

# NORWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS



## GRACE FARRAR COLE SCHOOL WILLIAM G. VINAL SCHOOL

### ELEMENTARY STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK 2023 - 2024

#### GRACE FARRAR COLE MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Grace Farrar Cole School is to promote curiosity, creativity, and opportunities in learning as we strive for excellence. We will promote appreciation of individual learning styles, skills and talents to maximize learning and growth. We will treat all people with dignity, kindness and respect. We will foster intellectual curiosity and risk taking through creative problem solving.

#### WILLIAM G. VINAL MISSION STATEMENT:

Our mission at Vinal School is to cultivate courage, integrity, and respect in our students; to encourage students to be more active and responsible contributors to their families and community; to involve students in stimulating and diverse learning experiences so that they may become confident and capable lifelong learners and clear and concise thinkers; and to provide a safe, clean and healthy environment to foster a wholesome and responsible lifestyle.

**NORWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS: *21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Students***

# ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

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# NORWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Christina Kane, Chair

Lisa A. DiFrisco  
Kristin A. McEachern, Clerk

Alison L. Link  
Patrick S. Reed, Vice Chair

## CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

PHONE (781) 659-8800  
FAX (781) 659-8805

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Superintendent of Schools  
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Warren G. MacCallum  
Director of Finance, Operations & Technology  
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Suzan A. Theodorou  
Director of Student Services  
e-mail [suzan.theodorou@norwellschools.org](mailto:suzan.theodorou@norwellschools.org)

## BUILDING PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

**Grace F. Cole Elementary School**  
PHONE (781) 659-8823

Eliza Y. Burns, Principal  
e-mail [eliza.burns@norwellschools.org](mailto:eliza.burns@norwellschools.org)

Heather Benner  
Assistant Principal  
e-mail [heather.benner@norwellschools.org](mailto:heather.benner@norwellschools.org)

**William G. Vinal Elementary School**  
PHONE (781) 659-8820

Nathan H. Thorsteinson, Principal  
e-mail [nathan.thorsteinson@norwellschools.org](mailto:nathan.thorsteinson@norwellschools.org)

Catherine Egan  
Assistant Principal  
e-mail [catherine.egan@norwellschools.org](mailto:catherine.egan@norwellschools.org)

**Norwell Middle School**  
PHONE (781) 659-8814 or (781) 659-8815  
James Dupille, Principal  
e-mail [james.dupille@norwellschools.org](mailto:james.dupille@norwellschools.org)  
Ellen Murray, Assistant Principal  
e-mail [ellen.murray@norwellschools.org](mailto:ellen.murray@norwellschools.org)

**Norwell High School**  
PHONE (781) 659-8810 or (781) 659-8808  
Marc Bender, Principal  
e-mail [marc.bender@norwellschools.org](mailto:marc.bender@norwellschools.org)  
Jennifer Greenberg, Assistant Principal  
e-mail [jennifer.greenberg@norwellschools.org](mailto:jennifer.greenberg@norwellschools.org)  
Matthew F. Marani, Assistant Principal  
e-mail [matthew.marani@norwellschools.org](mailto:matthew.marani@norwellschools.org)

The mission of Norwell Public Schools, in partnership with the community, is to provide excellence in education through a challenging and supportive environment, empowering students to be versatile, innovative, and responsible citizens who are prepared to navigate and contribute to a dynamic global society.

# WELCOME

September 2023

Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of the Norwell School Committee and Norwell Public Schools, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to a new school year and to introduce you to our ***ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK***.

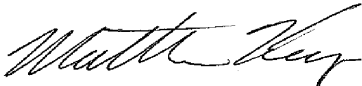
Norwell Public Schools is committed to the concept that a child's education is the product of the school **and** home. We believe that a strong partnership between school and your family will result in success for your child. You can help with this partnership in many ways. By regularly showing interest in your child's schoolwork, asking questions, and giving praise for accomplishments, you can reinforce what the school is trying to accomplish. Similarly, stressing the need for regular attendance conveys to your child the importance of school. Visiting school and attending as many school activities as possible also send a message to your child that education has a high priority in your family.

For our part, we need to keep you informed on a regular basis about school activities and your child's progress. We also need to provide you with as much information about the school as possible. To that end, the ***ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK*** has been developed and can now be accessed at <http://www.norwellschools.org>. It contains information common to Cole and Vinal elementary schools. Coupled with specific information provided by each school, we certainly hope that this handbook will be useful for you, our partners in education. Since students are held accountable for these expectations, we urge you to review this handbook carefully with your child and, once you have done so, please log into the Aspen Parent Portal and complete the digital **Receipt Confirmation** for this *Handbook* by **Friday, September 8, 2023**.

Please feel free to call the school for clarification of any rule, regulation, or policy. Also, please do not hesitate to contact me personally at 781-659-8800 or via e-mail [matthew.keegan@norwellschools.org](mailto:matthew.keegan@norwellschools.org), if you have concerns or questions regarding school matters.

I wish you and your child a successful school year.

Sincerely,



Matthew A. Keegan  
Superintendent of Schools

# GRACE FARRAR COLE SCHOOL

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Grace Farrar Cole School is to promote curiosity, creativity, and opportunities in learning as we strive for excellence.

## **Core Values**

- We will promote appreciation of individual learning styles, skills, and talents to maximize learning and growth.
- We will treat all people with dignity, kindness, and respect.
- We will foster intellectual curiosity and risk taking through creative problem solving.

# WILLIAM G. VINAL SCHOOL

## **Mission Statement**

Our Mission at Vinal School is to cultivate courage, integrity, and respect in our students; to encourage students to be more active and responsible contributors to their families and community; to involve students in stimulating and diverse learning experiences so that they may become confident and capable lifelong learners and clear and concise thinkers; and to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment to foster a wholesome and responsible lifestyle.

## **Core Values**

### **Responsibility**

Our students will assume responsibility for their actions, words, and choices.

### **Respect and Kindness**

Our students will treat others and their environment with respect and kindness.

### **Risk Taking**

Our students will have the courage to take appropriate social and intellectual risks.

# DIRECTORY

## GRACE FARRAR COLE SCHOOL

81 High Street, Telephone (781) 659-8823

Fax (781) 659-2850 [www.norwellschools.org/cole](http://www.norwellschools.org/cole)

Principal	Eliza Burns
Assistant Principal	Heather Benner
Secretary	Joyce Tracey
Office Assistant	Donna Higgins
Art	Jeffrey Menice
School Counselor	Anne Walsh
Library/Media/Info Specialist	Michelle McGarry
Literacy Specialist	Kerri Fuller
Music	Liza Gagnon
Inclusion Specialist	Amy Chiano
Instrumental Music	TBD
Instructional Technology	Lora Rantz
Nurse	Jacquelyn Cregg
Occupational Therapist	Shawwna Dearborn
Physical Education	James Thornton
Mathematics Specialist	Jennifer Bretsch
Reading Specialist	Christine Clark
School Psychologist	Dr. Leah Ciolkosz
Social Worker	Michele Henderson
Special Education	Maureen Ellis
	Sarah Crossen
	Lauren Sokolowski
	Kristen Walsh
	Nancy Sciaraffa
Speech & Language	Amy Coughlin
	Robin MacDonald
	Charlotte Sturdy, ELL
Itinerant Special Education	Jessica Greene
Preschool	Anne Williamson, Special Education Building Coordinator
Kindergarten	Michaela Johnson
	Erin Deptula
	Sara Giovanangelo
	Molly Howard
Grade One	Noelle Lynch
	Christina Austin
	Kelly Strauss
	Chelsea Mason
Grade Two	Elizabeth Evans
	Sara Donohue
	Monica Hayman
	Allison Ryan
Grade Three	Laura O'Malley
	Molly Marr
	Matthew Roberge
	Maura Rowell
	Dianne Uhlman
Grade Four	Shauna Howell
	Nancy Thompson
	Veronica Williamson
	Shannon Wragg

Grade Five

Kimberly Boyd  
Megan Barlow  
Kathleen McGuiggan

**WILLIAM GOULD VINAL SCHOOL**

102 Old Oaken Bucket Road, Tel. (781) 659-8820, Fax (781) 659-8812, [www.norwellschools.org/vinal](http://www.norwellschools.org/vinal)

Principal	Nathan Thorsteinson
Assistant Principal	Catherine Egan
Secretary	Diana DeCoste
Office Assistant	Shana Hallman
Art	Catherine Holmes
School Counselor	Timothy Lewis
Library/Media/Info Specialist	Mary Howard
Music	Stephanie Barry
Inclusion Specialist	Amy Chiano
Instructional Technology	Eileen Ryan
Literacy Specialist	Dr. Nicole Pedro
Nurse	Kristen Isola
Occupational Therapist	Joy Kingsbury
Mathematics Specialist	Tracy Simmons
Physical Education	Lee Leonard
Reading Specialist	Courtney Carpenito
School Psychologist	Kimberlee LaSalle
Social Worker	Michele Henderson
Special Education	Eileen Johnson
	Emmy Casagrande
	Kathy Weiler
	Erin McCarthy
	Alexa Flynn
	Nicole McSweeney
Speech & Language	Kaitlyn O'Brien
	Charlotte Sturdy, ELL
Itinerant Special Education	Jessica Greene
Preschool	Emmy Casagrande
Kindergarten	Terri Keefe
	Jessica Lewis
	Andrea Mulkerrin
	TBD
Grade One	Kristine Campbell
	Pamela Barbour
	Caitlyn Fraser
	Taryn Cattaneo
Grade Two	Debra Coggeshall
	Robbin Fitzgerald
	Wendy Harper
	Amanda Harrington
Grade Three	Michelle Carter
	Laura Schepman
	Amy Hayes
	Katie O'Connor
Grade Four	Brendan Fennessy



Grade Five

Elizabeth Martin  
Aubrey Glidden  
Caroline Doran  
Ryan Lynch  
Lynsie Fitzgerald  
Gretchen Abbott  
Laurie Peckham  
Anna Story

# **SUPPORT SERVICES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

## **After-School Programs**

The Norwell Recreation Commission (781-659-8046) provides numerous after-school activities for children, and the South Shore YMCA (781-829-8585, ext. 227) conducts an after-school program for Norwell K-5 students at both Cole and Vinal Schools.

## **Co-Curricular Activities Release of Liability**

Students participating in voluntary co-curricular activities are required to return a signed release of liability to the director of the event/activity. As these activities are voluntary, the student's participation in an event/activity is conditioned upon receipt of the signed and returned release of liability form. Massachusetts law permits use of such releases for school-related voluntary co-curricular activities. Release forms will be shared with interested students by the activity coordinator.

## **Release of Liability for Co-Curricular Activities Form**

Students participating in voluntary co-curricular activities, including but not limited to intra-mural or interscholastic athletics, are required to return a signed release of liability to the director of the event/activity prior to engaging in the activity, event, or the commencement of the athletic season. As these activities are voluntary, the student's participation in an event, activity, or athletic season is conditioned upon receipt of the signed and returned release of liability form. Massachusetts law permits use of such releases for school-related voluntary co-curricular activities, including but not limited to athletics. Release forms will be distributed by the Athletic Director and/or by the administrator overseeing activities.

The student's participation in any co-curricular activity, including but not limited to intra-mural or interscholastic athletics of any nature, is conditioned on compliance with all applicable laws, district policies (including but not limited to policies relative to student conduct and discipline, bullying, hazing, harassment, and discrimination), all MIAA policies, and district values and behavioral expectations. In the interest of student safety and compliance with these laws, policies, values, and expectations, coaches and/or other school staff will routinely monitor locker room activities. Such monitoring may include physical presence by coaches or other staff in locker rooms. While monitoring students in locker rooms, all coaches and staff will give appropriate consideration to student privacy. Students seeking increased privacy when changing clothes/uniforms may utilize individual stalls and/or privacy curtains or screens where available, and are encouraged to address any privacy related concerns with the coach or building principal.

## PARENTAL CONSENT, RELEASE FROM LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

We, the undersigned parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ [student's name] ("Student") and Student, do hereby consent to Student's participation in voluntary athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs of the Norwell Public Schools and do forever RELEASE, acquit, discharge, and covenant to hold harmless the Norwell Public Schools, a municipal corporation of the State of Massachusetts, and its successors, departments, officers, employees, servants, agents, and volunteers ("Releasees"), of and from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, demands, damages, costs, loss of services, expenses and compensation, inclusive of attorney fees, on account of, or in any way growing out of, directly or indirectly, Student's participation in the voluntary athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs, including but not limited to all known and unknown personal injuries or property damage which we/I may now or hereafter have as the parent(s) or guardian(s) of said Student, and also all claims or right of action for damages which said Student has or hereafter may acquire, either before or after Student has reached majority, resulting or to result from Student's participation in the Norwell Public Schools athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs.

