SAFETY PROGRAM
EBAB	PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY
EBB	FIRST AID
EBC	EMERGENCY PLANS
EBCD	EMERGENCY CLOSINGS
EBCFA	FACE MASKS
EC	BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT
ECA	BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY
ECAC	VANDALISM
ECAF	SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS
EDC	AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS
EEA	STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES
EEAA	WALKERS AND RIDERS
EEAE	SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM
EEAEA	BUS DRIVER REQUIREMENTS
EEAEA-1	DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS
EEAEC	STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES
EEAG	STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES
EEAJ	MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS
EFC	FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES

SAFETY PROGRAM

Accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences that can result in tragic consequences--bodily harm, loss of school time, property damage, legal action, and even fatality. The School Committee will guard against such occurrences by taking every possible precaution to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Committee will comply with safety requirements established by governmental authorities and will insist that its staff adhere to recommended safety practices as these pertain, for example, to the school plant, special areas of instruction, student transportation, school sports and occupational safety.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the schools. Instruction will include accident prevention as well as fire prevention; emergency procedures; traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety.

The Superintendent-Director will have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school system. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Efforts directed toward the prevention of accidents will succeed only to the degree that all staff members recognize that preventing accidents is a daily operational responsibility.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55C and Acts of 1985c 614 Sec 1
Board of Education 603 CMR 36:00

CROSS REFS.: EEAE, School Bus Safety Program
GBGB, Staff Personal Security and Safety
IHAM, Health Education
JLI, Student Safety

PEST MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District is committed to providing a safe and properly maintained environment for all staff, students and visitors. To achieve this end, the School District will implement integrated pest management procedures for its buildings and grounds.

The integrated pest management procedures shall include implementation of appropriate prevention and control strategies, notification of certain pesticide and herbicide uses, record keeping, education and evaluation.

Integrated pest management procedures will determine when to control pests and what method of control to choose. Strategies for managing pest populations will be influenced by the pest species, location and whether and at what population level its presence poses a threat to people, property or the environment. The full range of action alternatives, including no action, will always be considered.

I. OVERVIEW AND GOALS

- A. The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District shall develop and implement an integrated pest management program.
- B. An integrated pest management program is a pest control approach that emphasizes using a balanced combination of tactics (cultural, mechanical, biological, chemical) to reduce pests to a tolerable level while using pesticides and herbicides as a last resort to minimize health, environmental and economic risks.
- C. Pesticides and herbicides will be used only as a last resort, based on a review of all other available options.
- D. The integrated pest management program shall strive to:
 - 1. Reduce any potential human health hazard.
 - 2. Reduce loss or damage to school structures or property.
 - 3. Minimize the risk of pests from spreading in the community.
 - 4. Enhance the quality of facility use for school and community.
 - 5. Minimize health, environmental and economic risks.

II. RESTRICTIONS ON USE OF PESTICIDES AND HERBICIDES

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used, they must be classified as an EPA Category III or IV. Application of any pesticide or herbicide may be performed only by certified applicators.
- B. Application of pesticides and herbicides may only be accomplished during a school break or when the building will be clear of students for at least 48 hours.

III. NOTIFICATION OF PESTICIDE AND HERBICIDE USE

- A. When pesticides or herbicides are used outdoors, notice of their use will be provided to parent/guardians, staff and students and will also be posted in a common area.
- B. When pesticides and herbicides are used in a building, the site will provide a 48-hour pre-notification in the form of posting the product name, purpose, application date, time and method and the Material Safety Data Sheet on all entrance doors. A contact person will also be listed.
- C. In the event of an EPA registered pesticide or herbicide application in or around a building site during the school year or summer session, a notice (including the product name, purpose, contact person, and application date, time and method), will be sent home in writing with students in the affected building at least 5 days prior to application.

IV. RECORD-KEEPING

- A. The District will keep a record of pesticides and herbicides used, amounts and locations of treatments and will keep any Material Safety Data Sheets, product labels and manufacturer information on ingredients related to the application of the pesticides or herbicides.
- B. All records of pesticides and herbicides used and correspondence will be available for public review upon notice and during normal school hours.

V. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES AND EDUCATION

- A. Designated staff (School Nutrition, Buildings and Grounds, etc.) will participate in sanitation and pest exclusion procedure appropriate to their roles. For example: keeping doors closed, repairing cracks, removing food waste within 12 hours, keeping lids on garbage receptacles and keeping vegetation properly cut.
- B. Ongoing education of all appropriate District staff will be a priority to ensure a safe and clean environment.

LEGAL REF.: Chapter 85 of the Acts of 2000, "An Act to Protect Children and Families from Harmful Pesticides."

FIRST AID

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call the school physician.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the student to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

Procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent and/or family physician immediately.
3. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or principal may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.
4. The teacher or other staff member to whom a student is responsible at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.
5. All accidents to students and staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent-Director and, if the Superintendent-Director deems appropriate, to the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:55A; 71:56

CROSS REF.: JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY PLANS

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent-Director will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters.

The Superintendent-Director shall develop, in consultation with school nurses, school physicians, athletic coaches, trainers, and local police, fire and emergency personnel, an Emergency Medical Response Plan for the district. The Plan shall include:

1. A method establishing a rapid communications system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities, to local Emergency Medical Services along with protocols to clarify when EMS and other emergency contacts will be called.
2. A determination of EMS response times to any location on the campus.
3. A list of relevant contacts with telephone numbers and a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of experts to help with post-event support.
4. A method to efficiently direct EMS personnel to any location on campus, including the location of available rescue equipment.
5. Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the school campus.
6. A method of providing access to training in CPR and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other school staff which may include CPR training for High School students; provided that School Committees may opt out of instruction in CPR pursuant to Section 1 of Chapter 71.
7. In the event the school possesses Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), the location of all available AEDs, whether the location is fixed or portable, and a list of personnel trained in its use.

The Superintendent shall annually review the response sequence with local police and fire officials and submit to the DESE at least every 3 years by September 1 or when changes occur. Plans must be updated in the case of new construction or other physical changes to the school campus.

Building Principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills and Emergency Response drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 69:8A
Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000
Section 7 of Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014

CROSS REF.: EBCD, Emergency Closings
JL, Student Welfare
JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent-Director may close the school or dismiss it early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent-Director has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible.

In making the decision to close school, the Superintendent-Director will consider many factors, including the following principle ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the students:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of school difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

The Superintendent-Director will weigh these factors and take action to close the school only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, parents and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When the school is closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with School Committee policy in reporting for work.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:4; 71:4A

CROSS REF.: EBC, Emergency Plans

FACE COVERINGS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District is committed to providing a safe environment in schools during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Maintaining a safe environment is critical to the District's ability to ensure students remain in a full-time classroom learning environment.

According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks or face coverings. Therefore, in accordance with guidance and recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth is strongly recommended to be worn by individuals who remain unvaccinated or are otherwise immunocompromised in school buildings, and on school grounds, even when social distancing is observed.

Individuals who are vaccinated are not required to wear a mask, but may do so if desired.

Students and staff returning from 5-day quarantine following a positive COVID test must follow strict mask use, other than when eating, drinking, or outside, and conduct active monitoring for symptoms, through day 10 of exposure.

Masks will be required in all school health offices.

All students and staff may be required to wear a mask on school buses based on local, state, or federal agency mandates.

The Assabet Valley RVSD reserves the right, as directed by the Superintendent-Director and with support of the AVRVD School Committee, to reinstate a required mask mandate due to an increase in COVID cases/transmission and/or as a requirement from local, state, or federal agencies.

Guidance Statements: Massachusetts Department of Public Health

[https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements - mask-requirements-in-certain-locations-https://search.mass.gov/?q=school+health+offices](https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-mask-requirements-mask-requirements-in-certain-locations-https://search.mass.gov/?q=school+health+offices)

Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Guidance for Covid-19 Prevention in K-12 Schools Updated January 13, 2022.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education – Fall 2021 Covid-19 Guidance Updated February 9, 2022

<https://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/on-desktop/2022-0209mask-requirement-update.pdf>

SOURCE: MASC – February 10, 2022

PROPOSED: 8/25/2020	APPROVED: 9/15/2020
REVISED: 9/1/2021	APPROVED: 9/28/2021
REVISED: 2/15/2022	APPROVED: 2/15/2022

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MANAGEMENT

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District School Committee's most important function is to provide for the education of its students, and it recognizes that the education of its students is dependent upon many factors, including a proper physical environment that is safe, clean, sanitary, and as comfortable and convenient as the facilities will permit or the use requires.

The supervision over the care and safekeeping of property used by the school department will be the general responsibility of the Superintendent-Director. He/she will work with member communities, as necessary, to develop a comprehensive and well-defined plan for the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of all school buildings and grounds to ensure that the school is equally well maintained, equipped, and staffed.

The Superintendent-Director will establish procedures and employ such means as may be necessary to provide accurate information in regard to the nature, condition, location, and value of all property used by the school department; to safeguard the property against loss, damage, or undue depreciation; to recover and restore to usefulness any property that may be lost, stolen or damaged; and to do all things necessary to ensure the proper maintenance, cleanliness, and safekeeping of school property.

Within the school, the building administrator will be responsible for proper care, maintenance, and cleanliness of building, equipment and grounds.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:68

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SECURITY

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District school building and grounds are one of the greatest investments of the member municipalities. It is deemed in the best interest of the school department and municipalities to protect the investment adequately.

Security should mean not only maintenance of a secure (locked) building, but protection from fire hazards and faulty equipment, and safe practices in the use of electrical, plumbing, and heating equipment. The Committee expects close cooperation with fire and law enforcement departments and with insurance company inspectors.

Access to school buildings and grounds outside of regular school hours will be limited to personnel whose work requires it. An adequate key control system will be established, which will limit access to buildings to authorized personnel and will safeguard against the chance of entrance to buildings by unauthorized persons.

Funds and valuable records will be kept in a safe place and under lock and key.

Protective devices designed to be used as safeguards against illegal entry and vandalism will be installed when appropriate to the individual situation. Employment of security personnel may be approved in situations where special risks are involved.

VANDALISM

The School Committee recognizes that acts of vandalism committed against public and private property are costly and require positive action through educational programs. Consequently, the Committee will support various programs aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism.

Every citizen of the member municipalities, staff members, students, and members of the police department are urged by the School Committee to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property under control of the school district, and the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible. Each employee will report to the Principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her and, if known, the names of those responsible.

The Superintendent-Director is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press the charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate, as he/she sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Parents and students will be made aware of the legal implications involved. Reimbursement will be sought for all or part of any damages.

SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, visitors, and facilities. Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means minimizing fire hazards, reducing the possibility of faulty equipment, keeping records and valuables in a safe place, protection against vandalism and burglary, the prosecution of vandals, and developing crisis plans.

School facilities and their contents, constitute one of the greatest investments of the member communities. The School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of students and taxpayers for the district to exert every reasonable means to protect the investment adequately.

In pursuit of this objective, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras in school district buildings and on its property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property. Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent-Director in consultation with school officials as well as local law enforcement and emergency response agencies. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks and appropriate signage that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent-Director shall ensure that proper procedures are in place and are followed regarding use, viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district. All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent-Director/designee, School Principal/designee). Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee.

The Superintendent-Director may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws and this policy.

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS

The School Committee wishes to be of assistance, whenever possible, to other municipal departments and community organizations. Therefore, permission to use school equipment may be granted by the Superintendent-Director upon request by responsible parties or organizations.

Staff members may use school equipment when the use is related to their school employment, and by students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent-Director to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The major purpose of the school's transportation services is to aid students in getting to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

The school will contract for transportation services. The School Committee will award contracts on a competitive bid basis. Bus contractors and taxi contractors, who will be held responsible for the safe operation of school vehicles, will comply with all applicable state laws and regulations, including but not limited to:

1. Specifications for school bus design and equipment
2. Inspection of buses
3. Qualifications and examinations of bus drivers
4. Driving regulations
5. Small vehicle requirements, if applicable
6. Insurance coverage
7. Adherence to local regulations and directives as specified in bid contracts

The Director of Business Operations, working with the bus contractor and other appropriate administrators, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops, and all other matters relative to the transportation program.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A, B and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A;
71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1; 76:12Bi; 76:14

CROSS REF.: EEAA, Walkers and Riders

WALKERS AND RIDERS

Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school at the expense of the public schools when such transportation conforms to applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws. Reimbursement to the school district for transportation costs is given by the Commonwealth only for (a) students living at least one and one half miles from school, (b) students who live more than one mile from the nearest bus stop, and (c) students with special needs for whom transportation must be provided.

Exceptions to these guidelines may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent-Director. This will apply particularly to any student who must travel in a hazardous area to and from school. These students will be transported regardless of the mileage limits listed.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A; 71:68; 71B:5

CROSS REF.: EEA, Student Transportation Services

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Students will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport students will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986
M.G.L. 90:1 et seq.; 713:2; 713:7L
Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17

CROSS REF.: EB, Safety Program

BUS DRIVER REQUIREMENTS

The Superintendent-Director and/or his/her designee will reserve the right to approve or disapprove persons employed by the bus contractor to drive school transportation vehicles.

1. Courteous and careful drivers will be required.
2. The Superintendent-Director will obtain a state and national fingerprint background check for each driver.
3. No person under 18 years and only persons of high character will be allowed to operate school buses.
4. Only persons who are properly licensed by the state and have completed the driver-training program will be permitted to drive school buses.
5. At the request of the School District, the contractor will furnish a list of names of drivers and their safety records for the last three years.
6. The contractor will notify school officials as soon as possible of any change of bus drivers.

CROSS REFERENCE: ADDA, Background Checks

LEGAL REFS.: Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17
M.G.L. 90:7B; 90:8A; 90:8A ½

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING FOR SCHOOL BUS AND
COMMERCIAL VEHICLE DRIVERS**

The District shall adhere to federal law and Department of Transportation regulations requiring a drug and alcohol-testing program for school bus drivers and commercial vehicle drivers. Such testing will be conducted for five different situations: pre-employment, randomly, following an accident, following an authorization to return to duty, and upon reasonable suspicion that a driver is under the influence of alcohol or using drugs.

The District will comply with Department of Transportation protocols regarding the collection and testing necessary to establish whether alcohol or drugs are present in the driver's system, and regulations will be established for the steps to be taken in the event that test results are positive.

This program shall comply with the requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations, Title 49, Section 382 et seq. The Superintendent-Director or designees shall adopt and enact procedures consistent with the federal regulations, defining the circumstances and procedures for testing.

LEGAL REF.: 49 U.S.C. sec. 2717 et seq. (Omnibus Transportation Employee Testing Act of 1991)
49C.F.R. Part 40 Procedures for Transportation Workplace and Drug and Alcohol
Testing Programs
49C.F.R. Part 382 Controlled Substance and Alcohol Use and Testing
49 C.F.R. Part 391 Qualification of Drivers

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

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

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

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

School buses will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when buses are not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. The activity has the approval of the Superintendent-Director.
2. The owner of the vehicle being used in transporting students must file evidence with the Superintendent-Director of personal liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,000 - \$300,000 or more.
3. The parents of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement to this effect.

MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles; and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below referenced regulations. The term "school grounds" shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the district to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such air intake system, unless the school district has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety or are not cost effective.

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District shall erect and maintain in a conspicuous location on school grounds "NO IDLING" signage as described below. All such signage shall contain appropriate sized font so as to be visible from a distance of 50 feet.

**NO IDLING
PENALTIES OF \$100 FOR FIRST OFFENSE AND \$500
FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES
M.G.L. C. 90, § 16B AND 540 CMR 27.00**

It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that each school bus driver employed by the school district and not by a school bus contractor shall, upon employment and at least once per year thereafter, sign a document acknowledging the receipt of copies of M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B and 540 CMR 27.00. The prohibitions contained in M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B shall be enforced by state or local law enforcement agencies.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. c. 71:37H, c. 90:16B and 540 CMR 27.00

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES

The school district will take part in the National School Lunch Program and other food programs that may become available to assure that all students in the schools receive proper nourishment.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, and in accordance with the wishes of the Committee, no student who a teacher believes is improperly nourished will be denied a free lunch or other food simply because proper application has not been received from his/her parents or guardians.

As required by state and federal regulations, the School Committee will approve a policy statement pertaining to eligibility for free milk, free meals, and reduced price meals.

LEGAL REFS.: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760)
 Child Nutrition Act of 1966, P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended
 M.G.L. 15:1G; 15:1L; 69:1C; 71:72

SECTION F

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT

FA FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

FF NAMING NEW FACILITIES

FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The School Committee believes that any educational program is influenced greatly by the environment in which its functions. The development of a quality educational program and school facilities that help to implement the program must go hand in hand.

Therefore, it is the Committee's goal to provide the facilities needed for the number of students in the school system, and to provide the kind of facilities that will best support and accommodate the educational program.

In planning facilities, the Committee recognizes that capital outlay funds are limited, and that priorities must be established to make the best use of the school building dollar. The Committee's first objective will be to develop a plan that eliminates overcrowding and minimizes the need for extended day programs and double sessions. Whenever possible, the cultural as well as educational needs of the member communities will be considered in planning facility expansions.

Architects retained by the Committee are expected to plan for simplicity of design; sound economics, including low long-range maintenance costs and efficiency in energy needs; low insurance rates; high educational use; and flexibility.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:07

NAMING NEW FACILITIES

Naming a school facility is an important matter that deserves thoughtful attention. Personal prejudice or favoritism, political pressure, or temporary popularity should not be an influence in choosing a name for a school, a portion of a school, or a portion of school grounds. Whenever possible, the wishes of the community, including parents and students, may be considered in naming school facilities.

The School Committee has the authority to approve the naming and renaming of buildings, structures, and facilities located on school property. The School Committee also has the authority to name subsections of existing structures or facilities, such as classrooms, auditoriums, and gymnasiums.

Names and/or wording associated with school facilities shall be consistent with school district policies and promote messages aligned with the mission, vision and goals of the school district. To the extent possible, names and/or wording should be designed not to restrict the use of a space or inhibit changing the function of the space should that become necessary in the future.

When the opportunity to name or dedicate a school related property, structure or facility is forthcoming, an orderly procedure will be communicated at a School Committee meeting. The Committee's agenda should clearly reflect the intent to consider, review, and vote on naming opportunities.

Submission of a name for a school space may be made to the Superintendent, in writing, and should be made to the School Committee Chair. If a name is being considered reasonable steps must be taken to include the School Council and other appropriate school related groups in the nomination of the name before submission to the School Committee.

Suggestions should be submitted in writing and specify the intent of the requestor and the reasons why this particular name would fit the facility. It should offer appropriate background information on the proposed name after which the facility may be named. An offer of a financial contribution to the School District may accompany the naming request, but the School Committee is not obligated to accept or reject a name based upon financial considerations alone. Philanthropic contributions in support of the School District are encouraged by the School Committee. The School Committee Chair will specify a consideration period that allows for public comment, following which the Committee will deliberate and vote on the name.

PROPOSED: October 16, 2018

APPROVED: November 13, 2018

REVISED:

M.G.L Ref:

SECTION G

PERSONNEL

GA	PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS
GBA	EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY
GBD	SCHOOL COMMITTEE – STAFF COMMUNICATIONS
GBEA	STAFF ETHICS/CONFLICT OF INTEREST
GBEB	STAFF CONDUCT
GBEBC	GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF
GBEC	DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY
GBED	TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS PROHIBITED
GBGB	STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY
GBI	STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES
GBJ	PERSONNEL RECORDS
GBK	STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES
GCA	PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS
GCBA	PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES
GCBB	EMPLOYMENT OF PRINCIPALS
GCBC	PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS
GCCC	FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE
GCCD	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

GCE	PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/ POSTING OF VACANCIES
GCF	PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING
GCG	SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT
GCIA	PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT
GCJ	PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS
GCK	PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS
GCO	EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF
GCQD	RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS
GCQE	RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS
GCQF	SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS
GCRD	TUTORING FOR PAY
GDA	SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS
GDB	SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS
GDD	SUPPORT STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS
GDO	EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF
GDQC	RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS
GDQD	SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

PERSONNEL POLICIES GOALS

The District's specific personnel goals are:

- To develop and implement those strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, and selection that will result in the employment and retention of individuals with the highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education, and greatest probability of effectively implementing the system's learning program.
- To develop a general staff assignment strategy that will contribute to the learning program, and to use it as the primary basis for determining staff assignments.
- To provide positive programs of staff development that contribute both to improvement of the learning program and to each staff member's career development aspirations.
- To provide for a genuine team approach to education.
- To develop and use for personnel evaluation positive processes that contribute to the improvement of both staff capabilities and the learning program.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:00

EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

The School Committee subscribes to the fullest extent to the principle of the dignity of all people and of their labors and will take action to ensure that any individual within the District who is responsible for hiring and/or personnel supervision understands that applicants are employed, assigned, and promoted without regard to their race, religion, color, age, sex, gender identity, national origin, disability or sexual orientation. Every available opportunity will be taken in order to assure that each applicant for a position is selected on the basis of qualifications, merit and ability.