This release includes, but is not limited to, any claim based on allegations of negligence or negligent supervision, or any related claims arising out of the action or non-action of the District's agents, employees, servants, volunteers, or representatives regarding monitoring or supervising the activity of other students, or transfer of them to, on, or in any District facility including, but not limited to, play or practice fields and facilities, locker rooms, and vehicles used to transport participants. This release expressly excludes claims based on gross negligence or intentional acts, as defined by M.G.L. c. 258.

Furthermore, we hereby agree to protect the Releasees against any claim for damages, compensation or otherwise on the part of Student growing out of or resulting from injury to said Student in connection with Student's voluntary participation in the Norwell Public Schools athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs, and to INDEMNIFY, reimburse or make good to the Releasees any loss or damage or costs, including attorney's fees, the Releasees or their representatives may have to pay if any litigation arises from Student's intentional, grossly negligent or reckless acts or omissions while participating in said athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs.

By signing below, I further certify that Student has had a physical examination and that Student is physically able to participate in said athletic, extra-curricular, or co-curricular programs.

School: \_\_\_\_\_

Sport/Activity and Season: \_\_\_\_\_

_____		Parent/Guardian
Name (Print)	Relationship	

_____	_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian,	Date

On behalf of myself and, if Student is a minor/under my guardianship, on behalf of Student

_____	_____
Signature of Student	Date

## **Communication**

Communication between home and school is a priority at both elementary schools in Norwell, and staff is committed to developing and implementing effective strategies for facilitating strong connections between home and school. In the instance that a question or concern arises, there are several avenues by which that question or concern can be answered or resolved.

Generally, matters concerning the classroom should first be directed to the teacher. If the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, it should then be brought to the attention of the student's school counselor, school psychologist, or school nurse (depending on the concern). If necessary, the school counselor, school psychologist, or school nurse will arrange for a meeting with the parent, the teacher, the school counselor, the assistant principal and/or the principal.

Any emergency issue, or problem related to school policy or protocol, should be brought to the immediate attention of the assistant principal. The principal works with students, staff, and parents to be sure that inquiries are responded to by school staff in a timely and sensitive manner and to ensure that the steps to resolving concerns outlined above are followed.

The process below outlines steps to resolving student or parent questions and concerns that may arise. At any point in time, students and parents are welcome to contact the principal directly, who can provide direction and guidance.

1. The student discusses the issue with the teacher;
2. Should the conflict not be resolved, a meeting between the parent, student, and teacher can be arranged;
3. If the conflict is still not resolved, a meeting between the parent, student, teacher and school counselor can be arranged.

A meeting with an assistant principal may be requested if a resolution cannot be reached through the steps outlined above.

## **Communication Mechanisms**

One of our top priorities is to communicate with parents. To this end, parent-teacher conference times are scheduled twice a year and other times as needed. Everyone benefits from parent-teacher conferences. Shared information helps teachers understand the child better, helps parents learn new things about their child, and helps meet individual needs of the child.

Weekly school newsletters are sent out via email. Teachers update Schoology and send out weekly newsletters as well. Administrators and teachers can be reached by phone, email, and written notes and will return phone calls within 24-48 hours.

Coverage of Norwell Public Schools can be found via Norwell Spotlight TV, [norwellspotlighttv.com](http://norwellspotlighttv.com). Each school has a site on Norwell Public Schools' webpage. Please check out information about Cole School at [www.norwellschools.org/cole](http://www.norwellschools.org/cole) and information about the Vinal School at [www.norwellschools.org/vinal](http://www.norwellschools.org/vinal).

## **District Curriculum Accommodation Plans (DCAP)**

School districts in Massachusetts are required to develop a District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) Chapter 71 M.G.L. Section 38Q ½. The district must adopt a DCAP to ensure that all efforts are made to meet a student's needs in regular education. Curriculum Accommodation Plans specific to each school are included in each handbook. These plans are reviewed each year and are designed to assist the regular classroom teacher in analyzing and accommodating diverse learning styles in the regular classroom and in providing appropriate regular education support.

## 2023-2024 District Curriculum Accommodation Plans

		District	Cole School & Vinal School
1.	To assist regular education classroom teachers in analyzing and accommodating various students' learning needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An Instructional Support Team (IST) is in place in each school. The role of the Instructional Support Team is to confer with teachers on specific students and offer suggestions for instructional practices that may benefit students in the regular education program. The IST documents and reviews these efforts as needed.</li> <li>A focus on technology integration provides teachers with opportunities for students to access the curriculum in alternative ways.</li> <li>English Language Learner (ELL) specialists are available to consult with teachers regarding ELL students.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty participate on the Instructional Support Team (IST) and confer on best approaches to meeting student needs.</li> <li>Differentiated and multi-sensory instruction takes place in the classroom.</li> <li>Small group instruction in and out of the classroom.</li> <li>Teachers continue to study ways to adapt the curriculum using technology (after school and in-school training is</li> <li>Faculty are provided with iPads, laptops, and presentation technology to deliver curriculum. Students have access to various technology to be utilized in the classroom.</li> <li>Professional development opportunities (both within and outside of district) related to improving curriculum and instruction available to teachers.</li> </ul>
2.	To provide support services to students through the regular education program.	<p>Academic Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide direct and systematic instruction for all students.</li> <li>Teachers use formative and summative assessment data to monitor student progress and adjust as necessary.</li> </ul> <p>Social Emotional Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student Support staff consult with regular education teachers on issues that may interfere with learning.</li> <li>Individual and/or small group counseling and social skills groups in specific areas are available.</li> </ul>	<p>Academic Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Faculty are certified in subject area and level of courses they are instructing.</li> <li>Faculty administer and analyze formative and summative assessments to adjust instructional material and provide support for students.</li> <li>A literacy specialist and reading coordinator are available to support students and faculty. The literacy specialist and reading coordinator confer with teachers regarding students' literacy skills, and support students as needed.</li> </ul> <p>Social Emotional Learning (SEL)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The K-12 Social Health Curriculum provides training in understanding differences.</li> <li>Services are available from a Behavioral Specialist as appropriate.</li> <li>School Counselors may offer individual and /or small group counseling and social skills groups in specific areas.</li> </ul>
3.	To encourage teacher mentoring and collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Norwell Public Schools has a formal Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program in place to assist teachers who</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All teachers new to Norwell are assigned a mentor.</li> </ul>

		<p>are new to the teaching profession and/or new to the district through their third year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NPS' Professional Development Program requires that teachers meet regularly during the year to exchange ideas and promote continuous learning.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peer observations are conducted by mentor and mentees.</li> <li>• Grade level and cross grade level meetings are held to share curriculum and teaching strategies.</li> <li>• Paraprofessional training is conducted by professional support staff.</li> <li>• New teachers are allotted time with their mentors throughout the year to discuss curriculum, instruction, and school culture topics.</li> </ul>
4.	To encourage family involvement in their children's education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are provided with on-going opportunities to engage with their child's learning and partner with the school community.</li> <li>• Active community organizations provide support to enrich students' educational experiences.</li> <li>• School Councils participate actively in the annual budget development, developing school improvement plans, and reviewing school handbooks.</li> <li>• Families are encouraged to contact teachers through email, meetings, websites, etc. about their concerns for their child, and is available in their home language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent home-school communication exists through newsletters, phone calls, e-mail, and Schoology.</li> <li>• Families participate in Team Meetings and the decision process.</li> <li>• Families are part of the interviewing team for new hires.</li> <li>• Volunteers are welcomed to assist throughout the building.</li> <li>• Active PTO supports instruction financially and through volunteerism.</li> <li>• School Council consists of parent and community representatives.</li> <li>• Parent meetings on relevant topics are presented by staff</li> </ul>
5.	To review local curriculum in relation to Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A five-year curriculum adoption cycle is in place to examine and correlate curricula to the Massachusetts State Frameworks.</li> <li>• A process is in place for reviewing the Massachusetts State Frameworks.</li> <li>• The curriculum review process provides an opportunity to procure supplementary teaching materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers serve on committees to review frameworks and programs.</li> <li>• Five-year curriculum cycle is intended to review and revise curriculum documents and texts.</li> <li>• The Massachusetts Frameworks have been deconstructed and developed into Power Standards.</li> <li>• Supplementary resource materials are available for teachers.</li> <li>• Teachers serve on committees to review and update content area scope &amp; sequence.</li> </ul>

## **Food Services – School Lunch is Free for the 2023-2024 School Year**

Lunch, milk, and *a la carte* items may be purchased at school, or students may bring lunches from home. Lunch is free again for all students, *a la carte* milk is \$.60, and *a la carte* items range up to \$1.50 each. Checks should be made out to Norwell Food Services. Online payments can be made at [myschoolbucks.com](http://myschoolbucks.com). Borrowing money or negative balances are not allowed. If your family requires financial assistance for school lunch, please complete the Free and Reduced Form sent home at the beginning of the school year. Parents should complete the lunch orders through Schoology.

## **Health Services**

Management of health services in the middle school is the responsibility of the school nurse. Registered nurses are employed to serve the needs of students under the direction of the school administration and the school physician. Responsibilities of the school nurse include assessment of illness and injuries, health promotion, and infection control. Postural screening clinics are conducted in grade 5. Vision and hearing clinics are conducted annually for all students.

### **Accidents**

Norwell Public Schools takes care to provide a safe environment at school. All accidents should be reported promptly to the school nurse. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, the school nurse will make an assessment and appropriate interventions, and a parent/guardian will be notified. In non-emergency situations, parents/guardians are responsible for providing transportation. In emergency situations, a student may be transported to the hospital by ambulance at the parent's or guardian's expense. Every attempt will be made to contact the parent/guardian immediately.

### **Body Mass Index (BMI)**

In February 2009, Massachusetts promulgated amendments to the regulations of Physical Examination of School Children, 105 CMR 200, to improve the screening and monitoring of the health assessment of children across the Commonwealth. The amended regulations require screenings for height and weight and the recording and reporting of the Body Mass Index in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10th. Body Mass Index (BMI) is a number calculated from a child's weight and height and is a reliable indicator of body fatness for most children and teens.

### **Illness and Communicable Disease**

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 school reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

Any student who becomes ill during the school day must report directly to the nurse's office. If the nurse determines the student is too ill to remain at school, the parent/guardian will be contacted, and a plan will be made for the student to be dismissed from school.

In the event a student is dismissed from school by the school nurse due to illness one should not return until fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication. The student may return to school when symptoms improve, with no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours and nasal discharge/cough well controlled.

The parent/guardian of a student who is absent due to illness should call the school nurse to report symptoms. Students who are ill should not return until fever-free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication, symptoms improved, no vomiting or diarrhea for at least 24 hours and nasal discharge/cough well controlled.

If your child has a communicable disease, please notify the school nurse. Students may return to school as follows:

- Strep Throat, Scarlet Fever, and Conjunctivitis – 24 hours after the first dose of prescribed medication.
- Impetigo - 24 hours after medical treatment has begun, lesions should be covered in school.
- Chicken Pox– 7 days from appearance of first eruption, lesions crusted and fever free for at least 24 hours.
- COVID: Please contact your school nurse should your child test positive for the latest guidance on the quarantine protocol.
- Head lice: Remember to check your child's head frequently for head lice, as they can be a common occurrence in children. If found at school, parent/guardian will be notified and directed to treatment options to occur outside of school.

### Emergency Contact Information

Current emergency contact information is available for review on the Aspen Parent Portal. At the beginning of the school year, parents / guardians should review the information and submit changes through the Aspen Parent Portal. At any point in the year, changes can be submitted through the Aspen Parent Portal.

### Immunizations

Students registering in the district and all students entering grade 4 will be required to present a physician's certificate attesting to immunization against communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the Department of Public Health. The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization would not be in the best interests of the child, or by the student's parent or guardian stating that vaccination or immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the student or parent/guardian. Exemptions must be renewed yearly. Refer to the Massachusetts School Immunizations web page for details: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/school-immunizations>.

### Physical Examination

Physical Examinations As required by M.G.L. c. 71, s. 57 and related amendments and regulations (105 CMR 200.000-200.920) physical examinations are required at intervals designated by the School Committee.