LEGAL REF.: BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26:00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

SCHOOL COMMITTEE-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Although the School Committee wishes to maintain open channels of communication between itself and the staff. The basic line of communication will however, be through the Superintendent-Director.

Staff Communications to the School Committee

All communications or reports to the Committee or any of its subcommittees from Principals, supervisors, teachers, or other staff members will be submitted through the Superintendent-Director. This procedure does not deny the right of any employee to appeal to the Committee for administrative decisions on important matters, except those matters that are outside of the Committee's legal authority, provided the Superintendent-Director has been notified of the forthcoming appeal and that it is processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on complaints and grievances. Staff members are also reminded that Committee meetings are public meetings. As such, they provide an excellent opportunity to observe first-hand the Committee's deliberations on problems of staff concern.

School Committee Communications to Staff

All official communications, policies, and directives of staff interest and concern will be communicated to staff members through the Superintendent-Director. The Superintendent-Director will develop appropriate methods to keep staff fully informed of the Committee's problems, concerns and actions.

Visits to the School

Individual School Committee members interested in visiting classrooms will inform the Superintendent-Director of such visits and make arrangements for visitations through the Principal. Such visits will be regarded as informal expressions of interest in school affairs and not as "inspections" or visits for supervisory or administrative purposes. Official visits by Committee members will be carried on only under Committee authorization.

STAFF ETHICS / CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The School Committee expects members of its professional staff to be familiar with the code of ethics that applies to their profession and to adhere to it in their relationships with students, parents, coworkers, and officials of the school system.

No employee of the District will engage in or have a financial interest in, directly or indirectly, any activity that conflicts or raises a reasonable question of conflict with his duties and responsibilities in the school system. Nor will any staff member engage in any type of private business during school time or on school property.

Employees will not engage in work of any type where information concerning customer, client, or employer originates from any information available to them through school sources.

Moreover, as there should be no conflict of interest in the supervision and evaluation of employees, at no time may any administrator responsible for the supervision and/or evaluation of an employee be directly related to him/her.

In order to avoid the appearance of any possible conflict, it is the policy of the School Committee that when an immediate family member, as defined in the Conflict of Interest statute, of a School Committee member or district administrator is to be hired into or promoted within the School District, the Superintendent-Director shall file public notice with the School Committee and the Town or District Clerk at least two weeks prior to executing the hiring in accordance with the law.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:52; 268A:1 et seq.

STAFF CONDUCT

All staff members have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with and abide by the laws of the State as these affect their work, the policies of the School Committee, and the regulations designed to implement them.

In the area of personal conduct, the Committee expects that teachers and others will conduct themselves in a manner that not only reflects credit to the school system but also sets forth a model worthy of emulation by students.

All staff members will be expected to carry out their assigned responsibilities with conscientious concern.

Essential to the success of ongoing school operations and the instructional program are the following specific responsibilities, which will be required of all personnel:

- Faithfulness and promptness in attendance at work.
- Support and enforcement of policies of the Committee and their implementing regulations and school rules in regard to students.
- Diligence in submitting required reports promptly at the times specified.
- Care and protection of school property.
- Concern for and attention to their own and the school system's legal responsibility for the safety and welfare of students, including the need to ensure that students are under supervision at all times.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 264:11; 264:14

GIFTS TO AND SOLICITATIONS BY STAFF

Gifts

The acceptance of gifts worth \$50 or more by school personnel in a calendar year when the gift is given because of the position they hold, or because of some action the recipient could take or has taken in his or her public role, violates the conflict of interest law. Acceptance of gifts worth less than \$50, while not prohibited by the conflict of interest law, may require a written public disclosure to be made.

In keeping with this policy, no employee of the school district will accept a gift worth \$50 or more that is given because of the employee's public position, or anything that the employee could do or has done in his or her public position. Gifts worth less than \$50 may be accepted, but a written disclosure to the employee's appointing authority must be made if the gift and the circumstances in which it was given could cause a reasonable person to think that the employee could be improperly influenced. The value of personal gifts accepted is aggregated over a calendar year (4 gifts of \$20 value is the same as 1 gift of \$80 if given in the same calendar year).

In general, homemade gifts without retail value are permissible because a reasonable person would not expect an employee would unduly show favor to the giver, so no disclosure is required. Such gifts could include homemade food items (cookies, candy, etc.), handpicked flowers, and handmade gifts worth less than \$10 (ten) dollars.

Class Gifts

There is a specific exception to the prohibition against accepting gifts worth \$50 or more, when the teacher knows only that the gift is from the class, not from specific donors. A single class gift per calendar year valued up to \$150 or several class gifts in a single year with a total value up to \$150 from parents and students in a class may be accepted provided the gift is identified only as being from the class and the names of the givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. The recipient may not accept an individual gift from someone who contributed to the class gift. It is the responsibility of the employee to confirm that the individual offering such gift did not contribute to the class gift.

Gifts for School Use

Gifts given to a teacher solely for classroom use or to purchase classroom supplies are not considered gifts to an individual employee and are not subject to the \$50 limit. However, an employee who accepts such gifts must keep receipts documenting that money or gift cards were used for classroom supplies.

Solicitations

In spirit, the School Committee supports the many worthwhile charitable drives that take place in the community and is gratified when school employees give them their support. However, the solicitation of funds from staff members through the use of school personnel and school time is prohibited by the conflict of interest law. Therefore, no solicitations of funds for charitable purposes should be made among staff members. Staff members of course remain free to support charitable causes of their own selection.

Legal Ref: M.G.L. 268A:3; 268A:23; 930 CMR 5.00

CROSS REFS.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

PROPOSED: 6/5/18 APPROVED: 6/26/18
REVISED: APPROVED:

DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

The School District will provide a drug-free workplace and certifies that it will:

- Notify all employees in writing that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of a controlled substance, is prohibited in the District's workplace, and specify the actions that will be taken against employees for violation of such prohibitions.
- Establish a drug-free awareness program to inform employees about the dangers of drug abuse in the workplace; the District's policy of maintaining a drug-free work-place; and available drug counseling, rehabilitation, and employee assistance programs; and the penalty that may be imposed on employees for drug abuse violations occurring in the workplace.
- Make it a requirement that each employee whose employment is funded by a federal grant be given a copy of the statement as required.
- Notify the employee in the required statement that as a condition of employment under the grant, the employee will abide by the terms of the statement, and will notify the District of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the workplace no later than five days after such conviction.
- Notify the federal agency within ten days after receiving notice from an employee or otherwise receiving notice of such conviction.
- Take one of the following actions within 30 days of receiving notice with respect to any employee who is so convicted; take appropriate personnel action against such an employee, up to and including termination; or require such employee to participate satisfactorily in a drug abuse assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a federal, state or local health law enforcement, or other appropriate agency.
- Make a good faith effort to continue to maintain a drug-free workplace through implementation of all the provisions of this policy.

LEGAL REFS.: The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988

CROSS REFS.: JICH, Drug and Alcohol Use by Students

TOBACCO USE ON SCHOOL PROPERTY BY STAFF MEMBERS PROHIBITED

Smoking or the use of tobacco products within school buildings, the school facilities, on school property or buses and on off-campus work sites or field trips by any individual, including school personnel, is prohibited.

Staff members who violate this policy will be referred to their immediate supervisor.

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

STAFF PERSONAL SECURITY AND SAFETY

Through its overall safety program and various policies pertaining to school personnel, the Committee will seek to assure the safety of employees during their working hours and assist them in the maintenance of good health.

Employees offered a position as a custodian, maintenance worker or food service worker must successfully pass a pre-employment physical examination (provided at school district cost) prior to the date of employment.

The Superintendent-Director may require an employee to submit to a physical examination by a physician appointed by the school district whenever that employee's health appears to be a hazard to students or others in the school system or when a doctor's certificate is legally required to verify need for sick leave.

School employees, their families and members of their household are eligible to use the confidential services provided by the district's employee assistance program,

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:54; 71:55C

CROSS REFS.: EB, Safety Program

STAFF PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

The School Committee recognizes that employees of the school district have the same fundamental civic responsibilities and privileges as other citizens. Among these are campaigning for an elective public office and/or holding an elective or appointive office.

In connection with campaigning, an employee will not: use school district facilities, equipment or supplies; discuss his/her campaign with school personnel or students during the working day; use any time during the working day for campaigning purposes. Under no circumstances, will students be pressured into campaigning for any staff member.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:44

PERSONNEL RECORDS

Information about staff members is required for the daily administration of the school system, for implementing salary and other personnel policies, for budget and financial planning, for responding to appropriate inquiries about employees, and for meeting the School Committee's education reporting requirements. To meet these needs, the Superintendent-Director will implement a comprehensive and efficient system of personnel records maintenance and control under the following guidelines:

- A personnel folder for each present and former employee will be accurately maintained in the central administrative office. In addition to the application for employment and references, the folders will contain records and information relative to compensation, payroll deductions, evaluations, and any other pertinent information.
- The Superintendent-Director will be the official custodian for personnel files and will have overall responsibility for maintaining and preserving the confidentiality of the files within the provisions of the law.
- Personnel records are considered confidential under the law and will not be open to public inspection. Access to personnel files will be limited to persons authorized by the Superintendent-Director to use the files for the reasons cited above.
- Each employee will have the right, upon written request, to review the contents of his/her own personnel file.
- Employees may make written objections to any information contained in the file. Any written objection must be signed by the staff member and will become part of the employee's personnel file. Further, no negative comment will be placed in a staff member's file unless it is signed by the person making the comment and the staff member is informed of the comment and afforded the opportunity to include his/her written response in the file.
- Lists of school system employees' names and home addresses will be released only to governmental agencies as required for official reports or by the laws.

LEGAL REFS.: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, Sec. 438, P.L. 90-247
Title IV, as amended
88 Stat. 571-574 (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and regulations
M.G.L. 4:7; 71:42C
Teachers' Agreement

CONTRACT REF.: All Agreements

CROSS REF.: KDB, Public's Right to Know

STAFF COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee will encourage the administration to develop effective means of resolving differences that may arise among employees and between employees and administrators; reduce potential areas of grievances; and establish and maintain recognized channels of communication between the staff, administration, and School Committee.

It is the Committee's desire that grievance procedures provide for prompt and equitable adjustment of differences at the lowest possible administrative level, and that each employee be assured opportunity for an orderly presentation and review of complaints and concerns.

Channels established will provide for the following:

1. That teachers and other school employees may appeal a ruling of the Principal or other administrator to the Superintendent-Director.
2. That all school employees may appeal a ruling of the Superintendent-Director to the Committee, **except in those areas where the law has specifically assigned authority to the Principal and/or the Superintendent-Director and Committee action would be in conflict with that law.**
3. That all hearings of complaints before the Superintendent-Director or Committee be conducted in the presence of the administrator who made the ruling that is the subject of the grievance.

The process established for the resolution of grievances in contracts negotiated with recognized employee bargaining units will apply only to "grievances" as defined in the particular contract.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 150E:5 and 8

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contract Agreements

PROFESSIONAL STAFF POSITIONS

All professional staff positions in the school district will be approved initially by the School Committee. It is the Committee's intent to activate a sufficient number of positions to accomplish the school system's goals and objectives and to provide for equitable staffing. Although such positions may remain temporarily unfilled, only the Committee may abolish a position it has created.

In order to establish a new position, the Superintendent-Director will present for the Committee's approval a job description for the position, which specifies the jobholder's qualifications and the job's performance responsibilities. The Superintendent-Director will maintain a comprehensive set of job descriptions for all positions.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SALARY SCHEDULES

Teachers

The School Committee will adopt a salary schedule for regular teaching personnel as part of the contract negotiated with the teachers' bargaining unit. The schedule will be designed to recognize and reward training and experience and encourage additional study for professional advancement.

Principals

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The School Committee, with the advice of the Superintendent-Director, will establish levels of compensation for each position based on the circumstances, dynamics, and requirements of each position. Consideration may be given to individuals for exceptional performance as a basis for establishing merit increases for the Principal. It is the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director to present evidence to the School Committee to support recommendations for merit increases.

Administrators

Salaries will be reviewed annually prior to July 1. The Superintendent-Director may, upon the request of the Committee, survey other school systems to determine salaries being paid for comparable positions in each system. The survey will include the effective date of the specified salary.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:40; 71:43; 71:42B

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

EMPLOYMENT OF THE PRINCIPAL

The Principal shall be employed by the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District under an individual contract of employment. Said contract shall be submitted to the School Committee for its approval of all terms concerning compensation/benefits, prior to the presentation of a contract of employment to the Principal. The compensation/benefit levels, above referenced, may be exceeded only with the approval of the School Committee.

The initial contract issued to a Principal may be up to three years in length, and may be reissued by the Superintendent-Director at levels of compensation/benefits, determined by the School Committee, provided that the Superintendent-Director may employ the Principal under the terms and conditions of the previous contract of employment.

The length of second and subsequent contracts of employment for the Principal shall be in accordance with state law.

As a condition of employment, the Principal must maintain current certification, adhere to the policies and goals of the School Committee and the directives of the Superintendent-Director, and annually must submit, with the school council, the educational goals and school improvement plan for the school building under his/her direction.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:41; 71:59B

PROFESSIONAL STAFF SUPPLEMENTARY PAY PLANS

Certain assignments require extra responsibility or extra time over and above that required of other staff members who are on the same position on the basic salary schedule. When such supplemental assignments require extra time and responsibility beyond that regularly expected of teachers, they will be rewarded with extra compensation.

Assignments that are to be accorded extra compensation will be designated by the Committee. Appointments to these positions will be made by the Superintendent-Director for district-wide positions or by the Principal with the approval of the Superintendent-Director for building based personnel. The amount of compensation for the position will be established by the Committee at the time the position is created.

A teacher who is offered and undertakes a supplementary pay assignment will receive a supplementary contract specifying the pay, duration and terms of the assignment. If a teacher will not be extended the assignment for the following school year but will remain on the teaching staff, he or she will be so notified in writing prior to the expiration of the contract. Upon termination of the assignment, the supplementary pay will cease.

LEGAL REF.: Collective Bargaining Agreement

FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE

The School District shall comply with the mandatory provisions of the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993. The Superintendent-Director shall issue, and from time to time amend, regulations setting forth the rights and procedures granted by the Act, and shall ensure compliance with those regulations either personally or by delegation, or by some combination of personal oversight and delegation.

LEGAL REFS.: P.L. 103-3, "Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993"

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LEAVE POLICY

It shall be the policy of the school district to permit an employee to take up to 15 days of domestic violence leave from work in any 12 month period. In order to be eligible for said leave:

- (i) the employee , or a family member of the employee must be a victim of abusive behavior;
- (ii) the employee must be using the leave from work to seek or obtain medical attention, counseling, victim services or legal assistance; secure housing; obtain a protective order from court; appear before a grand jury; meet with a district attorney or other law enforcement official; or attend child custody proceedings or address other issues directly related to the abusive behavior against the employee or family member of the employee; and
- (iii) the employee must not be the perpetrator of the abusive behavior against such employee's family member.

This leave shall be paid or unpaid. An employee seeking such leave shall exhaust all annual or vacation leave, personal leave and sick leave available to the employee, prior to requesting or taking domestic violence leave, unless the employer waives this requirement.

Except in cases of imminent danger to the health or safety of an employee, advanced notice of domestic violence leave shall be required. If such imminent danger exists the employee shall notify the employer within 3 workdays that the leave was taken. The notification may be communicated to the employer by the employee, a family member of the employee or the employee's counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior. If an unscheduled absence occurs, an employer shall not take any negative action against the employee if the employee, within 30 days from the unauthorized absence or within 30 days from the employee's last unauthorized absence in the instance of consecutive days of unauthorized absences, provides any of the documentation found in (1) to (7) below. An employer may require documentation that the employee or employee's family member has been a victim of abusive behavior and that the leave is consistent with clauses (i) to (iii) as above referenced; provided, however, that an employer shall not require an employee to show evidence of an arrest, conviction or other law enforcement documentation for such abusive behavior. The documentation shall be provided to the employer within a reasonable period after the employer requests it.

An employee shall satisfy this documentation requirement by providing anyone of the following documents to the employer:

- (1) a protective order, order of equitable relief or other documentation issued by a court of competent jurisdiction as a result of abusive behavior against the employee or employee's family member;
- (2) a document under the letterhead of the court, provider or public agency which the employee attended for the purposes of acquiring assistance as it relates to the employee or family member;

- (3) A police report or statement of a victim or witness provided to police documenting the abusive behavior;
- (4) documentation that the perpetrator of the abusive behavior has admitted to sufficient facts to support a finding of guilt ; or has been convicted of , or has been adjudicated a juvenile delinquent by reason of any offense constituting abusive behavior;
- (5) medical documentation of treatment as a result of the abusive behavior;
- (6) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, provided by a counselor, social worker, health care worker, member of the clergy, , shelter worker, legal advocate or other professional who has assisted the employee in addressing the effects of the abusive behavior;
- (7) a sworn statement, signed under the penalties of perjury, from the employee attesting that the employee has been a victim of or is a family member of a victim of abusive behavior.

All information related to the employee's leave shall be kept confidential and shall not be disclosed, except to the extent that disclosure is:

- (i) requested or consented to, in writing, by the employee;
- (ii) ordered to be released by a court of competent jurisdiction;
- (iii) otherwise required by applicable federal or state law;
- (iv) required in the course of an investigation authorized by law enforcement, including, but not limited to, an investigation by the Attorney General; or
- (v) necessary to protect the safety of the employee or others employed at the workplace.

The Superintendent-Director shall ensure that notice is provided to all employees in the next school year and beyond by appropriately amending the district's employee handbooks, by whatever title they may be known, or by direct notice about the Domestic Violence Law and securing the employees signature acknowledging receipt of the handbook/notice. The Superintendent-Director shall be responsible for notifying all current employees, unless they have been notified through the handbook, of this policy in a manner that he/she deems appropriate.

No employer shall coerce, interfere with, restrain or deny the exercise of, or any attempt to exercise, any rights provided herein or to make leave requested or taken contingent upon whether or not the victim maintains contact with the alleged abuser. No employer shall discharge or in any other manner discriminate against an employee for exercising the employee's rights under law. The taking of domestic violence leave shall not result in the loss of any employment benefit accrued prior to the date of such leave. Upon the employee's return from such leave, he/she shall be entitled to restoration to the employee's original job or to an equivalent position. Definitions of "abuse", "abusive behavior", "domestic violence", "employees" and "family members" may be found in the laws referenced below.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 149:52E; Section 10
Chapter 260 of the Acts of 2014

PROFESSIONAL STAFF RECRUITING/POSTING OF VACANCIES

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director, with the assistance of the administrative staff, to determine the personnel needs of the school system and it is the responsibility of the Principal, in consultation with the Superintendent-Director, to determine the personnel needs of the individual schools. In addition, school councils may review personnel requirements as a means of evaluating the needs of a school. Any recommendations for the creation or elimination of a position must be approved by the School Committee.

The search for good teachers and other professional employees will extend to a wide variety of educational institutions and geographical areas. It will take into consideration the characteristics of the district and the need for a heterogeneous staff from various cultural backgrounds.

Recruitment procedures will not overlook the talents and potential of individuals already employed by the school system. Any current employee may apply for any position for which he or she has certification and meets other stated requirements.

Openings in the schools will be posted in sufficient time before the position is filled, in keeping with collective bargaining agreements, to permit current employees to submit applications.

LEGAL REFS.: Collective Bargaining Agreements

PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon identifying candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the students attending the schools.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director, and of persons to whom he or she delegates this responsibility, to determine the personnel needs of the school district and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the School Committee. The district's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the students.

It will be the duty of the Superintendent-Director to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the Committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to age, sex, religion, race, color, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or place of residence.
2. The quality of instruction will be enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience.
3. The administrator responsible for the hiring of a staff member (in the case of District-wide positions or for the position of Principal, it is the Superintendent-Director; for building-based personnel, it is the Principal) is directed to establish a representative screening committee. The administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is expected that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [69:6](#); [71:38](#); [71:38G](#); [71:39](#); [71:45](#); [71:55B](#)
Massachusetts Board of Education Requirements for Certification of Teachers, Principals, Supervisors, Directors, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents in the Public Schools of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, revised 1994
603 CMR [7:00](#) and [44:00](#)

SUBSTITUTE PROFESSIONAL STAFF EMPLOYMENT

The school system will employ as substitute teachers, to the extent possible, persons who meet the requirements for teacher appointments and will assign teachers substitute-teaching positions on the basis of their areas of competence. When the supply of potential substitutes in a particular subject area is too limited to meet school department needs, there will be active recruitment for substitutes in those areas. All substitute teachers will be expected to provide educational services, rather than to assume merely a student-supervisory role. They will be provided with as much support as possible by building administrators and teachers.

The School Committee will set the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers, including extended-term substitutes. The latter will be granted such additional benefits as approved by the School Committee.

PHILOSOPHY OF STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All staff members will be encouraged in and provided with suitable opportunities for the development of increased competencies beyond those they may attain through the performance of their assigned duties and assistance from supervisors.

Opportunities for professional growth may be provided through such means as the following:

1. Planned in-service programs and workshops offered within the school system from time to time; these may include participation by outside consultants.
2. Membership on curriculum development committees drawing personnel from within and without the school system.
3. Released time for visits to other classrooms and schools and for attendance at conferences, workshops, and other professional meetings.
4. Leaves of absence for graduate study, research, and travel.
5. Partial payment of tuition for approved courses.

The Superintendent-Director will have authority to approve or deny released time for conferences and visitations and reimbursements for expenses, provided such activities are within budget allocations for the purpose.

PROFESSIONAL TEACHER STATUS

Teachers and certain other professional employees who have served in the School District for three consecutive years shall be entitled to professional teacher status. The Superintendent-Director, upon recommendation of the Principal, may award such status to a teacher who has served in the Principal's school for not less than one year or a teacher who has obtained such status in any other public school district in the Commonwealth. The Superintendent-Director will base his/her decisions on the results of evaluation procedures conducted according to Committee policy.

At the end of each of the first three years of a teacher's employment, it will be the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director to notify each employee promptly in writing of the decision on reappointment. Notification to a teacher not being reappointed must be made by June 15 or at an earlier date if required by a collective bargaining agreement.

A teacher who attains professional teacher status will have continuous employment in the service of the school system. A teacher with professional teacher status whose position is abolished by the School Committee may be continued in the employ of the school system in another position for which he/she is legally qualified.

Nothing in these provisions will be considered as restricting the Superintendent-Director from changing teaching assignments or altering or abolishing supervisory assignments except that, by law, no teacher may be assigned to a position for which he/she is not legally qualified.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38; 71:38G; 71:38H; 71:41; 71:42; 71:43; 71:42B

PROFESSIONAL STAFF ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

The basic consideration in the assignment of professional staff members will be the needs of the students and the instructional program.

Therefore, the assignment and transfer of professional staff members will be accomplished by the Superintendent-Director on the basis of the employee's qualifications, the needs of the school system, and the employees' expressed desires.

Care will be exercised by the Superintendent-Director to assure that the school is staffed with effective teachers.

Within the school, the Principal will have the authority to assign classes and courses, provided this is done with full regard for the teacher's area of certification and the policies delineated above.

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In order to assure a high quality of teacher and administrator performance and to advance the instructional programs of the schools, a continuous program for teacher and administrator evaluation will be established by the School Committee. Regular reports will be made to the Superintendent-Director concerning the outcomes of these evaluations.

The evaluation process will include:

1. The development and periodic review of techniques and procedures for making evaluations.
2. Interpretation of the information gained in the evaluative process in terms of the objectives of the instructional program.
3. The application of the information gained to the planning of staff development and in-service training activities, which are designed to improve instruction and increase teacher competence.

The evaluation process will include self-evaluation, supervisor initiated observations, and teacher initiated observations.

The formal evaluations will be written and will be discussed by the supervisor and the person being evaluated. The discussions may either precede or follow the writing of the evaluation document. Copies of the written document will be signed by both parties and incorporated into the personnel files of the teacher or administrator. In addition, the individual and his department chairman (if applicable) will receive a signed copy. The signature should indicate that the evaluation has been read and discussed.

The written evaluation should be specific in terms of the person's strengths and weaknesses. Those areas where improvement is needed should be clearly set forth and recommendations for improvement should be made. Subsequent evaluations should address themselves to any improvement or to any continuing difficulty that is observed.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:38; 71:38Q; 150E; 152B
603 CMR 35:00

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Agreement

RESIGNATION OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Professional staff members may discontinue their service in the school system during the school year by submitting a written notice of intent to resign to the appropriate hiring authority.

Such written notice of intent to resign will be given to the Superintendent-Director. The staff member will be notified in writing of the Superintendent-Director's action on the resignation.

When a resignation is accepted by the Superintendent-Director the employee may be expected to continue in service at his or her assigned duties for a period of 30 days after submission of the resignation.

RETIREMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

Annually, the Superintendent-Director will inform the Committee of the professional staff members who have indicated their intention to retire at the end of the current school year. No further School Committee action is necessary unless approval is needed for the payment of or participation in continued local benefits.

LEGAL REF.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256

CONTRACT REF.: Teachers' Contract

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF MEMBERS

The Superintendent-Director will strive to assist personnel to perform their duties efficiently. However, the Superintendent-Director may dismiss any employee in accordance with state law. Further, the Committee recognizes the constitutional rights of the District's employees and assures them the protection of due process of law. To guarantee such rights, a system of constitutionally and legally sound procedures will be followed in each case of suspension or dismissal of an employee.

When the Superintendent-Director or a Principal determines that sufficient cause exists that a professional employee be suspended or dismissed from service in the school system, he or she will:

1. Be certain that each such case is supported by defensible records.
2. Determine if the individual is to be suspended immediately with the understanding that the suspension will be subject to restoration of salary and position if an appeal is decided in favor of the individual.
3. Follow the procedures for dismissal or suspension that are contained in applicable laws as well as those included in the current agreement with the teachers' bargaining unit.
4. Provide the individual involved with a written statement that will:
 - a. Indicate whether the action the Superintendent-Director is taking is dismissal or suspension.
 - b. State the reason for the suspension or dismissal.
 - c. Guarantee that all procedures will be in accordance with due process of law.
 - d. Inform employees who have a right to request a hearing under appropriate laws that they may be represented at such a hearing by counsel of their choice.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:42; 71:42D

TUTORING FOR PAY

Definition: "Tutoring" means giving private instruction or help to an individual or group for which the teacher receives remuneration other than through the school district.

A teacher cannot recommend that one of his or her own students get tutoring, and then be paid to tutor that same student in a second job.

A teacher may not tutor students who are currently in his/her class. Even if the teacher does not recommend that the current student receive private tutoring, the teacher should not tutor current students.

Teachers and other public employees may not approach a student, or the student's parents, seeking private tutoring work. A teacher may provide tutoring when the relationship is initiated by the parents or a student, but, if the student is, or in the future may be, under the teacher's authority, the teacher will need to provide a written disclosure.

A teacher cannot use school resources such as classrooms or materials in connection with a private tutoring business. A public school employee cannot use a school or district website to advertise private tutoring services. Schools cannot send home brochures for a particular tutoring service with the children.

Tutoring is not to be recommended for a student unless the appropriate teacher of the student involved is consulted and agrees that it will be of real help. If tutoring seems advisable, the Principal may give the parents a list of persons who are willing to tutor. This list may include teachers, but not the student's teacher of the subject in which he or she is to be tutored.

Tutoring for pay is not to be done in the school building.

LEGAL REF: M. G. L. 268A Mass. Ethics Commission FAQs for Public School Teachers

SUPPORT STAFF POSITIONS

Education is a cooperative enterprise in which all employees of the school system must participate intelligently and effectively for the benefit of the students. This school district will employ support staff members in positions that function to support the education program.

All support staff positions will be established initially by the Committee. In each case, the Superintendent-Director will submit for the Committee's consideration and action a job description or job specifications for the position.

Although positions may remain temporarily unfilled or the number of persons holding the same type of position reduced in event of de-staffing requirements, only the Committee may abolish a position.

SUPPORT STAFF CONTRACTS AND COMPENSATION PLANS

In establishing rates of pay and levels of compensation for support staff personnel, the School Committee will take into account the responsibilities of the position, the qualifications needed, past experience of the individual, and years of service in the school department.

Compensation plans will be reviewed annually for all categories of staff. Such review, where applicable, will be carried out in connection with negotiations with representatives of recognized bargaining units. The master agreements with these units will be considered appendices to this manual and will have the full force of School Committee policy.

The School Committee will set the rates of pay for personnel not covered by collective bargaining agreements.

Overtime

Support staff employees will be paid overtime wages for work performed in excess of 40 hours in a work week.

Every effort must be made to minimize overtime by scheduling duties during the regular workday. Overtime will be authorized only by the Superintendent-Director and only to cover emergency situations. All such work will be assigned on a fair and equitable basis.

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

CONTRACT REFS.: All Contracts

SUPPORT STAFF VACATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

Holidays

The school calendar, as adopted by the School Committee, establishes holidays and school recess periods for the employees who work on teacher and/or student days.

Employees who work on a 12-month basis will be granted paid holidays on all legal holidays and such other holidays as designated by the School Committee. They will also be expected to report to work during school recess periods unless days during these periods are considered official and designated as paid holidays by the Committee.

To qualify for holiday pay, the employee must be at work on the day before and the day following the holiday, unless his absence is approved on the basis of current leave policies.

Vacations

All 12-month employees will be eligible for paid-vacations in accordance with the following:

1-5 years	-- two weeks vacation
5-10 years	-- three weeks vacation
After 10 years	-- four weeks vacation

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 136:12

CONTRACT REFS. All support staff contracts

EVALUATION OF SUPPORT STAFF

A program of continuous observation and evaluation will be developed to find the right employees to fill vacancies, determine assignments and equitable workloads, and establish wage and salary policies that encourage employees to put forth their best efforts. The evaluation of employee achievements and the provision of a good atmosphere are some of the major duties of the Committee.

The evaluation will cover the major areas of the employee's responsibilities and will include the following:

- Specific work assignment
- Attitude toward students
- Attitude toward public education
- Attitude toward supervisors, teachers, and fellow employees
- Work habits

Each employee will be informed of the basis upon which he/she is to be evaluated in advance of evaluation.

CONTRACT REFS.: All support staff agreements

RETIREMENT OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

All full-time non-instructional personnel are required to participate in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Retirement System.

Periodically, the Superintendent-Director will present to the Committee the names of support staff members who have indicated their intentions to retire.

LEGAL REFS.: Age Discrimination in Employment Law, P.L. 95-256; MGL 71:16F

SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL OF SUPPORT STAFF MEMBERS

Support staff employees employed by the School District may be terminated by the Principal, with the approval of the Superintendent-Director. However, employees may request the Superintendent-Director to review the circumstances of their termination.

Bus drivers are employed on a monthly basis with continuity of employment conditioned only upon satisfactory performance. In the event of failure to perform as required, the Superintendent-Director may immediately suspend employment.

Support staff employees will generally be given notice of their dismissal two weeks prior to the effective date.

The Superintendent-Director, or the Principal, with the approval of the Superintendent-Director, may also suspend employees from their assignments.

SECTION H
NEGOTIATIONS

HA **NEGOTIATIONS GOALS**

HB **NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS**

HF **SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS**

NEGOTIATIONS GOALS

The School Committee recognizes that education is a public trust; it therefore is dedicated to providing the best possible educational opportunities for the young people of this community. In negotiations, this objective may be best attained if there is a climate of mutual trust and understanding between the negotiating parties.

The School Committee believes that the best interests of public education will be served by establishing procedures that provide an orderly method for the School Committee and representatives of the staff to discuss matters of common concern.

It is further recognized that nothing in negotiations will compromise the School Committee's legal responsibilities nor will any employee's statutory rights and privileges be impaired.

NEGOTIATIONS LEGAL STATUS

All negotiations between the School Committee and recognized employee groups are conducted subject to Chapter 150E of the Massachusetts General Laws. The legal status of negotiations is defined in part by Section 2 of that chapter, as follows:

Employees shall have the right of self-organization and the right to form, join, or assist any employee organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively through representatives of their own choosing on questions of wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment, and to engage in lawful, concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid or protection, free from interference, restraint, or coercion. An employee shall have the right to refrain from any or all of such activities, except to the extent of making such payment of service fees to an exclusive representative as provided in section twelve.

Basic to all employer/employee negotiations is the concept of "bargaining in good faith." It is the legal responsibility of both the School Committee and employee organizations to bargain in good faith as they conduct negotiations. However, such obligation does not compel either party to agree to a proposal or make a concession.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 150E:1 et seq.

SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEGOTIATING AGENTS

The School Committee is responsible for negotiations with recognized employee bargaining units. However, because of the expertise and time required for negotiations, the Committee may hire a negotiator to bargain in good faith with recognized bargaining units to help assure that mutually satisfactory agreements on wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment will be developed.

The School Committee will appoint the negotiator and the fee or salary for his/her services will be established in accordance with the law at the time of appointment.

The duties of the negotiator will be as follows:

1. To negotiate in good faith with recognized bargaining units to arrive at a mutually satisfactory agreement on wages, hours, and working conditions of employees represented by the units.
 - a. The negotiator may recommend members of the administration to serve on the negotiation team. They will not be members of any unit that negotiates with the Committee, and their participation in negotiations must be recommended by the Superintendent-Director and approved by the Committee.
 - b. He/she will direct accumulation of necessary data needed for negotiations, such as comparative information.
 - c. He/she will follow guidelines set forth by the Committee as to acceptable agreements and will report on the progress of negotiations.
 - d. He/she will make recommendations to the Committee as to acceptable agreements.
2. The negotiator will interpret the signed negotiated contracts to administrators and may be called upon to offer advice on various aspects of contract administration during the terms of the contracts with employee organizations.

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

SECTION I
INSTRUCTION

IB	ACADEMIC FREEDOM
IC/ICA	SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR
ID	SCHOOL DAY
IE	ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION
IGA	CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT
IGB	SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS
IGD	CURRICULUM ADOPTION
IHA	BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
IHAE	PHYSICAL EDUCATION
IHAI	TECHNICAL EDUCATION
IHAM	HEALTH EDUCATION
IHAM-R	HEALTH EDUCATION
IHAMA	PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION
IHAMB	TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL, AND TOBACCO
IHAQA	POLICY ON HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAM
IHAQB	COOPERATIVE WORK PLACEMENT
IHB	SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS
IHBA	PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
IHBAA	OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
IHBD	COMPENSATORY EDUCATION

IHBEA	ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS
IHBF	HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION
IHBG	HOME SCHOOLING
IHBG-R	HOME SCHOOLING
IHBH	ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS
IHBHE	REMOTE LEARNING
IHBHE-E	REMOTE LEARNING ADDENDUM
IHCA	SUMMER SCHOOLS
IHCF	CHILD CARE PERSONNEL
IJ	INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS
IJ-R	RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES
IJJ	TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION
IJK	SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION
IJL	LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION
IJLA	LIBRARY RESOURCES
IJM	SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION
IJND	ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES
IJNDB	EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY
IJNDC	INTERNET PUBLICATION
IJNDD	POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA
IJOA	FIELD TRIPS
IJOB	COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/SPEAKERS
IJOC	SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

IK	STUDENT PROGRESS REPORT TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS
IKE	PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS
IKF	DIPLOMA AND VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATION
IL	EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS
IMA	TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS
IMB	TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS
IMD	SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES
IMG	ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

ACADEMIC FREEDOM

The School Committee seeks to educate students in the democratic tradition, to foster recognition of individual freedom and social responsibility, to inspire meaningful awareness of and respect for the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

Fairness in procedures will be observed both to safeguard the legitimate interests of the schools and to exhibit by appropriate example the basic objectives of a democratic society as set forth in the Constitutions of the United States and the State.

LEGAL REF.: Constitution of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

SCHOOL YEAR/SCHOOL CALENDAR

The school calendar for the ensuing year will be prepared by the Superintendent-Director and submitted to the School Committee for approval annually. The number of days or instructional hours scheduled for the school year will be determined in accordance with the following standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Education:

Secondary schools will operate for a minimum of 180 days. Schools shall ensure that every secondary school student is scheduled to receive a minimum of 990 hours per school year of structured learning time, as defined in 603 CMR 27.02. Time which a student spends at school breakfast and lunch, passing between classes, in homeroom, at recess, in non-directed study periods, receiving school services, and participating in optional school programs shall not count toward meeting the minimum structured learning time requirement for that student.

For the information of staff, students, and parents, the calendar will set forth the days schools will be in session; holidays and vacation periods; in service days; and parent conferences.

The approved calendar may be altered by the School Committee for good cause.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 69:1G; 71:1; 71:4; 71:4A; 71:73; 136:12
Board of Education Regulations for School Year and School Day
Board of Education, Student Learning Time Regulations
603 CMR 27.00

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED: 3/10/20

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 6/2/20

SCHOOL DAY

The length of the school day is established in the collective bargaining agreements with the various school unions. The specific opening and closing times of the schools will be recommended by the Superintendent and set by the Committee.

The Superintendent-Director is authorized to make minor changes in opening and closing times to simplify transportation scheduling; however, major changes in schedules will be subject to Committee approval.

Parents and guardians will be informed of the opening and closing times set by the Committee. To help insure the safety of all students, parents will also be notified that students will not be admitted into the school building until 15 minutes prior to the start of the official day unless bus schedules requires earlier admittance.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 69:1G; 71:59

Board of Education Regulations for School Year and Day
603 CMR 27.00

PROPOSED: 6/5/18

APPROVED: 6/26/18

REVISED: 3/10/20

APPROVED: 6/2/20

ORGANIZATION OF INSTRUCTION

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School District will endeavor to have a school of the highest quality possible for students in grades nine through twelve. Except for special types of instruction, the instructional program will be arranged in units commonly designated as grades, each grade approximating the work of one year.

The basic organization of the District will be four grades in high school. Departures from this plan may be developed when special services or legal requirements dictate another type of structure. The organizational plan is designed to facilitate the philosophy of educating every student, each to their fullest potential.

All students will be provided with academic instruction as well as career and technical education. Following an exploratory program in the ninth grade, students will be placed in one of the career majors. For the next three and one-half years, they will receive specialized training in that occupational area, in addition to regular academic instruction.

Special education services are integrated across each grade level.

The organization is designed to meet the standards established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Curriculum Frameworks, by Time and Learning regulations, and in order to serve the needs of all students.

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED: 3/10/20

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 6/2/20

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Constant adaptation and development of the curriculum is necessary if the District is to meet the needs of the students in its schools. To be successful, curriculum development must be a collaborative enterprise involving staff and administrators utilizing their professional expertise.

The Committee expects its faculty and administration to regularly evaluate the education program and to recommend modifications of practice and changes in curriculum content as well as the addition or deletion of courses to the instructional program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 69:1E
 603 CMR 26:05

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED:

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED:

SUPPORT SERVICES PROGRAMS

To support the classroom activities and other instructional needs of the District, various educational services as listed shall be provided. The Support Services staff will work in cooperation with building staff and the administration of the District in the coordination and the supervision of the curriculum implementation of the instructional program, and support services to meet the needs of all students.

The Director of Pupil Personnel Services shall be responsible for all services for students who are not eligible for special education assistance, such as psychological services, speech correction, homebound and hospital teaching and such other programs as may be assigned.

CROSS REF.: ACE, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Handicap

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED: 3/10/20

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED: 6/2/20

CURRICULUM ADOPTION

The School Committee will rely on its professional staff to design and implement instructional programs and courses of study that will forward the educational goals of the school district.

The Superintendent-Director will have authority to approve new programs and courses of study after they have been thoroughly studied and found to support educational goals. The Committee itself will consider, and officially adopt, new programs and courses when they constitute an extensive alteration in instructional content or approach.

The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum. It will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 15:1G; 71:1; 69:1E

PROPOSED: 6/5/18

APPROVED: 6/26/18

REVISED:

APPROVED:

BASIC INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Consistent with its statutory mandate, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee will provide students of the district with those subjects considered to be essential to the development of fundamental learning and living skills. Instruction in all subjects will be presented through an inclusive perspective which reveals the contributions of all persons and groups, absent any stereotypical views based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, sexual orientation or gender identification.

Vocational training will be provided to all students of the school. After mandated exposure to the range of available vocational training, students will be permitted to select a vocational discipline which they will pursue through the balance of their educational career at Assabet Valley.

This training shall lead to the development of vocational proficiency in each student adequate to their employment in a line of work consistent with their capabilities and training.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1,2,3; 71:13
 603 CMR 26:05

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

The School Committee will provide every student with an opportunity for wholesome and enriched educational experiences. It is the Committee's belief that the following basic aims and objectives of the physical education program will contribute to this goal:

1. To aid the development of the entire student so that a well-trained mind may function properly in a healthy body.
2. To encourage student participation in vigorous physical activity while in school, and to teach the skills of those activities so that they will have a carry-over value for later activities in everyday life.
3. To increase appreciation of physical fitness and its importance in regard to good health.
4. To impress upon students the importance of integrating one's mind, body and attitude in preparing to face the obligations of a complex society.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1; 71:3
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Physical Education
603 CMR 26:05

TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School Committee recognizes that its students should be prepared to achieve high levels of competence in their technical program. The Committee also accepts the responsibility to help guide students to understand their rights and responsibilities within this society through quality education and in so doing, respond to the needs of the business and professional community.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37K; 71:38A through 71:38F; 74:1 et seq.
Board of Education Chapter 74 Regulations

HEALTH EDUCATION

Good health depends upon continuous life-long attention to scientific advances and the acquisition of new knowledge.