Updated Physical Examination and Immunization history are required for:

- New students to the district
- All students entering grade 4

### Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications

Students are not to carry medications of any kind. The school nurse shall be the supervisor of the medication program in the school, including over-the-counter medications such as calamine lotion, ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.

ALL medications, prescription or non-prescription, can only be administered under the following conditions:

- A written medication order form is required for prescription medication and over-the-counter medications not including the standing orders written by the district physician
- A written parent/guardian authorization form is required for all medications
- All medications must be in the original pharmacy labeled container
- All medications must be brought to school by the parent/guardian and given directly to the nurse.

Under Chapter 369 of the Acts of 2012, “An Act for the Humanitarian Medical Use of Marijuana,” codified in M.G.L. c. 94C, App. §§ 1-1 – 1-17 (“Law”), registered marijuana patients’ possession and consumption of medical marijuana is legal in Massachusetts. The law expressly states that a school is not required to accommodate on-site medical marijuana use, however. (See c. 94C, §1-7). In stark contrast, marijuana remains a Schedule I illicit drug under federal law, regardless of medical need/registration. Students who violate the above policy face disciplinary action including suspension.



A student with a parental authorization form and the physician's order may carry special medications, such as epi-pens or inhalers, for those students with severe allergic conditions and for whom an emergency treatment has been prescribed by a physician, which must be on file in the nurse's office.

All medical information is confidential.

## **Instructional Support Team**

The Instructional Support Team (IST) is composed of classroom teachers, school counseling staff, school psychologist, specialists and administrators. The Instructional Support Team provides a team approach for identifying and solving issues that may interfere with student progress. The Instructional Support Teams are also used to screen students for possible special education referral or for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, 1973 and Americans with Disabilities Act, 1992 (ADA).

## **Library**

The elementary schools' Library/Media Center is a place for learning. An atmosphere will be maintained that is conducive to research, study and quiet reading. Students who come to the Library/Media Center are expected to come prepared to use the materials and the facility productively. The library has several computers linked to the internet for purposes of research. The library collection contains a wide range of materials (in print and electronic form) that can be used to complete research assignments. The collection also offers a variety of books and magazines for leisure reading. The library staff is available to help students locate information and develop basic library research skills that will be valuable lifelong learning tools.

### **Borrowing Materials**

Reference materials (usually marked **REF**) and magazines cannot be borrowed and must be used within the library. All other books may be borrowed for a two-week period. Book loans can be extended by bringing the book to the circulation desk and asking for a two-week renewal.

### **Overdue and Lost Materials**

When books are held beyond the return date, they are considered overdue. Notices of overdue books will be sent to the student's classroom. Students who have long term overdue books or who consistently do not return books on time will be referred to the administration for appropriate disciplinary action, which may include paying for the cost of the materials. Books that are lost or damaged beyond reasonable repair will be charged to the student. The charge will be the original purchase of the book.

### **Student Borrowing Responsibility**

The student who borrows a book is responsible for returning the book to the library. If one student lends the book to another student or "checks-out" a book for another person, the student who is on record as borrowing the book is responsible for any costs if the book is lost or damaged.

## **School Counseling**

Each elementary school has the services of a school counselor. You may contact the school office to make an appointment to discuss your child's school counseling needs with the school counselor. A full description of the Elementary School Counseling Program is available on the district website under Instructional Services Directory.

## **Section 504 School Accommodation Plan**

All programs, activities and services are open to all students, including those with disabilities. When a student has a life-threatening food allergy, physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, reasonable accommodations may be necessary to enable that student to access the school's programs, activities and services, the principal (or an appointed designee) will convene a Team meeting to determine eligibility for a Section 504 Accommodation Plan. Procedures, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are followed in these circumstances.

For more information regarding a Section 504 School Accommodation Plan, please contact your building principal. Alternatively, you may also contact the District Section 504 Coordinator: Suzan Theodorou, Director of Student Services, 322 Main Street, Norwell MA 02061, 781-659-8800.

### **Social Health**

The Social Health Department provides programs for the elementary schools in the following areas: child abuse prevention, conflict resolution, drug and alcohol abuse prevention, safety, and sexual development.

### **Special Education Program**

The Special Education Department, under the supervision of the Director of Student Services, provides individualized programs of instruction for students with disabilities who have been found eligible for Special Education and/or related services. Services range from those provided within our fully inclusive classrooms to placement in out-of-district programs.

Norwell Public Schools Director of Student Services: Suzan Theodorou, 322 Main Street Norwell MA, 02061, 781-659-8800.

## **ORGANIZATIONS**

### **School Sponsored Organizations**

**School Improvement Council:** The Education Reform Act of 1993 mandated that school councils be formed at every school. A school council has a role in shaping the policies and programs of the schools. The school council is comprised of the principal, teacher representatives, parent representatives, and a community representative, and at the secondary level, students. These groups meet monthly to review school budgets, formulate school improvement plans, and advise the school principal.

**Special Education Parent Advisory Council:** The Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is a district-wide organization of parents that supports the total special education community. The SEPAC members provide guidance and assistance to parents, staff, the community and special needs students. Parents may contact the school or the Special Education office for program information.

### **Booster Organizations**

**Norwell High School Boosters:** The Norwell High School Boosters is an association formed to advocate for the importance of athletics for all students, build awareness in the community of the many competitions and events that occur for our student-athletes, and raise funds to support the athletic programs of the Norwell Public Schools. For more information, please visit the Norwell High School Boosters website.

**Norwell Scholastic Arts Society:** The Norwell Scholastic Arts Society (NSAS) is an association formed to advocate for the importance of arts education for all students, build awareness in the community of the many arts performances and events that occur in our schools, and raise funds to support the visual art, theatre and music programs of Norwell Public Schools.

### **Parent Organizations**

**Parent-Teacher Organization:** Our school has an active parent-teacher organization that provides support for programs and educational and extracurricular activities that benefit all students at our school. The PTO provides

grants to teachers for classroom activities and to enhance curriculum. The PTO serves as a communication forum for parents, administration and staff. The PTO holds regular meetings and all parents and teachers are invited to attend. For more information contact the principal's office or consult the school PTO web page for calendar and organization information.

### **Community Organizations**

**Norwell Education Foundation (NEF):** The Norwell Education Foundation (NEF) is a non-profit corporation whose purpose is to support educational activities and programs that encourage academic excellence for all students in the Norwell Public Schools. Annually, NEF grants are awarded to Norwell Public Schools educators on a competitive basis. Programs throughout the grade levels (PreK-12) have received support from NEF.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND INFORMATION**

### **Arrival**

Students who walk to school or who are transported privately should not arrive prior to 8:45 a.m. at Cole School and at Vinal School. We are unable to provide supervision for children until ten minutes before the start of the day.

### **Attendance**

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The dynamic nature of classroom experience is integral to the learning process and cannot be replicated. Daily attendance is the responsibility of the student and the parent in collaboration with classroom teachers and administrators. Supporting regular attendance is instrumental in providing a positive learning experience for the student.

A student who misses more than half of the instructional time in a school day is considered absent. Attendance data is maintained and reported to the State for accountability measures. Chronically absent students are monitored at the school and state levels. Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year (equivalent to 18 days a year, 2 days every month) for any reason including excused and unexcused absences.

In accordance with Chapter 76, Section 1 of Massachusetts General Law, a principal or their designee will notify the parent/guardian of a student who has reached five (5) unexcused absences and make reasonable effort to meet with the student's parent/guardian. In the event that a student reaches ten (10) or more unexcused absences, the parent/guardian is required to meet with an administrator to discuss his/her child's attendance issues.

The only absences excused by the school will be those necessitated by school-sponsored field trips, court appearances, family bereavement, medical reasons documented by a medical professional, or for visits with active-duty military parents or guardians (MGL 76:15E). The principal must be contacted in advance of any extended absences.

Vacations that necessitate a student to be absent from school are considered unexcused. Teachers are not required to provide schoolwork in advance of such absences. It is the student's responsibility to make up work upon returning to school.

## **Bullying, Cyberbullying, Harassment and Hazing**

It is the policy of the Norwell School Committee to promote a safe and professional learning and work environment where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Therefore, bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, and hazing in any form will not be tolerated. It is an expressed violation of School Committee policy for any employee, student, volunteer or visitor to engage in or condone bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, or hazing, or fail to report or fail to take corrective measures when they become aware of such actions or activities in school, on school grounds, at school events, or in any way connected to school.

## **Bus Policies**

Please see Bus Policies and Rules under District Policies and Regulations section of this handbook. All bus concerns should be brought to the attention of the school counselor and/or the Assistant Principal.

## **Change of Student Information**

Parents should update their contact information in Aspen annually or as needed. If you are moving from Norwell, please come to the office to sign a records release form.

## **Code of Conduct**

### **Discipline and Consequences**

Management of student behavior is addressed in a number of ways, both in the classroom and throughout the entire school. As issues arise, it is our expectation that remedies can be reached at the earliest point and with those most directly involved.

### **Detention**

Detentions are viewed as one of many responses to specific behaviors. In that regard, detentions with individual teachers are held after school hours. Adhering to the above philosophy, teachers will issue detentions for an infraction of school rules. An accumulation of teacher detentions or failure to report to detentions will result in an office referral.

### **In-school Suspension**

In-school suspension is the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises. In-school suspension shall not be considered a short-term suspension.

### **Short-term Suspension**

Short-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal (or designee) may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve part of a short-term suspension in school.

### **Long-term Suspension**

Long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year.

### **Expulsion**

Expulsion is the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, §37H or 37H½ for: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the

educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §37H or 37H½.

#### Discipline under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H¾

When considering discipline under §37H¾, a decision-maker shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. Prior to the imposition of a suspension under §37H¾, alternative remedies, which may include but are not limited to (a) mediation, (b) conflict resolution, (c) restorative justice, (d) collaborative problem solving, must be employed, with the use of such remedies and the results documented, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, or when the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or harm upon another person while in school.

Note: The Principal or designee at the school level, and/or the Superintendent or designee at the district level, shall implement school and/or district-wide models (not considered a direct response to any specific incident) to re-engage students disciplined under §37H¾ in the learning process, which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models.

#### Due Process and Notice of Suspension and Hearing under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H3/4

Consistent with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H3/4, and except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, a principal (or designee) may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

The principal (or designee) shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- the disciplinary offense;
- the basis for the charge;
- the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
  1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
  2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
- The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
- Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

### Emergency Removal

The principal (or designee) 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. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger and/or disruption presented by the student documenting why no alternative remedies are suitable. 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;
- Provide written notice to the student and parent;
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless the principal, student, and parent otherwise agree to an extension of time for hearing.
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

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

### Alternative Consequences to Suspension

To the extent reasonable, the principal (or designee) shall avoid using suspensions that remove students from the school premises and regular classroom activities. Alternative consequences to such suspensions may include:

- Loss of privilege
- Exclusion from co-curricular activities (including athletics) and/or school-sponsored events
- Detention
- Apology
- Student contract
- Restitution
- Probation

### Alternative Remedies to Suspension May Include

- Mediation
- Conflict resolution
- Restorative justice
- Collaborative problem solving

### School-wide Education Service Plan

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 educational services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

### Court Documents

Court documents such as restraining orders and custody agreements must also be on file in the school office.

### Dismissal from School

If you need to have your child dismissed early from school, please notify the office **in writing** by note or email to the school secretary and office aide with the date, time, and reason for dismissal, as well as a telephone number

for verification. When picking your child up, please report to the school office where children will be dismissed only after parents or guardians have introduced themselves to the secretary or administrator. In cases of emergency, please call the school office so appropriate arrangements can be made to have your child ready for dismissal. Children will not be dismissed to another adult, including a non-custodial parent, without the written permission of the custodial parent or guardian.

**Early Release Days**

Early Release Days are provided throughout the school year for Professional Development activities for staff. On these days, which are designated on the Norwell Public Schools' yearly calendar, students will be dismissed before lunch. All kindergarten students attend school on early release days from 8:55 a.m.-12:20 p.m. If there is a change to the child’s dismissal routine on these early release days, the office must be notified.

**Electronic Devices**

Using personal electronic devices including smartphones and smartwatches is not permissible during the school day (including bus rides to and from school). If brought to school, all personal electronic devices including smartphones and smartwatches must be turned off and kept inside their backpack. The school will not be responsible in the event that the device is lost, stolen, or damaged while on school property.

Unauthorized student use of electronic devices during the school day will result in the device being confiscated. The device will be returned to the student and/or the parent after a conference with an administrator. In the event that a parent deems it necessary to contact their child during the school day, they may do so by contacting the main office directly.

**Emergency School Cancellation**

Regular school attendance reinforces the importance of education and prepares students for the responsibilities they will face after graduation. However, while every effort will be made, there are situations when extremely heavy snowfall, ice covered roads, or other emergency conditions lead to the cancellation of school. Delayed openings are even more rare and will only be employed in those unique circumstances when weather conditions are likely to improve substantially and additional time is needed to treat road surfaces. Early dismissal due to impending storm conditions will only be employed in extreme cases; however, from time to time, it may be necessary to dismiss middle and high school students slightly earlier so that the buses are able to transport kindergarten to grade five students in a timely fashion. While very infrequent, there may be occasions when afternoon kindergarten is cancelled due to hazardous weather conditions. In those instances when school is cancelled the Superintendent will place an emergency phone call to all students’ homes. **“NO SCHOOL”** announcements will be broadcast on the following stations:

<b><u>RADIO</u></b>		<b><u>TELEVISION</u></b>
WBZ	AM 1030	Channel 4 - WBZ
WRKO	AM 680	Channel 7 - WRKO
WATD	FM 95.9	Channel 5 - WCVB
WEEI	AM 850	Channel 25 - WFXT
WBUR	FM 90.9	Channel 6 or 13 -NECN

Since telephone lines must be kept open for communication and safety purposes, please DO NOT call the radio and television stations, Town Offices, Communication Center, the schools, or the Superintendent. The decision to cancel school is a judgment call based on the best information available in the very early morning hours. New England’s variable and rapidly changing weather conditions and unforeseen events such as the loss of electrical power make the decision-making process even more difficult. *The decision to send a child to school ultimately*



***belongs to the parent. Consequently, parents should feel free to keep their children at home if they disagree with a decision to keep school in session and are uncomfortable with the weather conditions.*** In those instances, please inform the principal about your child's absence and make arrangements for make-up work. As is the case with all absences, please follow up with a signed note explaining the circumstances.

### **Field Trips**

Class field trips may be scheduled from time to time. Parents will be notified in advance and may be asked to pay for transportation and fees. Teachers and parent volunteers serve as chaperones for students on these trips. Provisions are made for students in need of financial assistance. Please contact the building principal if financial aid is needed. Field trips are planned to reinforce the curriculum and enhance student learning.

### **Holidays**

Appropriate ceremonies and observances of national holidays and events of national, state, and local significance shall be encouraged and shall conform to statutory requirements of the Commonwealth. In addition, at various times throughout the school year, classes set aside time for activities that celebrate such holidays as Veterans' Day and Thanksgiving. However, it is recognized that not all families wish to observe or have their children observe these holidays. These activities are ordinarily planned in advance and parents should assume that some sort of celebration would usually occur during these times of the year. Parents who would like their child to be exempted from specific celebrations should contact the principal.

### **Homework Expectations Guidelines**

At the elementary level, the goal of homework is to foster a love for learning, motivate learners to be reflective and invested, and be part of a standards-based program. Since homework is part of a standards-based system, its completion should move students towards mastery of the standards. If students are able to master the standards and make adequate progress without completing the homework assignment then the assignments are not effective. For these reasons, homework assignments should not be considered as part of a student's ability to achieve a given standard, and should not be graded.

As with all learning, homework should be used to instill a growth mindset in which students make incremental growth and whose performances are measured against the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. The types of homework assigned should vary as students progress through the grades. In addition, homework assignments should take into account learning styles, needs, interests, and levels of readiness of the individual student. The following characteristics should be present in all homework as they are fundamental to its effectiveness:

- Purposeful - All homework assignments are meaningful. Students must understand the purpose of the assignment and why it is important in the context of their academic experience.
- Efficient - Homework should not take an inordinate amount of time and should require thinking. Well-structured assignments are adequately difficult to the individual student.
- Ownership - Students who feel connected to the content and process of the assignment learn more and are more motivated. Connecting assignments with student interest is also essential for promoting ownership.
- Competence - Students should feel competent in completing homework. Homework that students can't do without help is not effective homework. Students are discouraged when they are unable to complete their homework. Homework should be differentiated so it is at the appropriate level of difficulty for individual students.
- Goal Oriented - Student, parent, and teacher should set measurable goals related to learning standards and homework is used as a vessel to meet such goals.

Working together, students, parents, and teachers can make homework a useful, motivating, and enriching part of instruction that fosters a love for learning. The following suggestions are intended to help students, teachers, and parents identify their respective roles and responsibilities regarding homework.

### **Students**

- Once taught, students apply and practice self-regulation and study skills.
- Give their best effort on all assignments.
- Advocate for themselves, as needed, in relationship to the appropriate level of engagement with assignments.
- Manage time effectively.
- Use feedback from teachers to make progress toward learning goals.
- Reflect on their learning and play an active role in making suggestions in terms of steps needed to be taken to make progress.

### **Teachers**

- Explicitly teach self-regulation and study skills that are then accessed at home by the student to make progress towards learning goals.
- Consistently adapt assignments and materials to make content and process accessible to all students.
- Provide descriptive feedback that encourages growth and student reflection. In addition, feedback should refer to specific learning standards and mastery criteria.
- Be approachable when students verbalize their successes and struggles with assignments.
- Completed homework should be used to inform your instruction.
- Provide students and parents with clear instructions, exemplars, rubrics, and performance criteria that are related to learning standards. In addition, collaborate with students on performance criteria.
- Celebrate the learning process.
- Do not assign homework to students celebrating religious holidays.

### **Parents**

- Support your child by being a facilitator and providing an environment that is conducive to the learning style of your child.
- Be encouraging when it comes to your child's growth and him/her advocating for himself/herself.
- Be equal partners with the school in the education of your child.
- Be effective communicators with your child's teacher and school administration. If questions or concerns arise go to the school to get clarification.
- Should NOT do child's homework. If student is unable to complete homework, then the teacher needs to be aware of this and the student should be encouraged to communicate this with his/her teacher.

### **Lost and Found**

Each school designates an area for lost and found items. Parents and students are encouraged to check this area periodically. Valuable items such as watches, jewelry, eyeglasses, and money are returned to the school office. (Please write student names in clothing and other belongings to facilitate return of misplaced items.)

### **Lunch and Cafeteria**

Concerns about behavior in the cafeteria should be brought to the attention of the cafeteria duty aides or the classroom teacher.

## **Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS)**

Each elementary school has a Positive Behavior Intervention Supports framework in place to assist in maximizing academic and social behavior outcomes for all students. Expected behaviors for each area of the school (hallways, classrooms, playground, etc.) have been defined and explicitly taught to the students in the classroom and during Community Meetings.

## **Publication of Names, Photographs, and Recordings**

A student's parent/guardian must inform the principal in writing of their desire to allow their child's name, photograph and/or video/audio recordings to be released to other students or the school community as a part of virtual learning, the news media, printed in school programs, or exhibited on school websites. (Please see digital *Receipt Page in Aspen*). This is in compliance with the student's record release regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974.

## **Registration**

All elementary students must be registered by the school office before beginning school. Registration consists of completing a school registration form (medical record completed by up-to-date student's physician), an official birth certificate, and home language survey. Families can visit the Norwell Public Schools website to learn more about registration and begin the registration process.

## **Report Cards**

Report Cards are issued and available in Aspen at the end of each trimester in grades K through 5. See specific dates on the school calendar ([www.norwellschools.org](http://www.norwellschools.org)).

### **Parent/Student Friendly Language**

Each grade-level K–5 has a specific report card to communicate with parents and students where each student falls in relation to the standards in Literacy and Mathematics. In addition, each report card communicates progress towards Science and Social Studies content.

A report card is an integral part of a standards-based system. Its main purpose is to allow a teacher to accurately communicate a student's progress towards meeting content standards at specific points in a school year. The report card has more parent-friendly language than you may find in the standards.

A standards-based report card:

- provides a clear message to parents about which skills and concepts students know and are able to demonstrate in relation to established state and national standards
- helps teachers and students focus on identified **end-of-year expectations** from the very beginning of the year, giving students a direction for their learning
- aligns instruction, assessment, and grading with standards
- creates a higher level of consistency and continuity in assessing among teachers and across grade levels

Report cards will be available on Aspen for trimesters one, two, and three. In order to view your child's report card, please follow these directions:

- Open the email that you will receive letting you know that the report card is published to the Aspen portal account. The email will include basic reminders as to the username and how to reset the password if need be.
- Once logged in, you will be on the Pages tab where you will see a section called Published Reports and, in that section, there will be a PDF report for your child that says Report Cards - Standard Based.

- Click on the PDF to open the report card.



Revised report cards for all grade levels can be viewed on our website and [here](#). If you have any questions or concerns regarding the elementary report cards, please contact your child's principal.

### **School Buses**

All students except designated Cole School walkers are eligible to ride the bus to and from school. Students are to get on and off the bus only at their assigned bus stops. In the interest of student safety and security, transfers to other buses are not permitted, except in emergency situations with the written permission of the principal. The principal, for disciplinary reasons, may withdraw bus privileges immediately. All bus concerns should be brought to the attention of the school counselor and/or the Assistant Principal.

### **School Hours**

#### Cole and Vinal Grades Full Day K-5:

<u>School</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>Dismiss</u>	<u>Early Release</u>
Elementary	8:55 a.m.	3:20 p.m.	12:20 p.m.

#### A.M. Kindergarten Session:

<u>School</u>	<u>Start</u>	<u>Dismiss</u>	<u>Early Release</u>
Elementary	8:55 a.m.	12:30 p.m.	12:20 p.m.

### **School Pictures**

School pictures are taken at school in the fall each year and are offered to families for purchase or return. Parents are under no obligation to purchase portraits. Specific dates and other details will be made available to you. Any parent who does not want their child photographed for any reason should notify the school.

From time to time, events that occur within the schools receive media coverage. On occasion, photographs and newspaper articles include the names or pictures of students. If, for any reason, you do not wish to have your child's photograph in the newspaper (or any other form of publication), please be sure to opt out in Aspen on the *Parent Sign Offs* tab.

### **Snack**

Children should bring a snack with them each day. Please include a drink and food in your child's backpack. If your child has any food allergies, communicate this in writing to your child's teacher and the school nurse. Snacks containing peanuts/nut ingredients are discouraged, and based on the needs of the individual students in the classroom are sometimes prohibited.

## **Student Dress**

The School Committee considers that what a student should or should not wear is primarily a family decision. Thus, parents and students of an appropriate age should make the decision on the attire to be worn to school. The school administration, however, must establish basic guidelines to ensure the safety and well-being of the entire student body. Those guidelines include ensuring that dress does not disrupt or detract from the learning environment, health, safety, and cleanliness.

Students shall not wear hats or head coverings inside the school building during the regular school day unless previously approved for medical or religious reasons or special school activities as determined by the principal or designee.

If dress is in violation of these guidelines, the administration will advise the parents and may send the student home.

Students should dress for outdoor recess. Gym shoes are to be worn for all physical education classes.

## **Student Search**

The principal is entitled to conduct a search of a student's person, and immediate possessions (including property), whenever there is reason to believe the student has violated or is violating the law or the rules of the school including those relating to tobacco, drugs or alcohol and student safety.

## **Supplies**

Basic school supplies (texts, pencils, paper and crayons) are supplied to students. Individual teachers may request other specific items for students.

## **Visitors to the School**

Following district procedures, parents and citizens are cordially invited to visit the schools throughout the year for various activities. To ensure the proper climate of safety and wellbeing in each school building, all visitors must report to the office to be signed into a visitor's log with a date, time and purpose for the visit. Please note that staff members will approach visitors who are not properly identified. In addition, a buzzer system will be employed at each of the schools. Otherwise, visitors will need to be buzzed in and will report to the office immediately. This is necessary in order to ensure a climate of safety and well-being for our students.

## **Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement**

There are federal and state laws that protect the privacy rights of students, families, and staff. In a school situation, there are many instances in which confidential information is discussed in order to better understand students and how we can help them. When working in the schools as a volunteer there may be times when this information is overheard. Our staff will make every effort to prevent this from happening; however, as a volunteer you must agree that if you do hear information, about a student or family you will not repeat this outside of the school. This will ensure the protection of our students' interest and their families, thus creating a better environment for all.