The School Committee believes that the greatest opportunity for effective health education lies within the public schools because of their potential to reach children at the age when positive, lifelong health habits are best engendered and because the schools are equipped to provide qualified personnel to conduct health education programs.

The School Committee is committed to a sound, comprehensive health education program as an integral part of each student's general education.

The health education program will emphasize a contemporary approach to the presentation of health information, skills, and the knowledge necessary for students to understand and appreciate the functioning and proper care of the human body. Students also will be presented with information regarding complex social, physical and mental health problems, which they might encounter in society. In an effort to help students make intelligent choices on alternative behavior of serious personal consequence, health education will examine the potential health hazards of social, physical and mental problems existing in the larger school-community environment.

In order to promote a relevant, dynamic approach to the instruction of health education, the School Committee will continue to stress the need for curricular, personnel, and financial commitments that are necessary to assure the high quality of the school's health education program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

**HEALTH EDUCATION
(Exemption Procedure)**

Exemption will be granted from a specific portion of health education curriculum on the grounds that the material taught is contrary to the religious beliefs and/or teachings of the student or the student's parent/guardian.

A request for exemption must be submitted in writing to the Principal in advance of instruction in that portion of the curriculum for which the exemption is requested. The request must state the particular conflict involved.

The Principal will confer with the teacher to determine the length of time a student will be exempt. The teacher will develop an alternative activity for which the student will receive credit.

The Principal will inform the parent/guardian of disposition of the request within a reasonable number of school days of receipt of the request.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:1

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent-Director will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. Exempt their student from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. Inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent-Director.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent-Director for review of the issue. The Superintendent-Director or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent-Director's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

TEACHING ABOUT DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO

In accordance with state and federal law, the District shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally based drug, alcohol and tobacco education and prevention programs in all grades.

The drug, alcohol and tobacco education program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug, alcohol and tobacco use. It shall include special instruction as to the effects upon the human system; the emotional, psychological and social dangers of such use with emphasis on nonuse by school age children and the illegal aspects of such use. The program also shall include information about effective techniques for resisting peer pressure to use illicit drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

The objectives of this program, as stated below, are rooted in the Committee's belief that prevention requires education, and that the most important aspect of the policies and guidelines of the District should be the education of each individual to the dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco:

- To create an awareness of the total drug problem--prevention, education, treatment, rehabilitation, and law enforcement on the local, state, national and international levels.
- To relate the use of drugs, alcohol and tobacco to physical, mental, social and emotional practices.
- To develop the student's ability to make intelligent choices based on facts and to develop the courage to stand by one's own convictions.
- To understand the personal, social and economic problems causing the misuse of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.
- To develop an interest in preventing illegal use of drugs in the community.

The curriculum, instructional materials and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent-Director and approved by the School Committee.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:1

POLICY ON HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAM

Regulations Determining the Eligibility of Applicants for the House Building Program by Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. The Assabet Valley RVSD shall seek publicly applications from persons interested in a house building project for their own use, through advertisements in the newspapers serving the school district and whatever other means it deems advisable, depending upon the schedule of work as determined by the Superintendent-Director and Vocational Director.
2. The Superintendent-Director and the Vocational Director or his/her designee shall determine the type, style and specifications of the house to be built.
3. All applications received shall be submitted to the Assabet Valley RVSD through the Superintendent-Director to determine eligibility.
4. The Assabet Valley RVSD shall make the final selection of the applicant for whom the house building project will be carried out.
5. The Assabet Valley RVSD shall notify the applicant who is selected to be the recipient of the house building project.

B. SPECIFIC PROVISIONS

Regulations for qualifying applicants for house building project:

1. All applications for a house building project shall be submitted to the Office of the Superintendent-Director, Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District, 215 Fitchburg Street, Marlborough, MA 01752, on or before 3:00 p.m. on the last day of March to be a candidate for the subsequent year.
2. All applications for a house building project shall be submitted to the Assabet Valley RVSD for a determination of qualification and selection procedure.
3. Applicant must include with the application a bank letter and/or information evidencing approval of financial terms for construction of said building.
4. Applicant shall own a suitable plot of land with a clear title at the time of making application, which meets the requirements of local zoning ordinances and building codes regulating the construction of single or multiple family dwellings. This must be certified by the local Building Inspector and submitted with the application.

5. Applicant shall be a taxpayer and/or resident in the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.
6. The proposed site for construction shall be within the legal boundaries of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.
7. The applicant shall agree to have all site preparation and foundation work completed and approved in accordance with a construction timetable to be specified by the Carpentry Department of the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School.

FOUNDATION AND NECESSARY SITE WORK MUST BE COMPLETED AND APPROVED BY THE BUILDING INSPECTOR NO LATER THAN AUGUST 15TH OF THE YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION, UNLESS WAIVED BY THE COMMITTEE.

8. The applicant shall sign an affidavit setting forth his/her intent not to sell, lease, rent or transfer ownership of said real estate for a period of not less than two (2) years from the date of occupancy of the school built house or be subject to such penalties as set forth in an Agreement to be executed between the school district and the applicant, unless extreme hardship can be established, such Agreement to be signed by both parties.
9. Applicant shall agree, after consultation, to the type, style and specifications of the house to be constructed as recommended by the Superintendent-Director and Vocational Director or his/her designee and approved by the District School Committee.
10. Applicant shall agree that all carpentry work shall be done by students enrolled in this vocational/technical program at the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School.
11. Applicant shall agree that no significant changes or variations from the plans as originally approved and agreed upon by the applicant shall be permitted without written approval from the District School Committee or its authorized agent and the institution through which the applicant is financed. Plans must be reviewed by the property owner(s) and the Vocational Director or his/her designee prior to framing because **NO STRUCTURAL CHANGES WILL BE MADE AFTER FRAMING HAS BEGUN.**
12. The applicant shall comply with all local building codes, applicable ordinances and health regulations, and shall be responsible to secure same. Copies of such permits and a certified copy of the registered deed for the lot of land on which the home is to be constructed must be submitted to Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District prior to the execution of the Agreement.
13. The applicant shall secure and maintain during the entire building project suitable construction insurance, including fire, thief, extended coverage, property damage and liability according to requirements and in the amounts specified by the District School Committee. A copy of all insurance must be on file with the Superintendent-Director prior to the start of construction.

14. All materials used in the house building project shall be specified by and shall meet the approval of the carpentry department of the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School.
15. The applicant shall have all subcontracting work done in such a manner so as not to impede the progress of the building, and said subcontracting work shall meet the approval of the carpentry department of the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School.
16. The applicant shall agree to be available from time to time for consultation on the construction site at an hour specified by the carpentry department and/or the Assabet Valley RVSD when required.
17. The applicant shall agree to allow public inspection (Open House) of the building for a period not exceeding two weeks following completion of construction, and further, the applicant shall agree to allow all publicity regarding the project as authorized by the Assabet Valley RVSD or its authorized agent.
18. The applicant shall agree to provide water, power, comfort stations, emergency telephone, and fuel for temporary heat as deemed necessary by the Vocational Director or his/her designee and/or the instructors supervising the project.
19. A twenty percent (20%) service charge based on an estimate of all material and supply costs will be payable in advance. The applicant shall submit to the Office of the Superintendent-Director via the Vocational Director or his/her designee of the house building project a copy of all invoices incurred by the applicant. An adjustment will be made at the end of the project based on the actual material and supply costs.
20. The extent of the Assabet Valley RVSD work obligation is the final day of work done by the Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School students, usually in the month of June. Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School will only assume responsibility after this day for the structural integrity of the building. The Assabet Valley RVSD will not be responsible for any unfinished work or any spoilage, damage, loss, deterioration, nuisance stemming from unfinished work or work done by other than Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School students.
21. Failure of an applicant to comply with any of the foregoing regulations shall disqualify that applicant immediately.
22. The District School Committee reserves the right to change any or all of the foregoing regulations prior to approving a house building project, and/or to waive any or all regulations as it deems to be in the best interests of the District.

COOPERATIVE WORK PLACEMENT

The purpose of the cooperative work placement program is to provide students with a transitional supervised work experience consistent with their educational program.

The work placement program will meet the requirements of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for Cooperative Education Course of Study and the Assabet Student Handbook.

Students selected for placement on cooperative assignments shall meet criteria established by those administrators responsible for the program. Assignments should correspond as closely as practicable to the vocational objectives of the students participating in the program. Students on cooperative assignments shall be monitored on a regular basis.

Job placement will be secured through the Supervisor of Co-op and Work Placement.

Legal reference: MGL Chapter 74, CMR 603 4.0

**SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS
(PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)**

The goals of the School District's Special Education program are to allow each student to grow and achieve at his own level, to gain independence and self-reliance, and to return to the mainstream of school society as soon as possible.

The requirements of Chapter 71B and the Massachusetts General Laws (known as Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972) and state regulations will be followed in the identification of students with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of three through 21 who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

The School Committee believes that most students with special needs can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. These students should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school district's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents in designing and providing programs and services to students with special needs. Parents will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a student is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents will be accorded the right of due process.

The Committee will secure properly trained personnel to work with the students with special needs. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these students is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance from all sources.

LEGAL REFS.: The Individuals with Disabilities Ed. Act (PL 108-446, adopted 12/03/04)
 Rehabilitation Act of 1973
 M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)
 Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through
 7/1/81
 603 CMR 28:00 inclusive

PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the intention of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parents' request to observe their student(s), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Coordinator or designee and/or Principal.
2. The Special Education Coordinator or designee shall contact the parent(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
3. When a parent requests an observation of a special needs student or program, approval will be sought from the Coordinator of Special Education and the building Principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.
4. The Special Education Coordinator or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the classroom).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent, the parent must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their student(s) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual student. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other students. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.

12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s) prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

NOTE: The following quotes from the DESE Advisory are important points of understanding to the implementation of this policy.

"School districts and parents have reported that, typically, observations are between one and four hours. While useful as a general rule, the Department recommends that district policies and practices specify that the duration and extent of observations will be determined on an individual basis. Districts should avoid rigid adherence to defined time limits regardless of the student's needs and settings to be observed. The complexities of the child's needs, as well as the program or programs to be observed, should determine what the observation will entail and what amount of time is needed to complete it. Discussion between school staff and the parent or designee is a good starting point for resolving the issue."

"The observation law states that districts may not condition or restrict program observations except when necessary to protect:

**the safety of children in the program during the observation;
the integrity of the program during the observation;
and children in the program from disclosure by an observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program."**

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71B:3

REF: Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance
Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

**COMPENSATORY EDUCATION
(Title 1)**

Title 1 funds shall be used to provide educational services that are in addition to the regular services provided for District students. By adoption of this policy, the School Committee ensures equivalence in the provision of curriculum materials and supplies.

LEGAL REF.: Title 1, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in all grades in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English, observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by state and federal law and regulation.

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.
 42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964)
 603 CMR 14.00

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

The school may furnish homebound instruction to those students who are unable to attend classes for at least two consecutive weeks due to a physical injury, medical situation, or a severe emotional problem. The instruction is designed to provide maintenance in the basic academic courses so that when a student returns to school he/she will not be at a disadvantage because of the illness or the hospitalization.

To qualify for the program the student needs a written statement from a medical doctor requesting the homebound instruction, stating the reasons why, and estimating the time the student will be out of school. This statement needs to be sent to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

Homebound instruction is offered in basic academic subjects which do not require laboratories and special equipment, subject in all cases to the availability of qualified teachers. Certified teachers shall be assigned to homebound instruction by the Superintendent-Director or designee.

HOME SCHOOLING

The Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home Schooling program meet with the minimum standards established for public schools in the Commonwealth prior to approving such a program.

When a parent or guardian of a student below the age of 16 wants to establish a home-based educational program for his/her child, the following procedures shall be followed in accordance with the law:

Prior to removing the student from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the appropriate administrator 14 days before the program is established, and resubmit notification on an annual basis as long as the student(s) are being educated in a home-based environment.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing, on a form provided by the District, the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each student in the program.

The Superintendent-Director shall give the notice to produce records required by law if there is probable cause to believe the program is not in compliance with the law. Factors to be considered by the Superintendent-Director or School Committee in deciding whether or not to approve a home education proposal may be:

1. The proposed curriculum and the number of hours of instruction in each of the proposed subjects.
2. The competency of the parents to teach the student(s),
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the student(s) and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.
4. Periodic standardized testing of the student(s) to ensure educational progress and the attainment of minimum standards.

A student being educated in a home-based program within the District may have access to public school activities of either a curricular or extracurricular nature upon approval of the Superintendent-Director.

A student, with the approval of the School Committee, may be awarded a high school diploma if he/she or she has satisfied the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education's competency requirements and has met the District's educational standards for graduation.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles
Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324
(1987)

HOME SCHOOLING

1. Requirements for approval of home instruction will include:
 - a. The parent or legal guardian must request permission to hold home instruction on an annual basis.
 - b. A home instruction application form will be provided to the parents or legal guardian. This form must be completed and returned to the Superintendent-Director before approval may be granted.
 - c. The Committee delegates the approval of home instruction to the Superintendent-Director. Any approval or rejection of an application by the Superintendent-Director is subject to review by the Committee.
2. Students in home instruction may, at the discretion of parents or guardian, attend the school on a part-time basis. It may be an advantage for a home-taught student to attend specialized classes in the school.
3. Parents or a legal guardian in charge of home instruction should make provision for regular testing or use of other indicators of student progress such as standardized achievement tests. As an alternative to home testing and at the request of those in charge of the home instruction, the school will make provision for inclusion of home-taught students in the annual achievement test battery, which is usually administered in February or March of each school year. The home instruction summary form must include either a summary of home testing results for each required subject for each student or the results of the achievement test that is administered through the school.
4. Auditing functions of the Committee for the home instruction will include:
 - a. The Committee at any time may request a review by the Superintendent-Director of the attendance rolls, records of test scores or other achievement indicators in each required subject for any student in home instruction.
 - b. The Committee may request at any time that the Superintendent-Director review the instructional materials and methods used by the person(s) responsible for the home instruction.
 - c. The Superintendent-Director will prepare for the Committee an annual summary of the students included in home instruction. This report will also summarize, in general, the appropriateness or possible deficiencies of home education situations.
5. Within one week of the ending date of the home instruction, as indicated on the home instruction application form, the school will mail the parents or legal guardian a home instruction summary form. The completed form should be returned to the school within 30 days. This summary form must be returned to the school office before annual approval of home instruction can be made for any succeeding years.

6. The Committee will act in a responsible, cooperative manner to ensure that all students in the school receive competent, adequate instruction. This concern includes students in home education. If the Committee determines that a home instruction situation is inadequate, a conference between the parents or legal guardian and the Superintendent-Director will be scheduled to find mutually acceptable ways to correct any deficiency.
7. If deficiencies in a home education situation are not corrected or the proper annual application or summary is not completed by the parents or legal guardian, an appropriate referral will be made.

ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Some students have great difficulty coping with the conventional school program and as a result will drop out of school. Some students require more support and direct supervision than is reasonably available in conventional school settings. And, some students, along with a highly structured academic experience, require a special focus on life skills and an appropriate vocational involvement.

The School Committee will provide alternative education programs where these needs have been identified, where establishment of such programs is feasible, and where the proposed programs fall within the function normally associated with the public school district.

These alternative educational programs will seek to provide an appropriate academic, social, and vocational experience to aid these young people either to reenter the regular school district move into another educational setting, or prepare them for successful employment.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37I; 71:37J
Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Section 8 of Chapter 636 of the Acts of 1974, Regarding Magnet School Facilities and Magnet Educational Programs

REMOTE LEARNING

In the event of a district-specific emergency requiring the use of remote learning, the superintendent of schools may declare such emergency and shall, as soon as possible, obtain the approval of the school committee. The remote learning plan below will be applicable in cases of disease, weather emergencies, destruction or damage to schools rendering them inaccessible, or other extraordinary circumstances, including emergencies declared by government officials, the school committee, or the superintendent.

When it becomes necessary for the school district to provide support to students who are unable to attend classes or access appropriate services due to an extended closure, the superintendent shall establish a plan and procedures to ensure that such services are provided. The provision of educational services may include the use of technology and devices, and strategies designed to support student learning away from school.

The remote learning plan will, to the extent possible:

- Ensure the safety of all students and faculty in coordination with appropriate local and state departments and agencies;
- Provide support for student social and emotional wellbeing and address the implications of trauma experienced by students or faculty as a result of the emergency;
- Identify goals and strategies for maintaining standards of student achievement and school improvement plans;
- Ensure instruction and services are delivered by district educators and personnel as much as practicable;
- Utilize the most effective tools and resources available for students and faculty, including the skills and talents of district personnel, in the delivery of instruction and services and share resources as needed;
- Provide resources and services equitably to meet the needs and circumstances of all students;
- Identify remedial strategies necessary after the emergency to advance student achievement (i.e. after-school, extended day, summer school, and contingency scheduling to cancel vacations.);
- Gather information both during and after the period of emergency regarding the most effective means of remote learning to implement as appropriate.

In developing a remote learning plan, the superintendent will:

- Identify and prepare effective means for communicating with faculty, students, parents and community stakeholders.
- Collaborate with municipal agencies that support the schools and community.
- Consult with the school committee to identify any extraordinary actions necessary or authority required to administer emergency and remote learning plans. This includes any changes to district policies on the school calendar, grading, promotions and retentions, local graduation requirements, testing, and standards and accountability.
- Consult with administrators and principals to ensure the continuing education of students at all levels, including:
 - use of the most appropriate resources, tools and strategies to deliver the curricula given

- local circumstances and conditions;
 - equitable access to appropriate content for all students;
 - specific accommodations for students at high risk, including clients of special education, students with disabilities, English learners, students at economic disadvantage, homeless students, students in foster care and students of military families.
- Utilize available technological resources suitable for serving students at all levels. This inventory will be prepared in advance in anticipation of an emergency.
- Ensure the privacy rights of students, faculty and families are protected, including assessing the security of district technology.
- Consult with bargaining units to determine if modifications to collective bargaining agreements need to be established for the period of the emergency.
- Identify the financial implications of the emergency plan and recommend transfer of funds as may be necessary.

LEGAL REFS.: 20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
 15 U.S.C. §§ 6501–6506 Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)

CROSS REFS.: EBCD – Emergency Closings
 IGA – Curriculum Development
 IGB – Support Services Programs
 IHBEA – English Learner Education
 IJND – Access to Digital Resources
 IJNDB – Empowered Digital Use
 IJNDC – Internet Publication
 IJNDD – Policy on Social Media
 IHBEA – English Language Learners
 JB – Equal Educational Opportunities
 JBB – Educational Equity

SOURCE: MASC – May 2020

PROPOSED: 8/25/2020 APPROVED: 9/15/2020
 REVISED: APPROVED:

REMOTE LEARNING ADDENDUM

Issues to consider when developing remote learning plans:

- Which of these issues requires policy or policy changes?
- What are the policy implications and what should school committees delegate to the superintendent for operating protocols?
- Do we learn anything from earlier experiences in emergencies?
- What can we learn from our current services to students who are unable to attend school because of illness or other disability or for disciplinary reasons?

Specific items to consider in developing a plan:

- When is remote learning appropriate?
- Designating a remote learning point person
- Reviewing the various models for remote learning
- Equity – how to ensure that students have access to tools to learn remotely.
- Internal vs. external resources.
- Collective bargaining implications
- Responsibilities of remote educators
 - Evaluating remote educators and programs
 - Who may observe remote instruction
 - Teacher professional development to incorporate various elements of remote learning
 - Common planning time
- Identifying cost implications and approving spending
- Special constituencies:
 - Special education students
 - English Language Learners
 - Physically challenged students
 - Homeless students
 - Students in foster care
 - Students of military families
 - Pregnant and parenting students
- Facilitating collaboration/removing barriers to collaboration.
- Protecting privacy rights of students and parents
 - FERPA (Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act and COPPA (Children’s On Line Privacy Protection Act)
 - What privacy protections do vendors and districts/schools have in place.
- Health and nutrition issues that may impact student wellness and/or privacy
- Internet security for students and faculty.
- Protecting educators and others who identify threats to student wellbeing via remote learning.
- Engaging district partners including companies, consultants, media (i.e., public television).
- Impact on decisions to retain or grant professional status educators.
- Academic implications (testing, grading, educator accountability, curriculum adaptations)

- Parental rights
- Data gathered remotely or on-line (who gathers, aggregates, or analyzes).