- Each student with whom you work has the right to expect that nothing that happens to or about him or her will be repeated to anyone other than authorized school department employees, as designated by the administrators at your school. Even when discussing a student with those who are directly involved in a student's education, such as a teacher, principal, or guidance counselor, you may not share otherwise confidential information with them unless it is relevant to the student's educational growth, safety, or well-being.

- You may not share information about a student even with others who are genuinely interested in the student's welfare, such as social workers, scout leaders, clergy, or nurses/physicians (a grave medical emergency, in which confidential information may be necessary for a student's care, is the only exception). Thus, you must refer all such questions to the school employees so authorized and indicated to you, typically the student's teacher or principal.
- Parents, friends, or community members may in good faith ask you questions about a student's problems or progress. Again, you must refer all such questions to the authorized school employees. You may not share information about a student even with members of your own family or the student's family.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

### **Art**

Each elementary school has an art specialist who provides weekly art lessons using various media (crayon, paint, clay, ink, etc.) Students' artwork can be viewed throughout the building during the school year.

### **Kindergarten**

Bus transportation is provided for all kindergarten students. On early release days, all kindergarten students attend school from 8:55 a.m. - 12:20 p.m. and are bussed home. Lunch is not served to half-day kindergarten students. Please see dismissal times under *School Hours*.

### **Music**

General music is taught in kindergarten through grade five by a music teacher. Band instrument lessons are offered during school hours to students in grade five. Parents are responsible for providing instruments. Concerts are performed twice yearly in grade 5.

### **Norwell Tiered Systems of Support**

The Norwell Tiered Systems of Support (NTSS) is an assessment-intervention model that allows all of our schools to deliver intervention and supports to students in both academic (K-8) and social-emotional areas (K-12). In NTSS, all students are screened and monitored for specific educational outcomes, and those needing additional assistance are given targeted intervention that is monitored systematically. NTSS uses a multi-tier model of intervention. Each tier represents an increasing level of instruction matched to the student's needs. Movement between tiers is decided by the current classroom teacher, grade level team, and the content specialists based on student growth as measured by screening instruments and progress monitoring tools.

### **Academic Supports**

All students in grades K-8 will be regularly screened in ELA and mathematics. Based on the results of the screenings, students will be supported in either content extension, additional practice, or reinforcement. At the elementary level, students requiring reinforcement will be supported by their teachers and/or the content specialists (Reading Specialist, Math Specialist, and/or Literacy Specialist). At least twice per year from kindergarten through third grade, students' reading ability and progress in literacy skills will be assessed, using a valid, developmentally appropriate screening instrument approved by the Department of Education. Consistent with section 2 of chapter 71B of the general laws and DESE's dyslexia and literacy guidelines, if such screenings determine that a student is significantly below relevant benchmarks for age-typical development in specific literacy skills, the school will determine which actions within the general education program will meet the student's needs, including differentiated or supplementary evidence-based reading instruction and ongoing monitoring of progress. Within 30 school days of a screening result that is significantly below the relevant

benchmarks, the school will inform the student's parent or guardian of the screening results and the school's response and shall offer them the opportunity for a follow-up discussion, in accordance with 603 CMR 28.03(1)(f). For more information, please contact the Principal, Assistant Principal, or your child's classroom teacher.

### **Social-Emotional Supports**

Norwell Public Schools provides students at every grade level with developmentally appropriate lessons in social-emotional health education led by the classroom teacher, school counselors, and/or health educators. Each year school personnel use a screening tool to determine whether students in grades 3-12 may need a more individual screening. Parents are informed about this process annually and are invited to refer their children for individual screening as well. Students found to need additional support are invited to attend targeted intervention groups that teach strategies and skills. Student progress is assessed at the completion of the intervention group and is reported to the parent. No screening or intervention will be provided without expressed parental consent. For more information, please contact the Principal, Assistant Principal, or your student's school counselor.

### **Physical Education**

Students (K-5) are scheduled for gym classes weekly with a physical education specialist.

### **Preschool**

Norwell Public Schools offers a half-day preschool experience for students with special education needs. Typically developing preschoolers may apply and are selected by lottery to participate.

### **Reading, Literacy, and Math**

Each elementary school has three full-time specialist/coordinators (reading, literacy, and math) who work to support small groups of students.

### **Student Testing & Assessment Programs**

Routine academic tests are given and results may be reflected in conference reports and student grades. In addition, the following tests are administered annually:

- Screening for learning problems – Kindergarten
- NTSS Screenings take place several times a year for all students K-5
- Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) – all students in grades 3-5

## **APPENDIX A:**

### **Federal Law and State Citations**

Norwell Elementary Schools ensures compliance with all Federal and State Laws and regulations including:

**Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** – Discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin

**Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964** – Discrimination in employment

**Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972** - Discrimination based on sex

**Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973** – Discrimination based on disability

**Age Discrimination Act of 1975** – Discrimination based on ages

**American Disabilities Act of 1990** - Discrimination based on disability

**Individual Disabilities Education Act (I.D.E.A.), Part B § 34 CFR 300**

**Massachusetts General Law C. 76 § 5** – Discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin or sexual orientation

**Massachusetts General Law C. 119 § 51A** – Child abuse/neglect

**Massachusetts General Law C. 151B §** - Discrimination in employment

**Massachusetts General Law C. 151B § 4** – Prohibition of sexual harassment

**Massachusetts General Law C. 151C** – Fair Educational Practices Act – prohibition of sexual harassment

**Massachusetts General Law C. 214 § IC** – Right of freedom from sexual harassment

**Massachusetts General Law C. 12 § 11 H and I** - Prohibition of threats, intimidation and coercion in violation of civil rights

**Massachusetts General Law C. 265 § 37** – Use of force for threat of force or in violation of civil rights

**Massachusetts General Law C. 265 § 39** – Assault and battery or damage to property for the purpose of intimidation in violation of civil rights

**Massachusetts General Law C. 291** - Sex education

**Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974** - Right of privacy of educational records



**Massachusetts General Law C. 71, § 57** – Physical examinations are required at intervals designated by the School Committee

**Massachusetts Educational Reform Act of 1993** - School councils

**Massachusetts General Law C. 76, § 16** – Exclusion of students from school

**Massachusetts General Law C. 71, § 37H 1/2** - Expulsion

**Massachusetts General Law C. 15A, § 39** – Dual Enrollment

**Massachusetts General Law C. 71, § 37H** – Weapons, drugs and alcohol

**Massachusetts General Law C. 150§ 37H** – Possession of dangerous weapons

**Massachusetts General Law C. 268 and 269, § 32** – Interference or tampering with police of fire signal system; false alarms

**Massachusetts General Law C. 269, § 17 and 18** - Hazing

**Massachusetts General Law C. 71, § 34h** - Rights of non-custodial parents

**Massachusetts General Law C. 71, § 34A, 34B, 34E, and C. 71B, § 13** - Rights of confidentiality, inspection amendment and destruction of student records

**Massachusetts General Law C. 150, § 10, C. 269, § 10, C. 648, C. 71, § 37L** - Weapons

**Massachusetts General Law C. 71, § 37H 1/2** - Felony complaint or conviction of student; suspension; expulsion; right to appeal.

**603 CMR 28.00** – Massachusetts Special Education Regulations

**603 CMR 23.00:** Student Records.

**McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act**

**Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (20 U.S.C. section 1232h; 34 CFT Part 98)**

## Section Two

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*Norwell Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, gender, gender identity, age, ancestry, homelessness or disability in its admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities.*

# **2023 - 2024**

## **DISTRICT POLICIES and REGULATIONS FOR STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOKS**

### **Academic Counseling**

With regards to general curricular and occupational/vocational opportunities, all students from linguistic, racial, and ethnic minorities; males; females; homeless students; and students with disabilities all receive the same information and academic counseling as other students on the full range of general curricular and any occupational/vocational opportunities available to them.

To ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and homelessness, all counselors encourage students to consider programs of study, courses, extracurricular activities, and occupational opportunities on the basis of individual interests, abilities, and skills. All counselors also examine testing materials for bias and counteract any found bias when administering tests and interpreting test results. Counselors communicate effectively with limited-English-proficient and disabled students and facilitate their access to all programs and services offered by the district and provide limited-English-proficient students with the opportunity to receive guidance and counseling in a language they understand. All counselors support students in educational and occupational pursuits that are nontraditional for their gender.

### **Access to a Full Range of Education Programs**

All students, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or homelessness, have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational/vocational education programs offered by the district.

### **Accessibility of Extracurricular Activities**

Extracurricular activities sponsored by the district are nondiscriminatory in that the school provides equal opportunity for all students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports and extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the school do not exclude students on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity disability, or homelessness.

## **Accommodating Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies**

The Norwell School Committee recognizes that students with documented life-threatening food allergies are considered disabled and are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, Public Law 93-112, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. A clearly defined “Individual Health Care Plan” shall be developed and implemented for all such identified students. Necessary accommodations shall be made to ensure full participation of identified students in student activities. The appropriate staff, the parent/guardian of the student, and the student’s physician, shall sign such plan.

All Norwell schools are responsible for developing and implementing guidelines for the care of food-allergic students. Such guidelines shall include, but not be limited to, staff development, strategies for identifying students at risk for life-threatening allergic reactions, means to manage the student’s allergy including avoidance measures, designation of typical symptoms, and dosing instructions for medications.

Norwell Public Schools each year shall register with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in order that school nurses will be eligible to train unlicensed personnel to administer epinephrine by auto injector (epi-pen) to students with life-threatening allergic conditions, consistent with 105 CMR 210.000.

*Please note:* The risk of life threatening allergic reactions can never be fully eliminated in the school environment. Parents with allergic children are asked to provide the school with an individualized action plan prepared by the student’s physician and reviewed by the school nurse. Parents are strongly encouraged to instruct their children in how to avoid contact with substances to which they are allergic. The school cafeteria can never be fully free of allergens.

## **Administering Medicines to Students – Policy JLCD**

Medication administration to students is one of the most common health related activities in schools. It ensures that students who require medication during the day will be able to attend school and encourages collaboration between parents/guardians and the school district.

The school nurse is the supervisor of the medication administration program in each school. When necessary for medication to be administered to a student during a school day the nurse will ensure there is a proper medication order form from a licensed prescriber and a written parent guardian consent on file in the nursing office. The prescribed medication must be provided to the school nurse by a parent/guardian or responsible adult, in the original pharmacy-labeled container or manufacturer’s container for over-the-counter medication. All medications must be renewed at the beginning of each school year by the licensed prescriber and a new parent/guardian consent must be signed. Faxed orders from the licensed prescriber’s office are acceptable.

Standing orders: Prior to the start of each school year, the Norwell Public Schools' school physician reviews and renews the standing orders in collaboration with the Nursing Department.

The Norwell Public Schools shall, through a nurse leader, register with the Department of Public Health for a partial delegation of medication administration and in the use of epinephrine auto-injectors.

Following consultation with the school nurse, parent, and the development of a care plan, 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 self-administer epinephrine auto injectors.

SOURCE: MASC 2011

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:54B](#)

Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.00; 244 CMR

3.00

### **Athletic Concussion Policy – Policy JJIF**

Norwell Public Schools, as an agent of the Town of Norwell, recognizes its role in the provision of information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities<sup>1</sup> including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation.

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<sup>1</sup> Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or band leader including, but not limited to, football, skiing, field hockey, gymnastics, cheer leading, swimming, soccer, lacrosse, hockey, baseball, basketball, softball, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

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

- Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
- DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
- DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
- DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents;
- and
- 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.

The associated *Concussion Prevention and Intervention Support Protocol* (included in "Student Services" section above) shall discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements. Lastly, this protocol shall discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

**Legal References:** M.G.L. 111:222; 105 CMR 201.000

### **Availability of In-School Programs for Pregnant Students**

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 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 unless it requires such certification for all students for other physical or emotional conditions requiring the attention of a physician.

### **Background Checks – Policy ADDA**

It shall be the policy of Norwell Public Schools to obtain Federal and State background information through both SAFIS (Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services) and CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information), to the extent allowed by existing law or as subsequently amended of all employees, volunteers and prospective employees of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation (including taxi cab drivers) to children. Any fees associated with such background checks shall be the responsibility of the individual.

In accordance with 603 CMR 51.00 regulations an employee shall be defined as “an individual working, applying to work, in a Massachusetts public or private school. Employees shall include any substitute employee, apprentice, intern, or student teacher, or individuals in similar positions.” A subcontractor is defined as “an individual not employed by the school employer but commissioned by the school committee or school, or employed by the city or town, or employed by a non-school employer under contract or lease with the school, school district, city, or town to perform work on school grounds with students. Such individuals may be the employees of a contractor or vendor hired by a school, or may be independent contractors or service providers hired by a school or may be performing services on school grounds under a contract or lease with the school, school district, city or town.” A volunteer is defined as “an individual who performs a service for a school employer on an unpaid basis, who is not an apprentice, intern, or student teacher.”

The School Committee may require that chaperones, volunteers, subcontractors, fellow school committee members, student teachers, and practicum students be required to submit to a federal background check through SAFIS in addition to the already required CORI if they have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Any fees associated with such background checks shall be the responsibility of the individual.

The Superintendent, or certified designees, shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board 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, or certified designees, may also have access to Criminal Offender Record Information and/or Statewide Applicant Fingerprint Identification Services 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 Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 51.00 “Direct and unmonitored contact with children shall mean contact with students when no other employee, for whom the employer has made a suitability determination pursuant to 603 CMR 51.00 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 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.”

If an individual is required to submit to a SAFIS or CORI 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 for SAFIS or personal information for CORI. In addition, the applicant or employee will be provided with all information needed to successfully register for a fingerprinting appointment.

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 a request form authorizing receipt by the district of all available federal and state background check data from the criminal history systems board. In the event that an individual has questions concerning the signing of the request form, he/she may meet with the Superintendent; however, failure to sign the CORI request form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed request forms must be kept in secure files.

The School Committee, Superintendent, or their designees certified to obtain information under this policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children. All federal and state background records will be kept in a locked cabinet, separate from personnel files in the Business Office. SAFIS and CORI results are not subject to the public records law.

When no longer needed, criminal record information and any suitability determinations will be destroyed by shredding paper copies and/or by deleting all electronic copies from the electronic storage location, including any backup copies or files. CORI data may be

retained for not more than three years. SAFIS data may be retained for not more than the life employment or volunteer duties.

All background check information is subject to strict state and federal laws, rules, and regulations. Criminal history information 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, the FBI, and the Executive Office of Public Safety & Security. Failure to comply with such rules and regulations could lead to sanctions. Federal law prohibits the exchange of records and information and could be 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 criminal history information.

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

Criminal history record information 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 laws, rules, and regulations, have been implemented to ensure the security and confidentiality of information. Each individual involved in the handling of such information is to familiarize himself/herself with these safeguards. In addition to the above, each individual involved in the handling of such information will strictly adhere to the protections of this policy on the storage, retention, and destruction of such information. SAFIS and CORI results are not subject to the public records law.

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision made pursuant to Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002. The employer may consider the following factors when reviewing a federal or state background check: the type and nature of the offense; the date of the offense and whether the individual has been subsequently arrested, as well as any other factors the employer deems relevant. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on CORI or SAFIS checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

For SAFIS results, a record of suitability determination will be retained. The following information will be included in the determination – the name, date of birth of the applicant; the date on which the school employer received the national criminal history check results; and the suitability determination (either “unsuitable” or “suitable”). 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.

If a criminal record is received from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB), the Superintendent will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the CORI request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

If the district is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of any federal or state background check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the district's Background Check policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the CORI or SAFIS record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides school related transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and the Superintendent, prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information, shall also inform volunteers in writing.

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records that 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 commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests, criminal court appearances or convictions. An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer 'no record' with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a complaint transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution."

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

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

A final adverse decision based on an individual's criminal record will not be made until the individual has been afforded a reasonable time, depending on the particular circumstances but not more than 30 days, to correct, or complete the criminal record.

Pursuant to state law and regulation, if the school 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 school 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 background checks. The school district 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 school 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 licensure action pursuant to the regulation, the school district shall report to the Commissioner in writing within 30 days of the discovery, regardless of whether the school 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 regulation to the Commissioner and shall also send a copy of the criminal record check results to the employee or applicant.

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 the 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.

As soon as possible after the district obtains the certification from the criminal history systems board to receive CORI and/or SAFIS data, the Superintendent shall obtain such data for any person then providing volunteer service, as a condition of continued service.

**LEGAL REFS:**

M.G.L.71:38R, 151B, 276, §.100A, St.2002, c.385  
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

## **Breathalyzer Testing – Policy JICHA**

Norwell Public Schools is committed to the promotion of healthful living and to the safety and well-being of its students, faculty and greater community, including but not limited to its best efforts at alcohol education and persuading students to say no to alcohol. In order to ensure a safe environment for all students, faculty and the community-at-large, the Norwell School Committee authorizes the Norwell High School Principal, or properly trained school staff delegated by the Principal, to administer breathalyzer tests to students and their guests while on school property or at a school-sponsored event, regardless of whether the event is held on or off school grounds.

The primary goals of utilizing a Breathalyzer are (1) to deter students and their guests from engaging in illegal and/or unpermitted alcohol consumption that could potentially result in harmful or even fatal consequences to students or others, (2) to prevent intoxicated students from harming themselves or others.

Breathalyzer testing may be used, at staff discretion, when a staff member has reasonable suspicion (grounds for reasonable suspicion shall include but not be limited to glassy eyes, slurred speech, unsteadiness on feet, atypical demeanor/behavior, alcohol odor, etc.) to believe that a student or guest may be under the influence of alcohol upon attempting to enter school property or a school-sponsored event, or during a school or school sponsored event. Upon initial testing of a student or guest reasonably believed to possibly be under the influence of alcohol, the student or guest will be escorted to a private location as is reasonably practicable given the event location for Breathalyzer testing in accordance with standard testing protocols. A minimum of two (2) tests shall be conducted on each individual tested with all results recorded.

If it is determined via Breathalyzer testing that a student and/or a student's guest is under the influence of alcohol, the student's and/or guest's parent or guardian will be notified and asked to transport the student and/or guest home to ensure safety. If it is determined that a student is under the influence of alcohol, the student will also be subject to discipline in accordance with the Norwell Public Schools drug, alcohol and discipline policies. A student may also be required to participate in a drug/alcohol awareness program. Any student or guest who refuses a Breathalyzer test when asked by staff to submit to testing will be considered to have been using alcohol and be treated in the same manner as a student or guest testing positive for alcohol consumption. In the event that the Principal or a designee is unable to contact the student's or guest's parent or guardian at the time of the incident, emergency personnel will be contacted to transport the student or guest as needed for his or her own safety.

For each incident, staff shall write a separate, brief written report indicating the date, time and location of the event as well as the name of any student or guest suspected of using alcohol and specific reasons for suspecting the individuals of using alcohol. Staff shall also record on each incident report the Breathalyzer results, the name of the individual(s) conducting the testing, the means and result of parent/guardian notification or attempted notification, and the circumstances of student removal/transportation from the event.

Staff shall ensure that the individual administering a Breathalyzer test has been properly trained and designated to administer the test and that all equipment is functioning correctly prior to each event for which it may be used.

### **Bullying Prevention – Policy JICFB**

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

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

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

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

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

Cyber-bullying 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 Norwell Public Schools;

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

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

#### Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The plan shall apply to students and members of a school staff including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

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

#### Reporting

Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to

report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

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

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

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

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

#### Investigation Procedures

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly initiate investigations procedures aligned with JICFB-R: Regulations for the Implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy.

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

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

#### Training and Assessment

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

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



### Publication and Notice

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

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

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

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on Norwell Public Schools' website.

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

**CROSS REFS:** AC, Nondiscrimination  
ACAB, Sexual Harassment  
JBA, Student-to-Student Harassment  
JICFA, Prohibition of Hazing  
JK, Student Discipline Regulations

## **REGULATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY – POLICY JICFB-R**

### *I. Officials for Reporting*

The building principal (or his/her designee) is responsible for receiving reports and complaints of violations of this Policy at the school level. A report or complaint of a violation of this Policy involving a principal should be filed with the District Complaint Officer (Director of Student Services), the Alternate District Complaint Officer (Director of Finance, Operations & Technology), or the Superintendent of Schools. Upon receipt of complaint, the Superintendent of Schools may notify the District Complaint Officer to conduct an investigation on his behalf.

The District Complaint Officer is responsible for receiving and addressing reports or complaints of violations of this Policy at the district level. A report or complaint involving the District Complaint Officer should be filed with the Superintendent of Schools; a report or complaint involving the Superintendent of Schools with the School Committee. Upon receipt of complaint regarding the Superintendent of Schools, the Norwell School

Committee may notify the District Complaint Officer to conduct an investigation on its behalf.

## *II. Reporting Procedures: General Overview*

1. Any school employee, school committee member, independent contractor, or school volunteer who becomes aware or has a reasonable belief that bullying/cyberbullying is occurring, has occurred or may have occurred on school property or in a school-related activity must promptly report the alleged incident(s) to the designated official.
2. Any student or other person (who is not a school employee, independent contractor or school volunteer) who becomes aware or has a reasonable belief that bullying/cyberbullying is occurring, has occurred or may have occurred on school property or in a school-related activity is strongly encouraged to and should promptly report the incident(s) to a designated official. In situations where a student or other person does not feel comfortable reporting the incident to a designated official, they may report it to a trusted school employee, who must promptly transmit the report to a designated official.
3. When a report or complaint involves physical injury, the building principal (or his/her designee) will promptly report the incident to the Superintendent of Schools and the District Complaint Officer and/or his designee.
4. All complaints or reports about a violation of this Policy must be documented on the District's *Reporting/Complaint Form*. The form is available from designated officials. If a complainant or reporter is either unwilling or unable to complete the District's *Reporting/Complaint Form*, the designated official who receives the oral complaint or report will promptly prepare a written report, by filling out the District's *Reporting/Complaint Form*, using, to the extent practicable, the reporter's or complainant's own words to describe the potential violation.
5. If the complaint occurs at the school level, the designated official will promptly provide the principal with the completed *Reporting/Complaint Form* (or to the District Complaint Officer, if the principal is the subject of the complaint), with a copy to the District Complaint Officer. If the complaint occurs at the district level, the designated official will promptly provide the completed *Reporting/Complaint Form* to the District Complaint Officer.

## *III. Filing a Complaint or Report*

1. The complainant or reporter files a written complaint or report with a designated official, using the District's *Reporting/Complaint Form*, identifying the name(s) of the subject of the complaint, if known; describing the facts and circumstances of the incident or pattern of behavior; providing the time(s) and date(s) of the incident(s); and identifying any witnesses and relevant documentary information.
2. A complainant or reporter may also file an oral complaint or report. In those circumstances, a designated official will complete the District's Reporting/Complaint Form based on the oral information, using, to the extent practicable, the complainant or reporter's own words. The complainant will sign the Reporting/Complaint Form.
3. Anonymous reporting of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation can be made either through the completion of an online anonymous report (available on our main website at [www.norwellschools.org](http://www.norwellschools.org) and also on all school website). Additionally, anonymous reports can be made via telephone to any school or district office or via completed and mailed report forms (mailed to any district office or school building).
4. Even where the designated official does not obtain the identity of, or cooperation by, the alleged victim(s), the District will investigate the allegations, and proceed to Informal or Formal Proceedings, to the extent practicable.

#### *IV. Formal vs. Informal Proceedings*

1. After the school principal (or his/her designee), or the District Complaint Officer, receives a complaint or report, the District must determine whether to resolve the complaint or report through Formal or Informal Proceedings.
2. After receipt of a report, the designated official will initially investigate the veracity of the claims and shall verbally notify the parents of both the alleged target and alleged aggressor. The parents of the alleged target will receive a letter, copied to the Norwell Police Department, which outlines their right to report the alleged incident to the Norwell Police Department at any time throughout the process.
3. In reports of bullying/cyberbullying among staff members the designated official will meet with both the alleged victim and alleged perpetrator to gather additional information, as necessary.
4. If the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, determines that:

- a. the allegation is serious enough that it appears to place the complainant or any other person at physical risk;
- b. the incident has resulted, or may result, in a criminal charge;
- c. the incident involves a referral to the Department of Children and Families;
- d. the allegation involves a serious form of harassment, discrimination, or retaliation;
- e. the District has intervened with the alleged student offender under the purview of this policy or procedures;
- f. there is a pending Formal Proceeding against the subject of the complaint;
- g. the subject of the complaint has previously been found to have violated this Policy after Formal Proceedings;
- h. or that a Formal Proceeding is otherwise appropriate under the circumstances, then the designated official must commence a **Formal Proceeding** (as delineated under Section VI). If none of the aforementioned factors are variables in the presenting complaint then Informal Proceedings (as delineated under Section V) must commence.