SOURCE: MASC – May 2020

PROPOSED: 8/25/2020
REVISED:

APPROVED: 9/15/2020
APPROVED:

SUMMER SCHOOLS

The school shall make available summer sessions as a supplement to the instruction offered during the school year, when funding for such programs is available. The focus of the program will be remedial work.

To attend summer school, students must have the approval of their classroom and/or special subject teachers.

Students at all instructional levels may attend approved summer schools for remedial, enrichment, or make-up purposes. Credit towards graduation requirements may be granted high school students in line with regulations of the School District.

All summer programs will be subject to annual approval by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:28

CHILD CARE PROGRAM

Assabet Valley students or employees who have children enrolled in the Child Care Center will be charged a Child Care Tuition recommended by the Superintendent-Director and/or his/her designee and approved by the School Committee.

For purposes of tuition stability the administration may accept into enrollment in the Child Care Program children of parents not currently attending or employed by the District, provided such slots are available in the program.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee believes that materials appropriate to the needs of the school program must be available to each student and teacher. These will be furnished by the School Committee subject to budgetary constraints.

The task of selecting instructional materials for programs will be delegated to the professional staff of the school system. Because instructional programs and materials are of great importance, only those that meet the following criteria will be approved by the Committee:

1. They must present balanced views of international, national, and local issues and problems of the past, present and future.
2. They must provide materials that stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic and ethical values.
3. They must help students develop abilities in critical reading and thinking.
4. They must help develop and foster an appreciation of cultural diversity and development in the United States and throughout the world.
5. They must provide for all students an effective basic education that does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity, physical disabilities or sexual orientation.
6. They must allow sufficient flexibility for meeting the special needs of individual students and groups of students.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:48; 71:49; 71:50
BESE regulations 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES

Material that is challenged usually belongs to one of the three basic categories: religion, ideology, or profanity/obscenity. Board policies regarding these areas shall be as follows:

Religion -- Factual, unbiased material on religions has a place in school libraries.

Ideologies -- Libraries should, with no thought toward swaying reader judgment, make available a balanced collection of primary and factual material, on the level of their students on various ideologies or philosophies which exert or have exerted a strong force, either favorably or unfavorably, in government, current events, politics, education and other phases of life.

Profanity/obscenity -- Materials shall be subjected to a test of literary merit and reality in context using the criteria established.

When a problem concerning instructional resources in a school arises, the disposition of the problem will be made in a reasonable period of time using District adopted procedures.

In accordance with the statement of philosophy, no questioned materials shall be removed from the school pending a final decision. Pending the outcome of the request for reconsideration, however, access to questioned materials can be denied to the students of the parents making the complaint, if they so desire.

If the decision of the School Committee is that the questioned instructional resource be retained, the District will not convene a Review Committee relative to the same complaint for a period of three years. If a substantially different point of view is advanced, it will be investigated. (The period of three years does not apply in this instance).

If an individual or a group undertakes action to keep material from the shelves by checking it out and failing to return it, or by taking turns in keeping it checked out so that it is not available for student use, the Superintendent-Director shall request, in writing, the return of the material. If it is not returned within thirty (30) days, a bill for the current replacement cost of the item shall be rendered to the party holding the item.

After the School Committee has adopted new materials or approved certain methods, that decision will not be reconsidered for a period of three years beginning with the end of the school year when the adoption is made.

TEXTBOOK SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Responsibility for the review and selection of textbooks to be purchased shall rest with the Principal. The Principal is encouraged to establish a review committee to assist in the process to determine the textbooks that best meet the curriculum guidelines of the District. The review committee should include teachers who will use the texts and other staff members as found desirable. Students and parents will be encouraged to serve.

Principles that apply generally to the selection of instructional materials and library materials shall apply to textbooks. Additionally, basic textbooks and textbook support materials shall be chosen:

- To advance the educational objectives of the school system and particular objectives of the course program;
- To contribute toward continuity, integration, and articulation of the curriculum; and
- To establish a general framework for the particular course or program.

Because the instructional purposes of textbooks, as stated above, are of such importance, particular care shall be taken in their selection as to content.

Although many points must be examined, the School Committee directs the staff to be mindful of the following considerations:

- The needs of all learners must be provided for.
- Attention should be given to gender roles depicted in the materials.
- The textbook and textbook support materials should lead the student and teacher beyond the textbook into a wide variety of other materials and educational experiences.
- If the textbook deals with problems and issues of our times, it should present and encourage examination of varied points of view.
- Because textbooks are selected for several years' use, special attention also shall be given their physical characteristics, durability, format and price.

LEGAL REFS.: 71:48; 30B:7; 71:50
603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee recognizes that knowledge is changing and expanding and that it may be necessary to use various types of supplementary materials in addition to the basic and fundamental textbooks.

For the purpose of this policy, supplementary materials shall be defined as any instructional materials other than textbooks including, but not limited to, books, periodicals, newspapers, pictures, diagrams, maps, charts, slides, filmstrips, films, records, audiotapes, and suitable technological applications which relate directly to the adopted curriculum.

The School Committee believes that teachers and administrators should have a large role in selection and recommendation of supplementary materials. Teachers are encouraged to use a wide range of learning aids, provided the expense incurred in purchasing these aids remains within the limits of the budget.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

LIBRARY MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

The School Committee endorses the School Library Bill of Rights, as adopted by the American Library Association, which asserts that the responsibility of the school library is to:

1. Provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the students served.
2. Provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.
3. Provide a background of information that will enable students to make intelligent judgments in their daily lives.
4. Provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.
5. Provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.
6. Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Initial purchase suggestions for library materials may come from all personnel--teachers, coordinators, and administrators. Students will also be encouraged to make suggestions. The librarian will recommend materials to be included in the school library. Final approval and authority for distribution of funds will rest with the Principal subject to the approval of the Superintendent-Director.

Gifts of library books will be accepted in keeping with the above policy on selection. Complaints about library books will be handled in line with Committee policy on complaints about instructional materials.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

CROSS REF.: KEC, Public Complaints about the Curriculum or Instructional Materials

LIBRARY RESOURCES

The primary objective of the library/media center is to implement its resources to enrich and to support the educational program of the school.

Definition of Library Resources

Library resources are those materials, both print and non-print, found in school libraries which support curricular and personal information needs.

Criteria for Selection of Library Resources

The criteria for selection of library resources in the District are:

- Needs of the individual student
Based on knowledge of students
Based on requests of parents and students
- Needs of the school
Based on knowledge of the curriculum of the school
Based on requests from the professional staff
- Provision of a wide range of materials on many levels of difficulty with a diversity of appeal and the presentation of different points of view.
- Provision of materials of high artistic quality.
- Provision of materials with superior format.
- Reputable, unbiased, professionally prepared selection aids are consulted as guides.

In accordance with the District's policy of providing instructional materials on opposing sides of controversial issues, it should be noted that neither the media centers nor the District serve as advocates for the ideas expressed in any materials, nor does the presence of any material indicate automatic endorsement of the ideas expressed therein.

Disclosure of Information/Privacy of Circulation Records

Circulation records shall not be made available to anyone except pursuant to such process, order, or subpoena as may be authorized by law.

Re-evaluation (Weeding) of Library Resources

The continuous review of library/media center materials is necessary as a means of maintaining a useful and active collection. As new materials are selected and added, some older materials are withdrawn. The responsibility for determining which materials are to be withdrawn rests with the professional staff.

Among the reasons for withdrawing an item are the following:

- Curricular changes have rendered superfluous some materials (or multiple copies of materials) formerly used but no longer in demand.
- Some materials contain factual material that is no longer accurate nor current.
- Some materials intended for recreational reading have become dated or unattractive and are no longer in demand. (Some such books, which are deemed “standards” or “classics”, will be retained even though they rarely circulate).
- Some materials have become worn out, damaged or physically deteriorated and have lost utility and/or appeal.
- Some materials have been superseded by newer items, which present the same information, but in superior format.

Withdrawn library/media center materials are processed in one or more of the following ways:

- Made available to be used as resource or supplementary material by teachers.
- Offered to other libraries in the district’s municipalities and schools, as it is possible that a material, which lacks utility in one building, may have some usefulness in another.
- Contributed to appropriate charitable or educational agencies.
- Discarded, when warranted.

Continuing evaluation is closely related to the goals and responsibilities of library/media centers and is a valuable tool of collection development. This procedure is not to be used as a convenient or expedient means to remove materials presumed to be controversial or likely to be disapproved by segments of the community. Materials are not to be proscribed or removed because of actual or potential partisan or doctrinal disapproval, nor because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.

SPECIAL INTEREST MATERIALS SELECTION AND ADOPTION

Organizations, institutions, and individuals at times develop materials that are offered to schools free or inexpensively. As a general rule, sponsored materials present a particular point of view, and extreme care must be exercised in evaluating and using them. The responsibility for using sponsored materials rests with the certified staff member who recommends its use. In any questionable instance, the Principal should be informed and shall decide whether its use in the best interests of the students.

Sponsored materials must meet the same basic selection criteria as any other learning material, as well as the following special criteria.

Any expression of a point of view should be clearly identified.

Any advertising that appears on or with any material should be in good taste and unobtrusive.

The source of all material should be clearly identifiable.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

ACCESS TO DIGITAL RESOURCES

The School Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner.

Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent-Director, in conjunction with the Director of Technology, shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of student computer or tablet use, ethical use of digital resources and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines shall prohibit utilization of digital resources for prohibited or illegal activities and for the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA);
- Safety and security of minors when they are using e-mail, instant messaging applications, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including hacking, viruses, and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.

The School District shall provide reasonable public notice to address and communicate its internet safety measures.

Empowered Digital Use

All students and faculty must agree to and sign an Empowered Digital Use form prior to the student or staff member being granted independent access to digital resources and district networks. The required form, which specifies guidelines for using digital resources and district networks, must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be kept on file as a legal, binding document. In order to modify or rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Director of Technology with a written request.

Employee Use

Employees shall use district email, district devices, and district networks only for purposes directly related to educational and instructional purposes.

Community Use

On recommendation of the Superintendent-Director in conjunction with the Director of Technology, the district shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community. All guests will be prompted to, and must accept the district's Access to Digital Resources Policy before accessing the district network.

Disregard of Rules and Responsibility for Damages

Individuals who refuse to sign required Empowered Digital Use documents or who violate district rules governing the use of district technology or networks shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, and network.

Individuals shall reimburse the district for repair or replacement of district property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254

EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY

Purpose

The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

Availability

The Superintendent-Director or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using digital devices, whether personal or school owned, and the school district network is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege.

The Superintendent-Director or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media.
- Users shall give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately

These procedures shall be reviewed annually by district administration together with students and teachers and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology.

INTERNET PUBLICATION

I. PURPOSE

The School District has established a district-wide web page that links users to web pages for the district's individual schools. The School District maintains these web pages for educational purposes only, in furtherance of the educational mission of the School District. All published pages and corresponding links to other sites must relate to the district's educational mission.

II. SUPERVISION AND APPROVAL OF WEB PAGES

The Superintendent-Director (or his/her designee) may select the person or persons ("the Webmaster") responsible for overseeing the school district's web pages and maintaining the web pages in a manner consistent with this policy and the school district's Access to Digital Resources Policy. The Webmaster must approve all links from the district web pages to other sites on the Internet. The Webmaster will review the links to ensure that the links are related to the district's educational mission.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their class projects or courses on their school's web site. Staff members must submit their material to the Webmaster for approval before the material can be published. Staff members may not publish or link to personal web pages as part of the school district web site.

Student or staff work (e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork) may be published on the district's web pages, as detailed below. All work that is published will be accompanied by a copyright notice written by the Webmaster that prohibits copying the work without the written consent of the copyright holder.

III. CONTENT STANDARDS

All web page materials are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors. Web pages should be well-organized and professional in appearance. Web pages must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the school's web page.

IV. SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

A. In general

Identifying information about students, such as first and last names, personal phone numbers or home addresses, will not be published. First names or first names and the first letter of the student's last name may be used where appropriate.

B. Student photographs

- Student photographs may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
- Student photographs will not be accompanied by identifying information about the student(s).

C. Student work

Student work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

D. Staff photographs, identifying information and work

- Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
- Staff work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Superintendent-Director and the School Principal will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

- 1) Improper fraternization with students using social media or other electronic means.
 - a. Teachers and coaches may not friend or follow current students on social media.
 - b. All electronic contacts with students should be through the district's computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.
 - c. Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.
 - d. All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrator.
 - e. Teachers and coaches will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
 - f. Inappropriate contact via phone or electronic device is prohibited.
- 2) Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
- 3) Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
- 4) Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
- 5) Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology
- 6) The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent-Director or designees will periodically conduct internet searches to see if staff members have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principal and Superintendent-Director will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee will also encourage field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent-Director will establish regulations to assure that:

1. All students have parental permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.
3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.
5. All trips allow student access without regard of family ability to pay

Fundraising activities for field trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

CROSS REF.: JJH, Policy Relating to Field Trips Involving Late Night or Overnight Travel

COMMUNITY RESOURCE PERSONS/ SPEAKERS

Community resources include those individuals or groups who are invited into the schools to present supplementary information and ideas to the classroom course of study. These experiences afford students the opportunity to benefit from community viewpoints. Care should be taken in selecting these speakers so that they are individuals who respect diversity in thinking and varying views and who are not attempting to inappropriately influence points of view.

CROSS REF.: ADDA, Background Checks

SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

CROSS REF.: ADDA, Background Checks

STUDENT PROGRESS REPORTS TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The School Committee recognizes the school's obligation to give periodic reports of a student's progress and grades. The School Committee further recognizes that these reports are a vital form of communication between the schools and parents. The School Committee also believes that all progress reports must be based upon full information, accurately and honestly reported with the proper maintenance of confidentiality.

A report depicting the student's progress will be issued periodically following an evaluation by the appropriate teacher, teachers, or other professional personnel.

In addition to the periodic reports, parents will be notified when a student's performance requires special notification.

Grading and promotion will be based on improvement, achievement, capability of the student, and the professional judgment of the teacher and Principal.

Major changes in the reporting system shall be preceded by a cooperative study and evaluation by teachers, principals, parents, and the Director of Academics, who will submit the proposal to the School Committee for consideration and approval.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the Principal.

DIPLOMA AND VOCATIONAL CERTIFICATION

Requirements for Diploma

Under provisions of Massachusetts General Laws and in accordance with the policies of the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational District School Committee, a full high school diploma may be earned at this school. This school and its programs are accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

Student schedules must include 18 academic and 10 vocational credits per year. A maximum of 18 credits from elective courses are obtainable. From a total of 115 possible credits - 72 academic, 40 vocational, and 3 for senior capstone graduation requirements - a student must successfully pass all MCAS exams currently required by the Commonwealth and earn a minimum of 109 credits in the configuration described below, in order to graduate with a high school diploma and a vocational certificate.

Rank in class is established by deriving a quality point average (Q.P.A.) based on points accumulated from the grade in each course. Honors course grades are given extra weight of 0.5. Advanced Placement and Pre-Engineering courses are weighted with a factor of 1.0.

Valedictorian/Salutatorian are based on class rank senior year at the close of the second term grades.

Specific values are clearly illustrated in the "grading system" section of the Student Handbook.

Diploma Requirements

		YEARS	CREDITS	
R E Q U I R E D C O R E S E S	Vocational / Technical	4 years	40 credits	
	English	4 years	12 credits	
	Mathematics	4 years	12 credits	
	*Math Strategies (Class of 2022 only)	2 years	*3 credits (Math Strategies 9 & 10 both 1.5 credit courses)	
	**Math Strategies (Class of 2021 only)	2 years	*3 credits (Math Strategies 9 & 10 both 1.5 credit courses)	
	***Math Strategies (Class of 2020 only)	1 year	**1.5 credits (Math Strategies 10 is a 1.5 credit course)	
	Social Studies	4 years	12 credits	
	Science	3 years	9 credits	
	Phys Ed / Health	4 years	6 credits	
Senior Capstone Requirements		3 credits		
	Core Credit Total		94 credits	
	Class of 2019 Core Credit Total		***95.5 credits	
	***Class of 2020 Core Credit Total		**97 credits	
	**Class of 2021 Core Credit Total		*97 Credits	
	*Class of 2022 Core Credit Total			
	Required Elective Credits		15 credits	
	Total Credits (Class of 2019)		109 credits	
	Total Credits (Class of 2020)		*110.5 credits	
	*Total Credits (Class of 2021)		**112 credits	
	*Total Credits (Class of 2022)		*112 credits	

EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

The School Committee considers comprehensive and objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum to be of primary importance. The Superintendent-Director will provide for the translation of the stated instructional goals into objectives and for appraisal of their implementation in order to:

1. Determine educational needs and provide information for planning.
2. Indicate instructional strengths and weaknesses.
3. Check on the suitability of programs in terms of community requirements.
4. Show the relationship between achievement and the system's stated goals.
5. Provide data for public information.

Elements of this evaluation process may include:

1. Testing programs such as nationally standardized general achievement tests, nationally standardized tests in specific subject areas, and tests administered by other agencies.
2. Study of school achievement records.
3. Study of students' high school and drop-out records.
4. Use of outside services, participation in regional research studies, contracted evaluation services; evaluation services at cost to the school system must be approved in advance by the School Committee.
5. Teacher and parent evaluation of student behavior.
6. State Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education specialists and services.
7. Evaluation by the regional accrediting association.
8. Evaluation by other agencies.

An evaluation of the curriculum and its effectiveness will be made periodically and reported to the Committee by the Superintendent-Director.

TEACHING ACTIVITIES/PRESENTATIONS

It is the desire of the School Committee that the best available strategies for bringing about learning be utilized in the District's schools. The instructional staff shall be expected to keep abreast of new and promising instructional ideas and practices developed in schools throughout the nation and to apply those which have potential for improving the learning program in the District's schools.

An educational climate shall be established which shall be conducive to rational thought, inquiry, and respect for the dignity of the individual. This educational climate will assist students in learning how to think rather than what to think and shall provide students the opportunity to identify, express, and defend their opinions without penalty or fear of reprisal or ridicule.

Nothing in this policy shall limit a parent/guardian's right to file a complaint to challenge the use of teaching activity or presentation.

TEACHING ABOUT CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES/CONTROVERSIAL SPEAKERS

An important goal of the schools is to help prepare students for intelligent and conscientious participation as citizens in our democratic society. One step toward meeting this goal is to introduce students to reasoned and dispassionate approaches to the analysis of contemporary social and political issues. To insure that these issues can be examined in an atmosphere as free from emotion and prejudice as the times permit, the School Committee establishes the following guidelines for discussion of controversial issues in the schools.

Teacher-Planned Classroom Discussions

1. Controversial issues selected by teachers for classroom discussion must relate directly to the objectives and content of courses approved by the School Committee for inclusion in the curriculum.
2. The teachers' right to introduce controversial issues in classroom presentations does not include the right of advocacy. Teachers must refrain from using their positions to express partisan points of view.
3. The approach to discussion of these issues in the classroom must be objective and scholarly with minimum emphasis on opinion and maximum emphasis on intelligent analysis.
4. Teachers must ensure that the reasoned arguments of all sides of an issue are given equal presentation and emphasis in classroom discussions.
5. Teachers may invite visitors from outside the schools to give presentations on controversial issues when the visitors offer qualifications and resources not available in the schools. All visitors are to be guided by the standards of language usage that prevail in the classrooms and by the standards of scholarly inquiry set forth above. Whenever possible, teachers who invite visitors to present one side of an issue will also invite visitors to present the other side(s).
6. In all cases teachers must obtain from the appropriate Principal permission to invite visitors for classroom presentations. Permission must be requested at least 48 hours before the scheduled time of presentation.

Student-Initiated Forums on Controversial Issues

Student groups may request permission to conduct forums on controversial issues in the schools. The Principal may grant such requests under the following conditions:

1. Preparation for presentation of a forum will not cause any student or teacher to miss class and will not cause the cancellation of any class.
2. Adequate advance planning must be conducted for each forum. A request to hold a forum must be received by the Principal at least three weeks before the scheduled date of presentation. For each request the Principal will appoint, after consultation with the requesting student group, an adult advisory group consisting of at least two parents and two faculty members.

3. The standards for approach to discussion, style of presentation, and use of visitors as defined above will apply to student-initiated forums.

Requests from Groups or Individuals Outside the Schools

No permission will be granted to non-school groups or individuals to make presentations on controversial issues in the schools during school hours. Requests for after-school or evening use will be processed in accordance with the Committee's policy on community use of school facilities.

No permission will be granted to outsiders for distribution of literature on controversial issues to students in general or to class groups.

The Principal may grant an outside group or individual permission to post one notice of a public meeting for discussion of issues if the language of that notice conforms to the standards that prevail in the community. The Principal will determine the appropriate bulletin board for such notices.

SCHOOL CEREMONIES AND OBSERVANCES

The United States Constitution and the Constitution of the State of Massachusetts and related court rulings clearly establish the concept of "church and state separation" and the "preclusion of sectarian instruction in public schools."

In order to help staff members abide by the spirit and letter of the law, and to avoid compromising any student's religious or conscientious beliefs or freedoms, the following guidelines have been established:

The observance of religious holidays is not the responsibility of the public schools.

While it is recognized that many activities are initiated with the approach of major holidays in order to capitalize on the readiness and interest that is generated at these times, it should be understood that such occasions frequently have religious underpinnings. Care should be taken to relate only to secular aspects of these holidays.

Music programs given at times close to religious holidays should not use religious aspect of these holidays as the underlying motive or theme. Although religious music is appropriate in the schools to the extent that it is sung or presented for musical rather than religious content, its use should not violate the secular nature of the school. Pageants, plays, recitals, and other literary or dramatic activities should not be used to convey religious messages. While the holidays represent a valid source of ideas for meaningful school art experiences, teachers should avoid assigning or encouraging art work that promotes religious aspects of such holidays. If, however, individual students choose to use a religious personage, event, or symbol as the vehicle for an artistic expression, they should be allowed to take this action.

The above statements should not be interpreted to preclude the factual and objective teaching about religions, religious holidays, and religious differences. Such instruction will be permitted in the schools since insights in this area can enhance the mutual understanding needed by all the people in a pluralistic society.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05

ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the Principal.

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District is committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment.

The School Principal, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in the building, shall utilize the Department of Public health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs*, cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

"Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Dogs or Law Enforcement Dogs - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals (Guide or Assistance Dogs)

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational District School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a "service animal includes any dog that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability". The regulations further state that "a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability".

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as "seeing eye dogs" or "guide dogs;"
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and assist individuals with mobility impairments with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the dog shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the dog will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to

remove the animal to a different location designated by the Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom assignment. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/guardian of the students.

When a student will be accompanied by an service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student's parent or guardian, as well as the animal's owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent-Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student's use of an assistance dog in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

LEGAL REF.: Title II of ADDA

SECTION J

STUDENTS

JB	EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY
JBB	EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
JFA	ADMISSION POLICY
JFAB	POST-GRADUATE ADMISSIONS
JFABA	POSTSECONDARY ADMISSIONS – PRACTICAL NURSING
JFABAA	PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM REFUND POLICY
JFABC	TUITION AND FEES
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JFABD	HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES
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JFBB	SCHOOL CHOICE
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JICA	STUDENT DRESS CODE
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JJIB	INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS
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JL	STUDENT WELFARE
JLA	STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM
JLC	STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS
JLCA	PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS
JLCB	INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS
JLCC	COMMUNICABLE DISEASES
JLCD	ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS
JLD	GUIDANCE PROGRAM
JQ	STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES
JRA	STUDENT RECORDS
JRA-R	STUDENT RECORDS
JRD	STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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

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

No child shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and course of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

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

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964
 Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment
 Opportunity Act of 1972
 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375
 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972
 M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)
 BESE regulations 603 CMR 26:00
 BESE regulations 603 CMR 28.00

CROSS REF.: AC, Nondiscrimination

EQUAL EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

The School Committee's goal is to strive to address the needs of every student in each of our schools, subject to budgetary, space and other limitations.

Educational equity for the purpose of this policy is defined as providing all students, as reasonably practical, the high quality instruction and support they need to reach and exceed a common standard.

To achieve educational equity the district will commit to:

1. Systematically, when appropriate, use districtwide and individual school level data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender/gender identity, national origin, language, special education, socioeconomic status and mobility to inform district decision making.
2. Raise the achievement of all students.
3. Graduate all students ready to succeed in a diverse local, national and global community.

In order to reach the goal of educational equity, as reasonably practical, for each and every student, the District shall:

1. Provide every student with access to high quality curriculum, support, and other educational resources.
2. Seek to promote educational equity as a priority in professional development.
3. Endeavor to create schools with a welcoming and inclusive culture and environment.
4. Provide multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body and actively encourage, support and expect high academic achievement for each student.

The Superintendent shall include equity practices in the district's strategic plan and goal strategies to implement this policy. The Superintendent, upon request, will periodically report to the Committee the progress of the implementation of this policy.

SOURCE: MASC September 2019

PROPOSED: 1/7/2020
REVISED:

APPROVED: 2/4/2020
APPROVED:

ADMISSION POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

Massachusetts state regulations ([603 CMR 4.00](#)) require all state-funded career/vocational-technical education (CVTE) schools and CVTE programs at public high schools to develop and implement admissions policies that comply with state and federal law, as well as relevant guidelines issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the U.S. Department of Education.

An admission process is necessary for vocational-technical schools where space is a limiting factor. Vocational technical learning spaces are designed and equipped to serve a specific maximum number of students safely. Therefore, to accommodate a safe learning environment, all applications to grades nine through twelfth at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School (Assabet) will be processed using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

II. ADMISSIONS

When Assabet receives more applications than it has available seats, Assabet applies a minimum requirement lottery - applicants must complete 3 required elements (Application, Interview, and Recommendation) to be considered for the lottery to determine which students it will admit. The number of students accepted each year from each of the Assabet Valley RVSD member communities (Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough) will be determined by the three-year average of the previous year's October 1 enrollment numbers that are submitted to the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. For example, if the town of Hudson, shows an average of 50 students enrolled over the past three years October 1 enrollment numbers, then 50 seats would be available to Hudson for the upcoming Admissions school year. If the number of students that apply from Hudson is less, those available seats will be put back into a general pool and will be filled last. This method should ensure that all member communities are represented equally based on their history of enrollment with the school district. The criteria Assabet applies has been approved by its school committee, and the school committee will approve the use of these criteria annually. Assabet's admission policy is available on the school website and is on file at the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

II. EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

Assabet does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, genetic information, gender identity, disability, marital status, veteran's status, or homeless status.

If a student's primary home language is not English, Assabet will provide them with an application form in their home language. Please contact our Admissions Office at 508-485-9430 x1250 or email admissions@assabet.org, if you have questions or need help filling out the application form. If there is a student with limited English proficiency, a qualified representative from Assabet will assist the applicant in completing the necessary forms and assist in interpreting during the entire application and admission

process, upon the request of the applicant. Applications are available in English, Spanish, and Portuguese or the current dominant languages of our sending communities. Accommodations for any other linguistic groups will be granted upon request.

Assabet is committed to providing educational opportunities to students experiencing homelessness. Please contact the Director of Pupil Personnel at guidance@assabet.org, 508-485-9430 with any questions. Students with disabilities may voluntarily identify themselves to Assabet to request reasonable accommodations during the application and admission process. In these circumstances, accommodations will be granted upon review.

Neither a student's disability nor the primary language of their home will have any effect on their admission to Assabet.

Consistent with Massachusetts [regulations](#), Assabet has created a plan with "deliberate, specific strategies to promote equal educational opportunities and attract, enroll, and retain a student population that, when compared to students in similar grades in sending districts, has a comparable academic around the demographic profile."

- *Attend Community Events-local fairs, festivals, and events*
- *Community Outreach-reach out to local organizations serving students and families*
- *Run and host the Feira da Familia- connecting multilingual resources for multilingual families in our communities.*
- *Implement strategies created by the Admissions Data Action team annually -after review of most recent data.*

III. ELIGIBILITY

Any rising or current 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th-grade student who is a resident of the Assabet Valley Regional Technical School District (Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough, Westborough), may apply for admission. Applicants from these communities who meet the minimum admission requirements are admitted before any non-residents seeking the same program.

Accepted applicants should be aware that their admission is conditional on the following elements which will be reported by a school form completed by sending school personnel at the close of the school year: Students may only be enrolled to Assabet if they have been promoted to the grade they are seeking to enter; if they are not ultimately promoted to enter the grade they have applied for, their admission will be rescinded.

Students who have received disciplinary infractions for conduct for which suspension or expulsion was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H or §37H1/2, or for which suspension or expulsion for more than 10 days was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H3/4 within the previous school year their admission will be rescinded.

All completed applications (including recommendations) received by January 15th will be considered for fall admissions and included in the initial lottery. Applicants must participate in an informational interview that will take place from January to March. The initial lottery will take place in April. Applications

received after this timeline will be processed and placed on the waitlist in the order of date application received. All applications will be processed using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy.

NON-RESIDENT STUDENTS:

Students who are not residents of Assabet's seven in the district communities are eligible to apply for admission to Assabet. Please be aware that residents of the Assabet district communities who meet the minimum admission requirements will be admitted before any non-residents seeking the same program. Students and families can find information on the [Chapter 74 Nonresident Student Tuition Program](#) online. Students who begin their enrollment as District residents and move outside of the District during their enrollment, who request to remain at Assabet as nonresidents under M.G.L. c. 74, Section 7 and 7C will be allowed to do so providing that they obtain approval from the Superintendent of the student's District of Residence in accordance with the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education *Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process* located at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines.

In all cases, nonresident applicants must file a Chapter 74 *Vocational Technical Nonresident Student Tuition Application* (located at: www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions) with the Superintendent of the student's district of residence in accordance with the MA Department of Education *Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process* pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74. www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres_guidelines.

If the student's parent/guardian finds that the decision of the Superintendent of the District of Residence is contrary to law, regulations, Board of Education, or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education policy, the application may be forwarded to the Department for review within 10 business days of its receipt from the District of Residence in accordance with the Guidelines for the Vocational Technical Education Program Nonresident Student Tuition Process pursuant to M.G.L. c. 74. M.G.L. c. 74 Section 8A requires that the municipality of residence provide transportation to students admitted to Assabet as nonresidents under M.G.L. c.74, Sections 7 and 7C.

HOMESCHOOLED STUDENTS:

Students who are formally home-schooled may apply for admission to Assabet provided all admission criteria are followed. The Home School student's parent(s)/guardians(s) must submit a copy of the Home School approval letter from the local school superintendent.

TRANSFER STUDENTS:

Students already participating in Chapter 74 programs at another school may apply for admission to Assabet and will be subject to the same admissions standards as other applicants. Transfer applications will be considered for the following school year and be processed on the same timeline as the first-year student applicants. Transfer students from other M.G.L. c. 74 state-approved vocational-technical programs, who move into the Assabet School District are eligible to apply.

SCHOOL CHOICE:

Assabet does not participate in the inter-district school choice program. The inter-district school choice program, [M.G.L. c. 76, § 12B](#), allows parents/guardians to send their children to schools in communities other than the city or town in which they reside.

IV. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. Students interested in applying to Assabet for fall admission to the 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade must:
 - a. Obtain an application from the local school guidance counselor, from the Assabet's website www.assabet.org or from the Assabet admissions office. Applications for the following school year will be available on October 15, 2021.
 - b. Return the completed application, signed by the applicant and parent/guardian, to the Assabet Admissions office by the January 15, 2022 deadline.
 - c. Have an informational interview with a member of the Assabet admissions committee. Every effort is made to conduct interviews with the students sending school. In cases of student absence on interview days, admissions representatives will work with sending school professionals to reschedule the interview. If a time is not established the Assabet Admissions/Public Relations Representative will contact the applicant's family to arrange for interview time and location.
 - d. All admissions materials will be available in the students' home language.
2. It is the responsibility of the sending school counselor (or other school personnel, if applicable) to:
 - Provide information about Assabet, its programs, and the timeline of the application process to students upon request.
 - Assist in organizing and scheduling school presentations
 - Assist in organizing and scheduling Assabet visits
 - Provide contact information pursuant to current regulations for students and families in their district
 - Complete the end of the year form for each accepted student to determine final enrollment eligibility.

LATE APPLICATIONS/WAITLIST:

Candidates for fall admission to grades 9, 10, or 11 who apply after the due date and meet the minimum criteria will be placed on the waitlist based on the date of application. The waitlist will remain in place for one school year. At the conclusion of the school year, applicants will be asked if they would like to be considered for seats that become available within their graduating class. Applicants will be invited to resubmit their materials for submission in the new lottery/waitlist if seats are available.

WITHDRAWN STUDENTS:

Students who withdraw from Assabet may reapply for admission to Assabet following the procedures contained herein. Applications for readmission will be evaluated using the criteria contained in this Admission Policy

V. ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

It is the responsibility of the AVRTHS Superintendent to supervise the administration of the policies and procedures required to admit and enroll applicants consistent with all applicable laws, regulations, and guidance.

The committee consists of the following:

- Director of Pupil Personnel Services, Chairperson
- Assabet Admissions/ Public Relations Representative
- School Counselors
- 2-4 Volunteer Teachers

The responsibilities of the Admissions Committee include:

- a. following of the admissions procedures
- b. processing applications
- c. interviewing prospective students
- d. acceptance of students according to the procedures and criteria in the admission policy.
- e. establishment of a waiting list of candidates if all available seats have been filled.

VI. ADMISSIONS COMMUNICATION POLICIES

Assabet maintains a calendar of events on its website www.assabet.org where it provides information on the admissions process, as well as other information about its programs. Students and their families can request hard copies of the calendar by calling or emailing the Admissions Office at admissions@assabet.org.

AVRTHS disseminates information about the school and/or recruitment information through a variety of methods. Including but not limited to:

- a. A timetable of all admission activities is developed in August posted to the school website and mailed to the guidance office of each sending school district and to each seventh and eighth-grade student in those districts.
- b. Assabet will work with all in district schools to schedule presentations in feeding middle schools, including student panels, information on application procedures, timelines, and technical program opportunities
- c. Career Awareness Days are scheduled in the Fall, and all eighth-graders are invited to visit the school and see the technical programs in action. Transportation to and from Career Awareness Days is provided by Assabet.
- d. A school-wide open house in December during which parents, students, and the local community can see demonstrations and talk to teachers in all of the academic and technical programs in the school. Admissions Information Sessions are presented for prospective

applicants and their parents.

- e. The Assabet recruitment materials, which describe the vocational-technical programs, academic courses, sports, clubs, cooperative education, and special education resources, are distributed to every seventh and eighth-grade student, supplied to all local sending schools, and distributed during all open house and information sessions. All recruitment materials are available in the dominant languages of the sending communities.
- f. Further assistance for families in need. Including assistance and in-person evenings for filling out necessary forms.

Assabet offers tours to interested individual applicants, as well as, groups. To request a tour, please call or email our Admissions Office at admissions@assabet.org. If the agreed-upon time slot for a tour occurs during the applicant's school day, the Admissions Office will provide confirmation to the applicant's current school that the applicant attended a tour during this time. Such tours are as excused absences by sending districts.

VII. SELECTION PROCESS

When more students apply to Assabet than available seats.

The minimum requirements will be the following:

1. Completed application submitted to Assabet by January 15
2. Applicants must attend an informational interview.
3. Applicants must submit a letter of recommendation. A form is provided with the application. The recommendation may be written by a counselor, teacher, advisor, coach, family member, or community member.

Applicants with completed requirements within the admissions timeline will be assigned a lottery number. The admissions committee will meet for a lottery evening, then conduct the lottery until seats are filled. Applicants from district towns who meet the minimum admission requirements is admitted before any non-residents seeking admission. All completed applications included (application and reference) received by January 15th will be considered for fall admissions and included in the initial lottery. Applicants must participate in an informational interview that will take place from January to March. The initial lottery will take place in April. Applicants received after this timeline will be processed and placed on the waitlist in the order of date application received

VIII. EXPLORATORY PROGRAM (IF APPLICABLE)

Because AVRTHS offers more than 5 Chapter 74 state-approved programs, Assabet provides a half-year exploratory program for 9th-grade students, which is based on the applicable Vocational Technical Education and Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

All ninth-graders who enroll at Assabet participate in a 5-month vocational-technical exploratory program designed to help them learn about their talents and interests relative to a variety of different vocational-technical programs. After a 36-hour mini exploratory that includes rotating through all program offerings,

students choose the top 6 programs they wish to explore for an extended period of time (approx. 30 hours per program).

During the extended exploratory students will receive a feedback form from the technical program teachers which includes strengths and areas for improvement. This feedback will not be considered or factored in during the placement lottery.

IX. PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ADMISSION

Assabet uses the following system for students to identify and enroll in their Chapter 74 technical program:

Assabet will host a decision night for all 9th-grade students and families, they will have the opportunity to submit their first, second, and third choice. Students must have explored a program to rank it as their first, second, or third choice. Staff will be available to assist families who require or would like assistance with this process. The school counseling staff will conduct a technical program selection meeting to process a lottery for students’ first choices. Subsequent second and third choice lotteries will be conducted for all students are placed based on space availability. The lottery system will be used to place students on a waitlist in the event that they are not placed in their first, second, or third place program. In the occurrence that, upon conclusion of the lottery, students did not receive a seat in their first, second, or third choice program students will be offered seats in programs that have openings. Waitlists will remain in effect for one school year following the initial lottery.

Students may only be granted continued enrollment in a specific technical program if they have been promoted to the next grade level; if they are not ultimately promoted to the next grade level, due to failure or credit deficiency they will forfeit their seat in the program.

Students who have received disciplinary infractions for conduct which suspension or expulsion was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H or §37H1/2, or for which suspension or expulsion for more than 10 days was imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H3/4 during the exploratory process for their desired program will not be eligible to choose that program during the selection process.

X. REVIEW AND APPEALS PROCESS

ADMISSION TO Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

If Assabet does not accept an applicant or places them on a waitlist, the applicant or their parent/guardian may request that the Superintendent of Assabet review that decision within 30 days of the admissions decision.

These requests can be made in the following ways:

By email	By hard-copy mail or hand delivery
ehoule@assabet.org	215 Fitchburg Street, Marlborough, MA 01752

The Superintendent will respond to these requests for review in writing and indicate whether the decision to deny admission to the student, or waitlist the student, will stand or be overturned. In making this determination, the Superintendent will review the following information:

Material submitted by the applicant
A written record of the lottery process

ADMISSION TO SPECIFIC PROGRAMS WITHIN Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School

Students who have been admitted to Assabet will need to apply to a specific program of study (also known as a “major” or “shop”) during the beginning of Term 2.

If the student applies to a program and is denied or waitlisted, the student may appeal their rejection to the Superintendent in the following ways:

By email	By hard-copy mail or hand delivery
ehoule@assabet.org	215 Fitchburg Street, Marlborough MA 01752

In making this determination, the Superintendent will review the following information:

Material submitted by the applicant
A written record of the lottery process

XI. MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

Assabet maintains records of all students who apply, enroll, or are waitlisted, to facilitate analysis of its admissions system and compliance with applicable laws and regulations. Assabet will provide this information to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education upon request.

PROPOSED: 9/14/2021 APPROVED: 9/28/2021
 REVISED: APPROVED:

POST-GRADUATE ADMISSIONS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District offers a one-year postgraduate vocational-technical programs for students who have already earned a high school diploma or equivalent.

I. Eligibility

The post-graduate program at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School is open to anyone, regardless of their city or town of residence who has earned a high school diploma or equivalent.

II. Equal Educational Opportunity

Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges and courses of study without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

III. Organizational Structure

The post-graduate program operates concurrently with the high school program and makes available to adults approved Chapter 74 vocational-technical career training. Enrollment in the post-graduate program is flexible, allowing adults to start on a rolling basis throughout the year. Assabet Valley reserves the right to limit the number of seats available to post-graduates in each program.

In-district post-graduate students are eligible for significant tuition support from their communities of residence. Out-of-district students are responsible for all tuition charges. Federal Pell grants and public agency support are available to qualified students.

POST-SECONDARY ADMISSIONS - PRACTICAL NURSING

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District is approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Board of Registration in Nursing to offer a ten-month post-secondary program in Practical Nursing which prepares men and women for the National Council Licensure Examination for Practical Nurses in the state of Massachusetts.

I. Eligibility

The Practical Nursing Program at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School is open to anyone, regardless of their city or town of residence, who is at least 17-1/2 years of age, has graduated from high school or holds a high school equivalency certificate (GED), and who meets the health requirements of the program.

Priority is given to residents of the School District, which includes: Berlin, Hudson, Marlborough, Maynard, Northborough, Southborough and Westborough.

II. Equal Educational Opportunity

Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District admits students and makes available to them its advantages, privileges, and courses of study without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

III. Organizational Structure

The Practical Nursing Program operates concurrently with the high school program, meeting for forty weeks on the same calendar, and offering classes and laboratory practice between 7:50 a.m. and 2:25 p.m. Clinical practice is scheduled for the same hours in a variety of community settings including hospitals, long-term care facilities, clinics, adult day settings and home care.

Program faculty are under the supervision of the Director of Licensed Practical Nursing. An advisory committee meets regularly to review curriculum and make recommendations. The Chair of this advisory committee serves on the General Advisory Committee of the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District.

In-district Practical Nursing students are eligible for significant tuition support from their communities of residence. Out-of-district students are responsible for all tuition charges. Every student is also responsible for program expenses including uniforms, test fees, lab supplies and books. The Pell Grant, Stafford Loan Program, Massachusetts Grant Scholarship Program and Massachusetts No-Interest Loan Program are available to qualified students.

PRACTICAL NURSING PROGRAM REFUND POLICY

In compliance with the guidelines for refund of student charges set forth by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, the following refund policy has been established and approved by the Assabet Valley School Committee. The non-refundable seat reservation fee is not part of the tuition.

Refund Schedule:

<u>If withdrawal occurs:</u>	<u>Tuition Refund:</u>
August 1 -August 31 st	75% of the tuition
September 1 st -September 15th	50% of the tuition
September 16 th and after	No refund

This refund policy is applicable to all students who do not receive financial aid. Student withdrawals and request for refunds must be made in writing and addressed to the Director of Business Operations who is the designated institutional officer. All refunds will be made within a 30 day period.

Students receiving Title IV Federal Financial Assistance are subject to federal refund policy (R2T4). R2T4 calculations are completed within 45 days from the date of determination. A student who withdraws may become ineligible for Federal Student Aid and thus is responsible for his or her tuition obligation.

Practical Nursing Program Registration Fee

The non-refundable registration fee is \$500.00 used to pay for NCLEX-PN licensure examination fees for graduating PN students.

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition and fees for Chapter 74 programs are established per the listing below.

Out-of-District High School Student Tuition

The tuition rate charged for Out-of-District High School Student Tuition, Post-Secondary (LPN) Out-of-District Tuition and Post-Graduate Out-of District Tuition will be as published annually by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Due to the timing of publishing these rates and the need for budget planning, the rate charged in any given school year will be the rate published for the prior year. An additional Registration Fee, set by the School Committee, will be charged for the Post-Secondary (LPN) Program and for the Post-Graduate Program.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 74:7C; 74:37C

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

As required by law, the district will work with homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth 1 (collectively, "homeless students") as well as their families or legal guardians to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, school nutrition programs, summer programming and extracurricular activities.

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

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

Students Remaining in Schools of Origin

It is presumed to be in the best interest of homeless students to remain in their schools of origin, i.e. the school that the student was attending at the time he or she became homeless, or the last school the student attended prior to becoming homeless. Homeless students may continue to attend their school of origin for as long as they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. For homeless students who complete the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term "school of origin" shall also include the receiving school in the same school district educating students at the next grade level.

Homeless students are entitled to transportation comparable to that provided for all other students attending school in the district. The district will transport students who are sheltered or temporarily residing within the district to the students' school of origin. For homeless students attending a school of origin located outside the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, the district in which the school of origin is located will coordinate with the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to provide the transportation services necessary for the student, and these districts will divide the cost equally. Formerly homeless students who find permanent housing mid-school year will continue to receive transportation services until the end of the school year.

Students Enrolling in District Where Sheltered or Temporarily Residing

Parents or guardians may elect to enroll homeless students in the school district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, rather than having the student remain in the school of origin. Enrollment changes for homeless students should take place immediately.

If homeless students are unable to provide written proof of their shelter or temporary residence in the district, the homeless liaison will work with the family seeking enrollment to determine homelessness. Information regarding a homeless student's living arrangement shall be considered a student education record, and not directory information. Records containing information about the homeless student's living arrangement may not be disclosed without the consent of the parent or satisfaction of another student-privacy related exemption.

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

Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families who reside in the district. Accordingly, the district will provide transportation services to school in a manner comparable to the transportation provided for all other students in the district.

Dispute Resolution

If the district disagrees with a parent or guardian's decision to keep a student enrolled in the school of origin and considers enrollment in the district where the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to be in the student's best interest, the district will explain to the parent, in writing and in a language the parent can understand, [2](#) the rationale for its determination and provide parent with written notice of their rights to appeal the district's determination to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [3](#). During the pendency of any such appeal, the student should remain enrolled in the school selected by the parent or guardian, receiving transportation to school and access to other available services and programs.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Advisory on Homeless Education Assistance contains additional information about educating homeless students and the appeal process. This advisory is available at the following link: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/haa/mckinney-vento.docx>

Homeless Liaison

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

amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students. The liaison shall ensure district staff receive professional development and other support on issues involving homeless students.

LEGAL REFS.: The McKinney-Vento Act and Title I, Part A, as Amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015

SOURCE: MASC October 2019

PROPOSED: 6/5/2018 APPROVED: 6/26/2018
REVISED: 12/9/2019 APPROVED: 1/7/2020

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MILITARY CHILDREN

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

Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REFS: M.G. L. 15E;
Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children

SOURCE: MASC October 2019

PROPOSED: 12/10/2019 APPROVED: 1/7/2020
REVISED: APPROVED:

Education Opportunities for Children in Foster Care

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

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

Best Interest Determination

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

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

Transportation

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

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

Immediate Enrollment

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

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

LEGAL REFS: *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA);
Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 (Fostering Connections Act)

SOURCE: MASC October 2019

PROPOSED: 12/10/2019 APPROVED: 1/7/2020
REVISED: APPROVED:

SCHOOL CHOICE

It is the policy of this school district **not** to admit non-resident students under the terms and conditions of the Interdistrict School Choice Law (M.G.L. 76:12B.) This decision must be reaffirmed annually prior to June 1st by a vote of the School Committee following a public hearing. In the event the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District School Committee votes to participate, the following local conditions would apply:

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:6; 71:6A; 76:6; 76:12; 76:12B
BESE Regulations 603 CMR 26.00

STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that parents of students attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their students attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the student; and observance of major religious holidays.

A student may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his character. Parents can help their students by not allowing them to miss school needlessly. Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a student. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

Student Absence Notification Program

The Principal, will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

The Principal or designee shall make a reasonable effort to meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Dropout Prevention

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent-Director or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if

applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:1](#); 76:1B; [76:16](#); 76:18; [76:20](#)

EXCLUSIONS AND EXEMPTIONS FROM SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Denial of Admission

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

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

Graduation from the twelfth grade of any school or receipt of any document evidencing completion of the equivalent of a secondary curriculum;

Having been expelled during the same school year from this District or any district in the Commonwealth;

Not being a resident of the District and the District has opted not to participate in the School Choice Law;

Failure to comply with the provisions of the Massachusetts School Entry Immunization Law.

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

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights--including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.
3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make, rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:37H; 71:82 through 71:86

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

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

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

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

Student Advisory Committee

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

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

CROSS REF.: BDF, Advisory Committees to the School Committee

PROPOSED: 6/5/18

APPROVED: 6/26/18

REVISED: 10/9/19

APPROVED: 11/12/19

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

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

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

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

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

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

Suspension

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed¹, the Principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension:

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

Emergency Removal

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

¹ Except for offenses referenced in the note at the end of this policy.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Superintendent-Director's Hearing

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

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

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

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

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

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

Expulsion

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

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

Academic Progress

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

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

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

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

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

Reporting

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

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

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

NOTE: The DESE regulations on student discipline and this policy, consistent with law, set forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a Principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, S. 37H or 37H½. The Principal, pursuant to the previously referenced statute may remove a student who has committed any of the disciplinary offenses above referenced from school for more than 90 days in a school year. Except that the removal from school for such offenses is subject to the provision of continuing educational services needed to make academic progress and, the requirement that all school districts regardless of the type of offense shall report school discipline data and analysis to DESE. Also, the prohibited actions above referenced are subject to the provision that allows the Commissioner to investigate each school that has a significant number of students suspended and expelled for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year and to make recommendations thereon.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

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

They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

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

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

STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

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

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

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

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

Distribution of Literature

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

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

GANG ACTIVITY/SECRET SOCIETIES

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

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

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

Symbols

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

Prevention Education

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

SECRET SOCIETIES

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

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

PROHIBITION OF HAZING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HAZING

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

BULLYING PREVENTION

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District;

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

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

Prevention and Intervention Plan

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

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

Reporting

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

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

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

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

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

Investigation Procedures

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Retaliation

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

Target Assistance

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

Training and Assessment

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

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

Publication and Notice

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

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

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

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District website.

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

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

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

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

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

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

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

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

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

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

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

CROSS REFS.: IHAMB, Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco
GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

POSSESSION OF WEAPONS

Possession of weapons in school or on school property is governed by the Massachusetts School Reform Law of 1993 and a School Security Ordinance, Chapter 197, Code of the City of Marlborough.

The weapons rules and consequences statement in the Teacher Handbook accepted by a vote of the District School Committee will be the governing policy for possession of weapons for staff and visitors.

LEGAL REF.: Code of City of Marlboro, Ch 197

HARASSMENT OF STUDENTS

Harassment of students by other students, employees, vendors and other third parties will not be tolerated in the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District. The alleged harassment must involve conduct that occurred within the school's own program or activity, such as whether the harassment occurred at a location or under circumstances where the school owned, or substantially controlled the premises, exercised oversight, supervision or discipline over the location or participants, or funded, sponsored, promoted or endorsed the event where the alleged harassment occurred, against a person in the United States. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of the School District, school buses, or attending or engaging in school sponsored activities.

Harassment prohibited by the District includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion pursuant to disciplinary codes. Employees who have been found to violate this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including, termination of employment, subject to contractual disciplinary obligations.

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

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student.

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

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

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

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

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. Individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by others.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment through designation of Title IX Coordinator or building based employees, who may include principals or their designees. The superintendent will recommend, in consultation with the principals, opportunities to the designated recipients for appropriate training. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the District will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally appropriate disciplinary, restorative and/or corrective action.

The District will respond promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of sexual harassment through designation of the Title IX Coordinator or building based employees to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights, pursuant to our detailed response protocol. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, the District will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally- appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BESE 603 CMR 26:00
34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

CROSS REF.: AC, Non-Discrimination Policy Including Harassment and Retaliation

SOURCE: MASC – December 2021

PREGNANT STUDENTS

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

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

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational Technical School District does not require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school.

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

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

SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

Searches by Staff

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding students, their own and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each student's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well-conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community. Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any concerns in a friendly and informal manner.

Students--and their parents and/or guardians--who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance through the appropriate channels. Appeals of individual disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings.

CROSS REF: JIC Student Discipline

CO-CURRICULAR AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

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

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

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

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

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Organizations

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26.00

STUDENT ACTIVITY ACCOUNTS

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

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

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

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

Graduating Class Funds

Funds held on behalf of graduating classes are to be held within the Student Activity Checking Account for the High School. Such funds shall be designated by the class' Year of Graduation, such as Class of 1998, etc.

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

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

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

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:47

STUDENT TRAVEL

All student trips which include late night or overnight travel must have prior approval of the School Committee. Initial approval by the School Committee is required before engaging students in fundraising activities. The School Committee will also consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to granting initial approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed including, but not limited to, all logistical details involving transportation, accommodation arrangements and fundraising efforts. The School Committee requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates, if possible.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. The School Committee will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

CROSS REFS.: IJOA, Field Trips

LEGAL REFS.: Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 (et al) approved on October 9, 2002
M.G.L. 69:1B; 71:37N

INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

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

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

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

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

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

CROSS REFS.: AC, Nondiscrimination (and subcodes)

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities¹ including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for school activities; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

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

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

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. Assabet Valley pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. School requires physician form when student/athlete has seen a doctor;
5. School nurse is responsible for ICAP form indicating plan to return to full academic activities;
6. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

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

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the

¹ Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach or athletic director, including, but not limited to, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country track, field hockey, football, golf, ice hockey, lacrosse, soccer, Softball, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), volleyball, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

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

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

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

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION REGULATIONS

Section I. What is a Concussion?

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

Section II. Mechanism of Injury:

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

Section III. Signs and Symptoms:

Signs (what you see):

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

Symptoms (reported by athlete):

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double vision/ blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Sensitivity to noise (tinnitus)
- Feels sluggish
- Feels foggy
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering
- Trouble with sleeping/ excess sleep
- Dizziness
- Sadness
- Seeing stars
- Vacant stare/ glassy eyed
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Inappropriate emotions

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

Section IV. Management and Referral Guidelines:

1. When an athlete loses consciousness for any reason, the athletic trainer will start the EAP (Emergency Action Plan) by activating EMS; check ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation); stabilize the cervical spine; and transport the injured athlete to the appropriate hospital via ambulance. If the athletic trainer is not available, the coach should immediately call EMS, check ABCs and not move the athlete until help arrives.
2. Any athlete who is removed from the competition or event and begins to develop signs and symptoms of a worsening brain injury will be transported to the hospital immediately in accordance with the EAP. **Worsening signs and symptoms requiring immediate physician referral include:**
 - A. Amnesia lasting longer than 15 minutes
 - B. Deterioration in neurological function
 - C. Decreasing level of consciousness
 - D. Decrease or irregularity of respiration
 - E. Decrease or irregularity in pulse
 - F. Increase in blood pressure

- G. Unequal, dilated, or unreactive pupils
 - H. Cranial nerve deficits
 - I. Any signs or symptoms of associated injuries, spine or skull fracture, or bleeding
 - J. Mental-status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion, agitation
 - K. Seizure activity
 - L. Vomiting/ worsening headache
 - M. Motor deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - N. Sensory deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - O. Balance deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - P. Cranial nerve deficits subsequent to initial on-field assessment
 - Q. Post-Concussion symptoms worsen
 - R. Athlete is still symptomatic at the end of the game
3. After a student athlete sustains a concussion, the athletic trainer will use the Standardized Assessment for Concussion (SAC) to assess and document the student athlete's concussion. The athletic trainer will also report on the student athlete's signs and symptoms by using the Signs and Symptoms Check-List. On the signs and symptoms checklist, the athletic trainer will also check pulse and blood pressure of each student athlete with a suspected concussion. After the initial evaluation of a concussion, all signs and symptoms will be tracked on the computer using the ImPact Test.
4. Any athlete who is symptomatic but stable is allowed to go home with his/her parent(s)/guardian(s) following the head injury.
- A. If the head injury occurs at practice, parent(s)/guardian(s) will immediately be notified and must come and pick up the student athlete and talk to the certified athletic trainer in person.
 - B. If the injury occurs at a game or event the student athlete may go home with the parent/guardian(s) after talking with the certified athletic trainer.

V. Gradual Return to Play Protocol:

1. The new concussion law requires student athletes and their parents, coaches, athletic directors, school nurses and physicians and others learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written materials. The law requires that athletes and their parents inform their coaches or athletic trainer about prior head injuries at the beginning of the season. If a student athlete becomes unconscious or suffers a known or suspected concussion during a game or practice, the law mandates removing the student from play or practice, and requires written certification from a licensed medical professional (i.e. - physician, athletic trainer, etc.) for "return to play". The chart below may serve as the Return to Play guidelines*.

The law also prohibits coaches, trainers and others from encouraging or permitting a student athlete to use sports equipment as a weapon or to engage in sports techniques that unreasonably endanger the health and safety of him/herself or other players, such as helmet to helmet hits.

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have completed the concussion training and understand the signs and symptoms of a concussion. Also, I agree to allow the Athletic Trainer or designee to administer the ImPACT test for baseline scores, subsequent post injury testing, and to follow the preset return to play guidelines.

Athlete's Name

Athlete's Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

2. Return to play guidelines

Stage	Activity	Objective
1. No activity	Complete cognitive (e.g. mental) rest	Recovery
2. Light aerobic exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary bicycle keeping intensity less than 50% of maximum predicted heart rate	Increase heart rate
3. Increased Light Aerobic Exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary bicycle keeping intensity less than 75% of maximum predicted heart rate	Increase heart rate
4. Sport-specific exercise	Skating drills in ice hockey, running drills in soccer. No head impact activities	Add movement
5. Non-contact training drills	Progression to more complex training drills, e.g. passing drills in football and ice hockey	Exercise, coordination and use of brain
6. Full contact practice	Following medical clearance , participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and allow coaching staff to assess functional skills
7. Return to play	Normal game play	

3. PARENT/ATHLETE HEAD INJURY DISCLOSURE FORM

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 111, Section 222, participants of interscholastic athletic programs and their parents prior to each season must disclose any information relative to any sports head injury history. This information must be shared with the athletic trainer and coach(s). A copy will be kept in student athletes file in the Athletics Directors office.

Have you ever exhibited signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) during a sporting competition at any level?

_____ YES _____ NO

Have you ever been diagnosed with a concussion?

_____ YES _____ NO

If yes to either of the above questions please list and explain each individual circumstance (signs, symptom or behavior followed by date of incident)

Do you currently have or have you ever had athletic participation restrictions in relation to being diagnosed with a concussion?

_____ YES _____ NO

I attest under penalty of law that the above information is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Athlete/Participation Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (Print)

Athlete/Participation Name (Print)

Date

Date

- 4. Each student athlete will complete a baseline test at the beginning of their sport season. **All student athletes and club cheerleading members will undergo ImPact testing.** Student athletes will be re-tested every other year. If a student athlete plays more than one sport during the academic year, their test will remain valid. For example, if a soccer student athlete also plays basketball in the winter, the student athlete will not have to take the ImPact Baseline Test again in the winter. If a student athlete posts scores below the norm, the student athlete will be re-tested at another time with either the certified athletic trainer or school nurse. Student athletes cannot begin practice until a valid baseline score is obtained during their designated time to take the test.
 - A. At the beginning of every sport season, student athletes are required to complete a concussion history form and return it to the athletic department. This information will be recorded in the student information system for tracking purposes, as outlined in Section V, paragraphs 1-3.

- B. Following any concussion the athletic trainer must notify the athletic director and school nurses.
- C. Following a concussion the student athlete will take a **post-injury test within 24 to 48 hours following the head injury. STUDENT ATHLETES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO MOVE ON TO FUNCTIONAL/PHYSICAL TESTING UNTIL THEIR IMPACT TEST IS BACK TO THE BASELINE SCORE AND ASYMPTOMATIC.** After a student athlete takes their first post-injury test, the student athlete will not be re-tested again for **5 days.**
- D. Assabet Valley may require a doctor's note to return to play.
- E. Following a post-injury test, the certified athletic trainer will document all post-injury tests taken by all students/athletes.
- F. The certified athletic trainer will also document the date on which the athlete is asymptomatic and sign the document agreeing that all the above statements are true and accurate.
- G. Once the athlete starts on the exertional post concussion tests, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified and the athlete will be sent home with all signed documents relating to head injury. At this time the parent/guardian(s) must bring the student athlete to a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, licensed physician assistant, nurse practitioner or other appropriately trained or licensed healthcare professional to be medically cleared for participation in the extracurricular activity.
- H. Student athletes who continue to exhibit concussion symptoms for a week or more must be evaluated by a physician before returning to play.**
- I. Once a student athlete's post-injury test is back at the student athlete's baseline score, the student athlete will go through 5 days of Exertional Post Concussion Tests. The student athlete must be asymptomatic for all functional and physical tests to return to play (RTP). All tests will be administered by a certified athletic trainer.

Exertional Post Concussion Tests:

- A. Assabet's Return to Play Guidelines will be followed, as outlined in Section V. Paragraphs 1-3.

Section VI. School Nurse Responsibilities:

1. Assist in testing all student athletes with baseline and post-injury ImPact testing.
2. Participate and complete the CDC training course on concussions. A certificate of completion will be recorded by the nurse leader yearly.
3. Complete symptom assessment when student athlete enters Health Office (HO) with questionable concussion during school hours. Repeat in 15 minutes.
4. Observe students with a concussion for a minimum of 30 minutes.
5. If symptoms are present, notify parent/guardian(s) and instruct parent/guardian(s) that student must be evaluated by an MD.
 - (a) If symptoms are not present, the student may return to class.
6. If symptoms appear after a negative assessment, MD referral is necessary.
7. Allow students who are in recovery to rest in HO when needed.
8. Develop plan for students regarding pain management.

9. School nurse will notify teachers and guidance counselors of any students or student athletes who have academic restrictions or modifications related to their concussion.
10. Educate parents and teachers about the effects of concussion and returning to school and activity.
11. If injury occurs during the school day, inform administrator and complete accident/incident form.
12. Enter physical exam dates and concussion dates into the student information system.

Section VII. School Responsibilities:

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

Section VIII. Athletic Director Responsibilities:

1. Provide parents, athletes, coaches, and volunteers with educational training and concussion materials yearly.
2. Ensure that all educational training programs are completed and recorded.
3. Ensure that all students meet the physical exam requirements consistent with 105 CMR 200.000 prior to participation in any extracurricular athletic activity
4. Ensure that all students participating in extracurricular athletic activity have completed and submitted their pre-participation forms, which include health history form, concussion history form, and MIAA form.
5. Ensure that athletes are prohibited from engaging in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of an athlete, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.
6. Ensure that all head injury forms are completed by parent/guardian(s) or coaches and reviewed by the coach, athletic trainer, school nurse and school physician.
7. Inform parent/guardian(s) that, if all necessary forms are not completed, their child will not participate in athletic extracurricular activities.

Section IX. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:

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

Section X. Student and Student Athlete Responsibilities:

1. Complete Baseline ImPact Test prior to participation in athletics.
2. Return required concussion history form prior to participation in athletics.
3. Participate in all concussion training and education and return certificate of completion to the athletic department prior to participation in athletics.

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

Section XI. Coach Responsibilities:

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

Section XII. Post Concussion Syndrome:

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

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

Section XIII. Second Impact Syndrome:

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

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

Section XIV. Concussion Education:

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

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

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

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

STUDENT CONDUCT

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

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); 71:37H ½; 71:[37L](#); [76:16](#); [76:17](#)
603 CMR 53.00

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

State law provides that:

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

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

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

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

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

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

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

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent-Director will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements; including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00,
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

The Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

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

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

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

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

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

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

STUDENT WELFARE

Supervision of Students

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

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

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

Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect

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

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

Student Safety

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

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

Safety on the Playground and Playing Field

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

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

Fire Drills and Reporting

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

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

STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

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

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

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS

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

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

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

Procedures for Emergency at School

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

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

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

- Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;
- Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parents. Requests made by parents for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;
- Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately;
- Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

Student Illness or Injury

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

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

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

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:53;54;54A;54B;55;55A;55B;56;57;69:8A

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

PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

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

Every student will be required to present proof of a physical examination within the past twelve (12) months upon enrolling in the school. The results of examinations will be a basis for determining what corrective measures or modifications of school activities, if any, should be recommended. A record of all examinations and recommendations will be kept.

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

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

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

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

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

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

INOCULATIONS OF STUDENTS

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

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

CROSS REF.: JF, School Admissions

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

By law admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

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

Exceptions:

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

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:54B](#)

Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.00; 244 CMR 3.00

GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Guidance is defined as helping individuals understand themselves in the light of their abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, strengths and limitations. This process should assist students in the development of their potential; their decisions relating to personal, educational, and vocational matters, and also in becoming capable of mature self-guidance.

The school system's guidance program will be based on this definition and developed from these broad fundamental principles:

1. Individuals are different from one another in their capabilities, aptitudes, interests, needs, goals, desires and values.
2. Conditions may be improved. Equality of educational opportunity will benefit the individual and society.
3. Guidance is a continuous and developmental process. Every experience of the individual influences his/her performance in some way.
4. Guidance does not propose to program an individual's course of action but rather tries to assist him/her in arriving at his/her own satisfactory solutions.

Guidance services will include: educational guidance; testing programs; occupational, career, and higher education assistance and information; study aids; consultation services; and personal developmental guidance as needed. These services will be available to all students.

While some of the problems of the individual may relate to behavior and consequently entail guidance on behavior, student discipline will not be a regular function of guidance personnel.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:38A through 71:38F; 71:46G
603 CMR 26.00

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

STUDENT FEES, FINES, AND CHARGES

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

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

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

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

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

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

Any fee or charge due to the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year

STUDENT RECORDS

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

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

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

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

CROSS REF: KDB, Public's Right to Know

STUDENT RECORDS

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

Application of Rights

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

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

Definition of Terms

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

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

Authorized school personnel: shall consist of three groups:

- (1) School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the School Committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling and/or diagnostic capacity. Any such personnel who are not employed directly by the School Committee shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- (2) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche, who are either employed by the School Committee or are employed under a School Committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- (3) The evaluation team which evaluates a student.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

CROSS REF: KDB, Public's Right to Know

STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

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

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

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

The purpose of the policy is to:

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

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

Provide a service to parents and students.

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

SECTION K

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

KA	SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS
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KLJ RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

**KLK RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL
AUTHORITIES**

SCHOOL/COMMUNITY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee believes that the District is an integral part of the community and that community support is necessary for the District's operation and achievement of excellence. The School Committee and District staff members recognize that community support is based on a mutual exchange, a dynamic process in which the District contributes to the community's success and, in turn, benefits from the community's resources.

In order to maintain productive relationships with the community, the District is committed to sustaining:

- Effective, accurate, and meaningful communications that facilitate dialogue, encourage involvement in District programs, and create community advocacy for its public schools.
- Volunteer programs that provide mutually enriching experiences for our students, staff, and community volunteers.
- Recognition programs that publicly honor the contributions of our students, employees, and community partners and express pride in our individual and collective accomplishments.
- Community service efforts which enable the District's staff and students to express their commitment to the community.

SCHOOL/PARENT RELATIONS GOALS

It is the general goal of the District to foster relationships with parents, which encourage cooperation between the home and school in establishing and achieving common educational goals for students.

While parents are individually responsible for their students, the District provides direct services of education and indirect services for students during the time when they are within the supervision of school personnel. Consistent with these shared responsibilities and as appropriate to the maturity of the student, members of the school staff will consult with parents regarding student progress and achievement, methods to enhance student development, and matters of correction.

Additionally, parental involvement in the schools is encouraged through regular communication with the school Principal and staff, the parent/teacher organizations, the school volunteer program, and other opportunities for participation in school activities and District programs.

NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' RIGHTS

As required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of their children ("non-custodial parents").

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

- (a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless the school or district has been given documentation that:
 1. The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 2. The parent has been denied visitation, or
 3. The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
 4. There is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- (b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).
- (c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- (d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).
- (e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- (f) Upon receipt of a court order which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H
603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents
20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

RELATIONS WITH PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

To foster relationships with parents that encourage the home and school to work together to establish and achieve common educational goals for students, the Superintendent-Director and the professional staff will:

1. Consult with and encourage parents to share in school planning and in setting objectives and evaluating programs.
2. Help parents understand the educational process and their role in promoting it.
3. Provide for parent understanding of school operations.
4. Provide opportunities for parents to be informed of their student's development and the criteria for its measurement.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION-MAKING

The School Committee endorses the concept that community participation in the affairs of the schools is essential if the school district and the community are to maintain mutual confidence and respect and work together to improve the quality of education for students. It therefore intends to exert every effort to identify the desires of the community and to be responsive, through its actions, to those desires.

All citizens will be encouraged to express ideas, concerns, and/or questions about the schools to the school administration, to any appointed advisory bodies, and to the Committee.

Residents who are specially qualified because of interest, training, experience, or personal characteristics, will be encouraged to assume an active role in school affairs. From time to time, these people may be invited by the Committee to act as advisors, either individually or in groups.

The Committee and the staff will give substantial weight to the advice they receive from individuals and community groups interested in the schools, particularly from those individuals and groups they have invited to advise them regarding specific problems, but will use their best judgment in arriving at decisions.

CROSS REF.: BDF, Advisory Committees to the School Committee

PUBLIC GIFTS TO THE SCHOOLS

The Superintendent-Director will have authority to accept gifts and offers of equipment for the schools in the name of the Committee when the gift is of educational value. In the case of gifts from industry, business, or special interest groups, no extensive advertising or promotion may be involved in any donation to the schools.

Gifts that would involve changes in school plants or sites will be subject to School Committee approval.

Gifts will automatically become the property of the school system. Any gift of cash, whether or not intended by the donor for a specific purpose, will be handled as a separate account and expended at the discretion of the Committee, as provided by law.

The Committee directs the Superintendent-Director to assure that an appropriate expression of thanks is given all donors.

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

PUBLIC'S RIGHT TO KNOW

The School Committee is a public board, and its meetings and records will be a matter of public information except as such meetings and records pertain to individual personnel and other classified matters.

The School Committee supports the right of the people to know about the programs and services of their schools and will make every effort to disseminate information. All requests for information will be acted on fairly, completely and expeditiously.

The official minutes of the Committee, its written policies and regulations, and its financial records will be open for inspection at the office of the Superintendent-Director by any citizen desiring to examine them during hours when the office is open. No records pertaining to individual students or staff members will be released for inspection by the public or any unauthorized persons by the Superintendent-Director or other persons responsible for the custody of confidential files. The exception to this will be information about an individual employee (or student) that has been authorized in writing for release by the employee (or student, or student's parent).

The Principal is authorized to use all means available to keep parents and others in the particular school's community informed about the school's program and activities.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 4:7; 66:10; 30A:18-25

CROSS REFS.: BEDG, Minutes
GBJ, Personnel Records
JRA, Student Records

NEWS MEDIA RELATIONS/NEWS RELEASES

Every effort will be made to assist the press and other communications media to obtain complete and adequate coverage of the programs, problems, planning, and activities of the school district.

All representatives of the media will be given equal access to information about the school. General releases of interest to the entire community will be made available to all the media simultaneously. There will be no exclusive releases except as media representatives request information on particular programs, plans or problems.

In order that school district publicity is given wide coverage and is coordinated into a common effort and purpose, the following procedures will be followed in giving official information to the news media:

1. The School Committee chairman will be the official spokesman for the Committee, except as this duty is delegated to the Superintendent-Director.
2. News releases are the responsibility of the Superintendent-Director. All statements made to the press by staff members must be cleared with the Superintendent-Director
- 3.

While it is impossible to know how news releases will be treated by the press, every possible effort should be made to obtain coverage of school activities that will create and maintain a dignified and professionally responsible image for the school district.

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent-Director
4. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Matters referred to the Superintendent-Director and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

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

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit his complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.

Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Committee as a whole or to a Committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school administration for study and possible solution.

The Superintendent-Director will develop, for approval by the Committee, procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedures will require that an employee who is the object of a complaint be informed promptly and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as he/she sees them.

If it appears necessary, the administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the Committee for a formal hearing and decision. Statutory restrictions on executive sessions will be observed.

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

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Sessions

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The following procedures are established to ensure that a citizen's complaint is given respectful attention and that the integrity of the educational program is upheld. "Complaint" in this regulation will be restricted in meaning to that criticism of particular school employees by a citizen of the School District which includes or implies a demand for action by school authorities. Other comments and suggestions will be referred informally to affected personnel.

1. If a complaint comes first to the person against whom it is directed, he/she will listen courteously and may try to resolve the difficulty by explaining the background and educational purpose involved. If the complaint remains unsatisfied, the employee will refer him/her to the Principal or other immediate supervisor to have his/her views considered further. Whether the complaint terminates with the individual staff member involved or seems likely to go further, the staff member will immediately inform his/her supervisor of the complaint.
2. If a complaint comes first to the Principal or other supervisor of the person criticized, he/she should listen courteously or acknowledge a letter promptly and politely, but should make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats. If the complaint involves a particular employee, the supervisor should suggest a conference between the complainant and the person criticized and should inform that person immediately of the complaint.

If the complainant has already met with the person criticized and remains unsatisfied, the supervisor should invite the complainant to file his complaint in writing and offer to send him the appropriate form regarding a school employee's behavior, character or qualifications.

3. If a complaint comes first to any other school employee, that employee will refer the complainant to the person criticized or his immediate supervisor and immediately inform both.
4. No further action on the complaint should be taken unless the complainant submits the complaint in writing.
5. When a written complaint form is received, the Principal or other supervisor will schedule a conference with him/herself, the complainant, the person criticized, and if advisable, the department chairman or other personnel that either the supervisor or the person criticized feels could contribute resolution of the problem.
6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the conference above, he/she should then be referred to the Superintendent-Director, who may handle the complaint personally or refer it to other personnel, as he/she may see fit.
7. Should dissatisfaction remain after the above steps have been taken, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting. The decision of the Committee will be communicated in writing to all interested persons.

LEGAL REFS.: MG.L. 76:5
 603 CMR 26.00

PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee, though it is ultimately responsible for all curriculum and instructional materials (including library books), recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the professional staff to select books and other materials supportive of the school system's educational philosophy and goals.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the schools may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. If a parent requests that his/her own student not read a given book, the teacher and/or school administrator should resolve the situation, perhaps by arranging for use of alternative material meeting essentially the same instructional purpose. This does not apply, however, to basic program texts and materials that the Committee has adopted.
2. The Committee will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections, but recognizes that at times a reevaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material withdrawn from school use:
 - a. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to sign a complaint on a standard form on which he/she will document his criticism.
 - b. Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Superintendent-Director will provide for a reevaluation of the material in question, he/she will arrange for the appointment of a review committee from among the faculty to consider the complaint.
 - c. The Superintendent-Director will review the complaint and the committee's reevaluation and will render a decision in the matter. Should the decision be unsatisfactory to the complainant, he/she may appeal it to the Committee.

In summary, the Committee assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials it makes available to students; it holds its professional staff accountable for their proper selection. It recognizes rights of individual parents with respect to controversial materials used by their own student(s); it will provide for the reevaluation of materials in library collections upon formal request. On the other hand, students' right to learn and the freedom of teachers to teach will be respected.

LEGAL REFS.: 603 CMR 26.00

CROSS REFS.: IJ, Instructional Materials
IJL, Selection and Adoption of Library Materials

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES/GROUNDS

It is the School Committee's desire that maximum use of school property be enjoyed by the member communities. It is the Committee's intent that such use will maintain safe conditions and preserve the property for school program use.

Use of school buildings and grounds by organizations will be permitted only when a worthy educational, civic, or charitable purpose will be served; or a substantial group of citizens from the community will be benefited.

School facilities/grounds will be used according to the regulations and rental fee schedules recommended by the Superintendent-Director and approved by the School Committee.

Permission for the use of facilities must be obtained through the office of the Superintendent-Director or his/her designee, where applications are available for this purpose.

Eligibility

School facilities will be available for the following:

1. Public school activities
2. Parent-teacher activities
3. Official town public hearings and political activities
4. Meetings and activities sponsored by the School Committee and school personnel
5. Parks and playgrounds activities
6. Local nonprofit and noncommercial organization activities
7. Metropolitan civic, educational, social, and religious organization activities if a substantial portion of the members are residents of the town
8. The activities of other organizations when approved by the Superintendent-Director and/or his/her designee.

School and Town Preference

The priority given requests for use of school facilities will be as follows:

1. School activities
2. Town meetings and elections over other community activities
3. Parks and playgrounds
4. Other community activities

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:71; 71:71B; 272:40A

SERVICE CHARGE FOR COST OF MATERIALS

All customers will be required to pay a 15% service charge based on the cost of materials that are used in the job. The charge is made to defer the unrecovered costs of materials, expendable tools, and maintenance.

A minimum service charge will be \$10.00.

No labor charges will be added to any job performed in the school.

COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL SERVICES

When students and accompanying staff travel to provide services for a community agency, the agency will assume all transportation costs for students, staff and for any items or equipment provided by the school.

The work to be performed should be such that students may receive meaningful educational experiences.

All material costs involved in these projects will be assumed and purchased through the agencies of the community having the work performed.

When the demands for equipment exceed the available supply at Assabet, the community agency will provide O.S.H.A. approved equipment material for student use.

The local agency shall provide in writing to the Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School a statement that the work being performed could result in a saving to the local taxpayers.

**TRANSPORTATION OF EQUIPMENT TO BE SERVICED BY OR DONATED
TO THE SCHOOL**

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District shall not assume the responsibility of transporting to or from the school any items or equipment that students service.

The Assabet Valley Regional Vocational School District may, with the approval of the Superintendent-Director, provide transportation to the school for items or equipment that are donated to the school.

In cases where a school owned vehicle and an employee of the District is involved in picking up the donated items or equipment, it shall be required that:

- The donor be present at the designated location,
- The donor and the school employee shall jointly sign a receipt designating specifically the items or equipment to be transported.

PUBLIC SOLICITATIONS IN THE SCHOOLS

The School Committee will place limits on commercial activities and fund-raising activities in the schools for the following reasons:

1. The school district should provide students, parents, and employees some measure of protection from exploitation by commercial and charitable fund-raising organizations.
2. The school district should not give the public the impression of generally endorsing or sanctioning commercial and fund-raising activities.
3. Commercial and fund-raising activities may disrupt school routine and cause loss of instructional time.

Following these guiding statements, the Superintendent-Director and Principal may permit occasional commercial or fund-raising activities related to the objectives of the school with the following exceptions:

1. No direct solicitation of students or employees may take place without School Committee permission.
2. No general or class distribution of commercial or fund-raising literature may take place without School Committee permission.

For the purposes of this policy, representing school district employees will be considered "school groups" and will be governed by the Committee's policy on staff solicitations.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 44:53A

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

PROPOSED: 6/5/18

APPROVED: 6/26/18

REVISED:

APPROVED:

ADVERTISING IN THE SCHOOLS

No advertising of commercial products or services will be permitted in school buildings or on school grounds or properties without permission of the School Committee. Publications of the school district will not contain any advertising. However, this will not prevent advertising in student publications that are published by student organizations, subject to administration controls, or the use of commercially-sponsored, free teaching aids if the content is approved by the administration.

Solicitation of sales or use of the name of the school district to promote any product will not be permitted by the Committee.

CROSS REF.: KHA, Public Solicitations in the Schools

PROPOSED: 6/5/18
REVISED:

APPROVED: 6/26/18
APPROVED:

RELATIONS WITH BOOSTER ORGANIZATIONS

The School Committee recognizes that the endeavors and objectives of booster organizations and similar groups can be a valuable means of stimulating interest in and endorsement of the aims and achievements of our public school system.

Generally, actions initiated by boosters provide the atmosphere and climate to foster and encourage community-school relationships.

Booster-proposed plans, projects, or activities must be evaluated and promoted in light of their stated contribution to the academic as well as the athletic and fine arts programs of the schools. Care must be taken to avoid compromising or diluting the responsibilities and authorities of the School Committee.

RELATIONS WITH POLICE AUTHORITIES

Cooperation with law enforcement agencies is essential for the protection of students, for maintaining a safe environment in the District schools, and for safeguarding all school property.

Relationships between the schools and officials of law enforcement agencies in investigative matters concerning pupils will take into consideration the respective roles of the schools and law enforcement agencies in assisting and protecting the interests of the community, and ensuring the rights of all concerned.

The School Committee also recognizes the potential enrichment that law enforcement agencies can make in the educational program.

Efforts should be made to develop and maintain a healthy attitude toward law enforcement agencies and personnel to promote better understanding and communication.

RELATIONS WITH PLANNING AUTHORITIES

The School Committee will participate in local and state planning functions that could directly affect the District.

The Superintendent-Director or designee will keep the School Committee informed of planning matters bearing directly on the operation of District schools or school-sponsored programs, and will undertake action on behalf of the School Committee to influence matters in the best interests of the students and the District.

RELATIONS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITIES

The School Committee and its administrative officers welcome all who seek to serve the residents of the member communities and will participate with them in the planning and execution of such projects as will be mutually beneficial for students.

It is School Committee policy that administration inform elected and appointed officials of the local and county government of the desire to work cooperatively for improved services.

SECTION L

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS

LA EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

**LB RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND
SCHOOL DISTRICTS**

LDA STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

EDUCATION AGENCY RELATIONS GOALS

The School Committee appreciates the place and importance of an educational system in its greater environment, which includes other organizations and institutions dedicated to education. It believes that much is gained through cooperative endeavors with other agencies.

In order to make a maximum contribution to education, within the school system and to other educational agencies, the Committee establishes these broad goals:

1. To encourage liaison with other educational agencies.
2. To supply educational services to and/or share with other educational agencies.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL DISTRICTS

The School Committee will cooperate with other schools and with local, state, and regional agencies and organizations to:

1. Seek solutions of educational problems of common concern.
2. Offer support services of high quality to our children.
3. Equalize educational opportunities for all children.
4. Acquire federal and state grants.
5. Promote local school system involvement in state and federal decision-making.

This cooperation may extend to research, providing transportation for students to special schools and hospitals, coordination of curriculum, exchange of information and data, construction of facilities that may be efficiently used on a cooperative basis, and the coordination of school calendars and activities.

Before joining any cooperative programs, education collaborative, or participating in any joint educational services with other school systems, the School Committee wants to be sure that in all instances the best interests of our school children will be served. In carrying out this policy the Superintendent will include in reports to the Committee an evaluation of the desirability and feasibility of cooperation with other schools and agencies on matters of mutual interest.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:4E; 71:48; 71:71D; 71B:4; 74:4 through 74:7A; 76:1

STUDENT TEACHING AND INTERNSHIPS

The Committee encourages the administration to cooperate with teacher-training institutions in the placement of student teachers in the school system. All initial arrangements with the colleges and universities will be subject to Committee approval.

The Committee authorizes the administration to honor the reasonable rules and training guidelines of the sending institution.

In all arrangements made with colleges and universities, the school system will be given the privilege of interviewing and accepting or rejecting individual candidates for student teaching and internships.

The school administration will devise procedures for evaluating the performance of student teachers that meet requirements of the sending institution and fit with the Committee's policies.