5. For allegations or incidents that do not require a Formal Proceeding, a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, may at his/her discretion apply either the Student Code of Conduct or initiate an Informal Proceeding. If the designated official deems it appropriate, (s)he may initiate an Informal Proceeding to obtain a voluntary agreement between the complainant and alleged offender that will effectively correct the problem and end the complained of conduct. The primary focus of an Informal Proceeding is resolution through non-disciplinary corrective action, although a resolution may also include disciplinary action.

6. Nothing in these procedures limits the District or school taking immediate interim disciplinary action as set forth in the school's disciplinary code and policies.

## *V. Procedures for Informal Proceedings*

### **STEP ONE: Investigation and Explanation**

Upon the initiation of an Informal Proceeding, the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint and any/all reported witnesses to ascertain the veracity of the complaint. Following the informal investigation, the District Complaint Office, or designee, will meet with the involved parties to provide an overview of the process, the information ascertained through the process, the nature of the complaint, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the corrective action the complainant seeks.

### **STEP TWO: Proposed Resolution**

If appropriate after adequate investigation, the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will propose a resolution. If the complainant, the alleged

offender and their parent(s) or guardian(s) agree with the proposed resolution, the designated official will write down the resolution, and the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and their parent or guardian, if present, will sign it, and each person will receive a copy. At the meeting, the designated official will again explain the prohibition against retaliation.

#### STEP THREE: Monitoring

A designated official will monitor the situation, and will follow up with the complainant at least weekly for two months to determine whether there are further incidents or concerns. The designated official will maintain a written record of the follow-up.

#### STEP FOUR: Initiate Discipline and/or Formal Proceeding

If the complainant and alleged offender cannot agree to an informal resolution, or if at any time after resolution the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, determines that the problem is not corrected, the District may apply the Student Code of Conduct or commence a Formal Proceeding.

*File Retention:* If the complaint occurs at the school level, the principal (or the District Complaint Officer, if the principal is the subject of the complaint), will maintain *in a separate confidential file* the District's Reporting/Complaint Form, information obtained through inquiry and investigation, and the proposed and agreed-to resolution, if any, and will provide a copy of the file to the District Complaint Officer and maintain a copy of the file in the applicable student record or employee personnel file.

If the complaint occurs at the district level, the District Complaint Officer will maintain the file.

The confidential file shall travel from school official to school official as the student progresses through their educational career in Norwell Public Schools.

#### VI. Procedures for Formal Proceedings

##### STEP ONE: Preliminary Investigation and Explanation

The designated official will separately meet in a timely manner with the complainant and the subject of the complaint, and, if students, with their parent(s) or guardian(s), to tell them about the formal process, explain the prohibition against retaliation, and determine the remedy the complainant seeks.

The designated official will also explain that the investigation will be kept as confidential as possible, but that the District cannot promise absolute confidentiality, and may not be able to withhold the complainant's identity from the subject of the complaint, since such a promise could interfere with the District's ability to enforce its Policy, conduct a fair and thorough investigation, or impose disciplinary or corrective action.

## STEP TWO: Formal Investigation

A designated official will conduct an investigation in accordance with the procedures described in Section VII, Procedures for Conducting Formal Investigations.

## STEP THREE: Findings and Written Report

The designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will determine whether the allegations have been substantiated, and whether the Policy, or if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct has been violated. If the complaint is substantiated, the designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will decide, based on the investigative findings, on the appropriate action. If legal issues arise, the designated official will seek the advice and guidance of legal counsel for the District.

The designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will prepare a written report that includes the investigative findings, the investigative steps taken, and the reasons for those findings. These findings will specify whether the allegations have been substantiated, whether the Policy, or if the subject of the complaint is a student, the Student Code of Conduct, has been violated, and any decision for disciplinary and corrective action.

## STEP FOUR: Notification and Disposition

The designated official will promptly notify the complainant and the subject of the complaint in writing to let them know whether the complaint has been substantiated. If the complaint is substantiated, the designated official will also promptly notify the complainant of any non-disciplinary corrective action imposed to protect him/her from future Policy violations.

If the complaint is substantiated and the offender remains a student in the school, the designated official will meet with the offender and his/her parent or guardian, to describe the disciplinary and/or corrective action imposed, the school's expectations for future behavior and the potential consequences for retaliation or future violation of the Policy. If the subject of the complaint is an employee, the principal, the employee's supervisor or the Superintendent will impose any disciplinary or corrective action.

Any disciplinary or corrective action against a student or employee must conform to the due process requirements of federal and state law. Any right of appeal from a disciplinary decision is governed by the Student Code of Conduct, the school's disciplinary code, applicable collective bargaining agreements, and Massachusetts and federal law.

If the District's investigation results from a third party report, the designated official will inform that person that the District has taken steps consistent with the Policy, while not providing information about any disciplinary action imposed or any other information that

would violate applicable state and federal confidentiality laws or student record regulations.

#### STEP FIVE: Police Referral

After the investigation has concluded, if the findings identify that bullying has occurred, the principal or District Complaint Coordinator shall report the findings of the formal investigation to the Norwell Police Department. It is the responsibility of the Norwell Police Department to initiate a criminal investigation, if deemed necessary, through its independent evaluation of events.

*File Retention:* If the complaint occurs at the school level, the principal (or the District Complaint Officer, if the principal is the subject of the complaint), will maintain *in a separate confidential file* the District's Reporting/Complaint Form, information obtained through inquiry and investigation, and the proposed and agreed-to resolution, if any, and will provide a copy of the file to the District Complaint Officer and maintain a copy of the file in the applicable student record or employee personnel file.

If the complaint occurs at the district level, the District Complaint Officer will maintain the file.

The confidential file shall travel from school official to school official as the student progresses through their educational career in Norwell Public Schools.

#### STEP SIX: Monitoring and Follow-Up Actions

A designated official will monitor the situation, and will follow up with the complainant at least weekly for two months to determine whether there are further incidents or concerns, and whether the corrective action imposed has been effective.

The designated official will maintain a written record of the follow-up.

The complainant may ask the District Complaint Officer to review, and, if appropriate, revise any non-disciplinary corrective action imposed through a Formal Proceeding, if the complainant believes that the corrective action is not adequate to protect him/her from future bullying/cyberbullying.

### VII. *Procedures for Conducting Formal Investigations*

#### Prompt and Thorough Investigations

Except where Informal Proceedings are initiated, the school or District, through a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will promptly investigate all reports or complaints of an alleged violation of this Policy (even where the offender is unknown), as set forth below. The nature and duration of an investigation will

depend on the circumstances, including the type, severity and frequency of the alleged conduct.

The goal of an investigation is to obtain an accurate and complete account of all incidents and circumstances deemed relevant to the allegations of the complaint. No complaint is considered frivolous; on the other hand, culpability is never presumed. These procedures are intended to protect the rights of a victim and the rights of a wrongfully accused individual.

### Emergencies

School officials will immediately call 911 in case of a threat of imminent physical harm or actual physical harm to a school community member or where police, fire, medical, or other emergency assistance is needed.

### Opening the Formal Investigation

Upon receipt of a report or complaint, a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will promptly undertake an investigation.

### Investigative Procedure

The designated official investigating the incident will gather and preserve evidence, and identify all involved parties and witnesses. The investigation will generally consist of personal interviews with the complainant, the subject(s) of the complaint and others who witnessed or may have potentially relevant knowledge about the alleged incident or circumstances giving rise to the report or complaint. Interviews will be conducted in a manner that protects the privacy of individuals to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

The designated official should take notes during interviews, or prepare them soon thereafter, for the purpose of maintaining accurate records. The designated official will also generally review and evaluate any other information or document, including video recordings, voice mails, e-mails, websites, text messages, instant messages, or other items deemed relevant to the allegations, and information regarding any prior incident(s) committed by the subject of the complaint.

### Communication during Investigation

Throughout the investigatory and complaint resolution process, the designated official will make reasonable efforts to regularly inform the complainant and the subject of the complaint and their parent(s) or guardian(s) of the status of the complaint, and the anticipated timing for concluding the investigation, and making a determination. The designated official will notify each person interviewed or made aware of the investigation that the investigation is confidential and should not be discussed with other students or District employees. The designated official will tell them that the District will not tolerate



retaliation against the complainant or reporter, or anyone else who cooperates with the investigation.

#### Timeline for Formal Investigations

The designated official will complete their investigation as soon as practicable, not normally to exceed more than fifteen (15) business days after receipt of the complaint or report, except for good cause or with consent of the parties (as documented in the investigatory file). The designated official will expedite the investigation of any claim involving physical violence or serious threats of harm.

#### Ensuring Safety during Investigation

The designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will take any step he/she determines is necessary and/or advisable to protect, to the extent practicable, the complainant, witnesses, and other individuals from further incidents or from retaliation pending the outcome of the investigation. Those steps for students may include, but are not limited to, ordering interim disciplinary action under the Student Code of Conduct, appropriate adult supervision, reassigning classroom seating, temporarily transferring the student subject of the complaint from his/her class(es) with the complainant or to an alternative school assignment, instructing the subject of the complaint to avoid communication or contact with the complainant and to maintain a safe distance (for e.g., fifteen feet) from the complainant while on school property or in school-related activities, and monitoring compliance and reporting non-compliance of protective orders issued by a court.

Prior to a resolution of the complaint or report, the designated official will make reasonable efforts to monitor the success of the interim measures in achieving their goals. At the discretion of a school and/or District administrator, a student complainant may also temporarily transfer classes or schools, where available, but only where the student and his/her parent or guardians voluntarily consent to the transfer.

#### Target Assistance

The designated official (or his/her designee) will make appropriate referrals for target assistance, including counseling and crisis intervention, if requested, or as needed.

#### Target Non-Cooperation

Where a violation of the Policy has been reported by a third party and the alleged victim fails to cooperate with the investigation, or denies the incident occurred, disciplinary and corrective action may be precluded, or limited, depending on the circumstances and the availability of information from other sources.

#### False Charges

Any person who makes knowingly false charges or brings a malicious complaint is subject to disciplinary and/or corrective action.

#### Law Enforcement Notification

After an investigation has concluded that had determined that bullying has occurred, the principal or District Complaint Coordinator shall report the findings of the investigation to the Norwell Police Department. It is the responsibility of the Norwell Police Department to initiate a criminal investigation, if deemed necessary through its evaluation of events.

#### *VIII. Basis for Determining whether Policy has been violated*

A designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, will determine whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this Policy. The determination will be based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances, including the context, nature, frequency and severity of the behavior, how long the conduct continued, where the incident(s) occurred, the number of persons involved in the wrongful conduct, the ages of and relationships between the parties, past incidents or patterns of behavior, and whether the conduct adversely affected the education or school environment of the victim or other school community member.

#### *IX. Confidentiality*

The District will respect the privacy of the complainant, the subject(s) of the complaint, and the witnesses to the extent possible consistent with its obligations under federal and state law and regulations and its Policy to investigate, report, and take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action, and consistent with applicable and state and federal confidentiality laws and student record regulations.

#### *X. Disciplinary and Corrective Action*

If a designated official, in consultation with the District Complaint Officer, concludes that the subject of the complaint has violated this Policy, the District will in a timely manner impose disciplinary measures and/or corrective action reasonably calculated to end the complained of conduct, deter future conduct, and protect the complainant(s) and other similarly situated individuals. In imposing disciplinary and corrective measures the District will take into account harm the victim and other members of the school community suffered and any damage to school climate or property. The decision whether discipline is imposed and the nature of any disciplinary action must comply with the District and school's disciplinary policies.

#### Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Students

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a student may include, but is not limited to, a written warning; classroom or school transfer; short-term or long-term suspension; exclusion from participation in school sponsored functions, after-school programs, and/or

extracurricular activities; limiting or denying access to a part or area of a school; exclusion, expulsion, or discharge from school; adult supervision on school premises; parent conferences; an apology to the victim; awareness training (to help students understand the impact of their behavior); participation in empathy development, cultural diversity, anti-harassment, anti-bullying or intergroup relations programs; mandatory counseling, or any other action authorized by and consistent with the Student Code of Conduct and/or school disciplinary code.

#### Discipline for Students with Disabilities

The District complies with the federal and state law requirements that apply to the discipline of students with disabilities, including the federal “Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004” (“IDEA 2004”).

#### Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Employees

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school employee may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspension, transfer, demotion, removal from certain duties, employment termination, supervision, training, and counseling.

#### Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Independent Contractors

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning an independent contractor may include, but is not limited to, a request to the employer of the independent contractor to warn, suspend or terminate its employee; limiting or denying the individual contractor access to school premises or school-related activities; terminating the contract with the District or school, and training.

#### Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning School Volunteers

Disciplinary and corrective action concerning a school volunteer may include, but is not limited to, a written warning, suspending or terminating the volunteer relationship, limiting or denying access to school premises or school-related activities, supervision and training.

#### Disciplinary and Corrective Action Concerning Other School Community Members

Corrective action concerning any other school community member, including parents and legal guardians of students, and visitors to District schools may include, but is not limited to, a warning; counseling; and limiting or denying the parent, guardian or visitor’s access to school premises or school-related activities.

## **Buses**

### **Student Conduct on School Buses – Policy EEAEC also JICC**

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

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

### **School Bus Safety Program – Policy EEAE**

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. Children 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 children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

The decision of the building principal on these matters is final.

### **Bus Policies and Practices**

#### **Bus Policies: General**

1. No persons other than school or bus company personnel will be allowed to board the bus while carrying students without the express permission of the superintendent or designee.
2. No standees, shuttling or doubling of bus routes shall be permitted without written approval from the superintendent or designee.
3. Students will be picked-up and dropped-off only at designated stops. Designated stops will be determined based upon location of students and safety in order to maximize timeliness of transportation service.

4. All students who ride buses are permitted to ride only the bus to which they are assigned. Only in cases of an emergency may a student be given permission to switch buses. To acquire permission in cases of emergency, a note from home must be given to the office on that morning. Students may not change buses for social visits or for after school activities. Bus stops cannot be changed without permission from the building principal.
5. Elementary students shall be picked-up and dropped-off on both sides of the following streets, and students shall not be allowed to cross in front or back of the bus for any reason:

Main Street, Route 123  
Washington Street, Route 53  
Grove Street, Norwell Avenue, Central Street  
River Street

6. Only cul-de-sacs that are greater than .5 miles long (provided there is ample room to turn) are eligible for bus service with approval from an annual review by the Director of Finance, Operations and Technology. The review will consider safety, ages of students and location of students on the street. All exceptions must be approved by the School Committee.
7. Students will be picked up and dropped off at day care or employment (in Norwell), upon written request by the parent or guardian and after approval by the principal. These arrangements must be permanent, pre-arranged and the same for all days.
8. Noon drop-offs of Kindergarten students will only be made after an adult can be physically seen by the bus driver. If visual contact is not made by the bus driver the student will be returned to the school.

#### Bus Driver Responsibilities

1. The bus driver must remain on the bus at all times when there are one or more students on the bus.
2. At the end of each and every bus run the driver must walk the interior length of the bus to inspect for the possibility of an undelivered student.
3. Drivers shall be responsible for the reasonable conduct of students while on the bus and will report inappropriate behavior to the student's principal. Discipline for misbehavior on a bus is the responsibility of principal not the driver. However, bus drivers will contact the Norwell Police Department and have a student removed off the bus if the student is endangering the safety of other riders on the bus.

### Bus Rider Rules

1. Follow the driver's instructions.
2. Do not eat or drink on the bus. Food consumption on buses compromises the safety of children with food allergies.
3. Keep all harmful materials off the bus.
4. Keep all parts of your body and all objects to yourself and inside the bus.
5. Keep the noise level down and remain seated facing forward.
6. Keep the aisle clear and do not litter, write on, or damage the bus.
7. All misbehavior on the bus will be reported to the principal.

### Bus Stop and Routes

All bus routes and the Director of Finance, Operations & Technology determines stops. They are developed with consideration for maximum safety and time efficiency. To the extent feasible (recognizing both safety and service/ timeliness requirements), bus routes will be designed to facilitate the practice of "first on/first off".

### Child Abuse/Neglect

The school recognizes a duty to be aware of and sensitive to children who educators have reasonable cause to believe have suffered physical or emotional abuse.

Because school personnel are in a position to notice the needs of a child and have an affirmative duty under law to make a report if they have reasonable cause to believe a child being abused. The first goal of school intervention in such cases is always to protect children from potential abuse and use available resources towards this end.

#### *Legal framework:*

Under M.G.L., c.119, sec.51A, a mandated reporter who, in their professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from: (i) abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse; (ii) neglect, including malnutrition; or (iii) physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth, shall immediately communicate with the department orally and, within 48 hours, shall file a written report with the department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect.

If a mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school or facility, the mandated reporter may instead notify the person or designated agent in charge of such institution, school or facility who shall become responsible for notifying the department in the manner required by this section. A mandated reporter may, in addition to filing a report under this section, contact local law enforcement authorities or the child advocate about the suspected abuse or neglect.

A report filed under this section shall contain: (i) the names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other person responsible for the child's care, if known; (ii) the child's age; (iii) the child's sex; (iv) the nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect; (v) the circumstances under which the person required to report first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect; (vi) whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, shelter or otherwise assist the child; (vii) the name of the person or persons making the report; (viii) any other information that the person reporting believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries; (ix) the identity of the person or persons responsible for the neglect or injuries; and (x) other information required by the department.

A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of any of the conditions listed in subsection (a) shall report the death to the district attorney for the county in which the death occurred and the office of the chief medical examiner as required by clause (16) of section 3 of chapter 38. A fine of not more than \$1,000 shall punish any person who fails to file a report under this subsection.

Any person may file a report under this section if that person has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from or has died as a result of abuse or neglect. No mandated reporter shall be liable in any civil or criminal action for filing a report under this section or for contacting local law enforcement authorities or the child advocate, if the report or contact was made in good faith, was not frivolous, and the reporter did not cause the abuse or neglect. No other person filing a report under this section shall be liable in any civil or criminal action by reason of the report if it was made in good faith and if that person did not perpetrate or inflict the reported abuse or cause the reported neglect. Any person filing a report under this section may be liable in a civil or criminal action if the department or a district attorney determines that the person filing the report may have perpetrated or inflicted the abuse or caused the neglect.

Legal References:                    M.G.L., Chapter 434, Legislative Acts of 1980  
   M.G.L., Chapter 119, Section 51A  
   M.G.L., Chapter 176, Legislative Acts of 2008

Definitions:

The following definitions may be found under the Department of Children and Families Regulations (110 CMR, section 2.00):

*Abuse:* the non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker upon a child under age 18 which causes, or creates a substantial risk of, physical or emotional injury; or constitutes a

sexual offense under the laws of the Commonwealth; or any sexual contact between a caretaker and a child under the care of that individual. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., abuse can occur while the child is in an out-of-home or in-home setting).

*Shaken Baby Syndrome:* infants, babies or small children who suffer injuries or death from severe shaking, jerking, pushing or pulling may have been student/victims of Shaken Baby Syndrome. The act of shaking a baby is considered physical abuse, as spinal, head and neck injuries often result from violently shaking young children.

*Neglect:* Failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence or inability to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, emotional stability and growth, or other essential care; provided, however, that such inability is not due solely to inadequate economic resources or solely to the existence of a handicapping condition. This definition is not dependent upon location (i.e., neglect can occur while the child is in an out-of-home setting).

*Emotional Injury:* an impairment to or disorder of the intellectual or psychological capacity of a child as evidenced by observable and substantial reduction in the child's ability to function within a normal range of performance and behavior.

*Physical Injury:* Death; or fracture of a bone, subdural hematoma, burns, impairment of any organ, and any other such nontrivial injury; or soft tissue swelling or skin bruising, depending upon such factors as the child's age, circumstances under which the injury occurred and the number and location of bruises; or addiction to a drug or drugs at birth; or failure to thrive.

*Institutional Abuse or Neglect:* Abuse or neglect which occurs in any facility for children, including, but not limited to, group homes, residential or public or private schools, hospitals, detention and treatment facilities, family foster care homes, group day care centers and family day care homes.

Each case of child abuse or neglect is individual. The child who has been hurt is always the student/victim. If you believe a child may be the student/victim of abuse or neglect, speak with your principal and/or guidance counselor.

### Reporters

By its nature, child abuse can evoke strong emotional reactions. Reporters need to be sensitive to their own feelings and attitudes, and realize that parents need understanding and help, and often feel relief when it is offered. The process is a non-criminal proceeding.

### **Procedures for Reporting Suspicion of Child Abuse/Neglect**

The following school procedures will be followed for reporting suspicion of child abuse/neglect:



1. Report situation to Principal.
2. Principal will convene and chair a team to further establish cause and reason for filing.
3. Principal or referring person will call the Department of Children and Families Child-at-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200 or our DCF Area Office at 781-682-0800; ask for the screener. Please describe the situation to him/her and you will be advised:
  - a. Whether a report has already been filed (sometimes multiple child abuse/neglect forms need to be filed to establish patterns).
  - b. If advice is needed to proceed on the situation.
4. Principal and referring person will complete and file required form within 48 hours. Forms may be obtained from Coastal Area Office. Forms should be sent with 48 hours to:

Massachusetts Department of Children and Families  
 Metro Area Office  
 541 Main Street, South Weymouth, Massachusetts 02189  
 (781) 682-0800

5. Forward a Xeroxed copy of the report to the Director of Student Services.
6. The parent(s) guardian(s) will be informed that a child abuse/neglect form is being filed with the Department of Children and Families, except in rare cases where a child's life might be endangered to do so. It is helpful to designate a team member who may know the parents and be concerned for them, to inform the parents of this situation.
7. If a neighbor calls a school with a report, he/she should be given the Department of Children and Families Child-at-Risk Hotline at 1-800-792-5200 and be urged to call. (This can be done anonymously.) School personnel should not act on these calls, but can help by giving appropriate numbers to call.

### **Children and Youth Experiencing Homelessness - Policy JFABD**

To the extent practical and as required by law, Norwell Public Schools will work with students experiencing homelessness and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of students experiencing homelessness not currently attending school. Students experiencing homelessness 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, English Language Learning services, vocational and technical education programs, and school nutrition programs.

Students experiencing homelessness are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;

4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

It shall be the role of the District Social Worker, in collaboration with the Office of Instruction, to serve as the district's liaison for students experiencing homelessness and their families.

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

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

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

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

The district's liaison for students experiencing homelessness 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 students experiencing homelessness in schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

### **Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities – Policy JJ**

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

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities are those which, though they are not addressed in the classroom setting, form an integral part of the school's educational program. These activities include, but are not limited to, student government, student publications, music, drama, subject-related clubs, as well as social, political, hobby, and service organizations. These programs provide students with opportunities to pursue established interests and explore new interests.

Through participation, students are encouraged to form productive and satisfying relationships with others based on respect, trust, and caring. Experiences that foster leadership, cooperation, and a sense of community educate young people for citizenship in a democratic society. Co-curricular and extracurricular activities enable students to fulfill their creative capacities, to develop school spirit, and to supplement or enrich classroom experiences. In addition, students earn through achievement the respect of peers, school personnel, parents, and the community.

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

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

**LEGAL REFS.:** M.G.L. 71:47; 603 CMR 26:06

## **Communication of Non-School Related Information to Students and Families – Policy KN**

The primary function of the school district is to educate students. Therefore, home-school communication regarding non-school related matters from non-parent organizations (as defined in policy KBE) should be kept to a minimum. No information or materials related to non-instructional issues may be distributed within the schools without the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Norwell School Committee recognizes that, from time to time, the provision of information to our student and family population is needed and best serves the needs of the community.

To this end, the Committee hereby approves the use of school newsletters (community events section only) through which information and materials may be shared, upon Superintendent's approval.

The Norwell School Committee hereby reserves the following means of communication to be used exclusively by school personnel, without exception:

- District and School Websites
- Email Announcements
- Phone Calls
- School Calendar/s
- School bulletin boards, doors, windows, and walls

Nothing in this policy prohibits the use of any/all means of communication in the event of an emergency or disaster. The Norwell School Committee allows for the use of school communication to relay information to its constituents from the local, state, and federal government given that the Superintendent of Schools has approved such communication.

## **Conflict Of Interest Law**

This summary of the conflict of interest law, General Laws chapter 268A, is intended to help municipal employees understand how that law applies to them. This summary is not a substitute for legal advice, nor does it mention every aspect of the law that may apply in a particular situation. Municipal employees can obtain free confidential advice about the conflict of interest law from the Commission's Legal Division at our website, phone number, and address above. Municipal counsel may also provide advice.

The conflict of interest law seeks to prevent conflicts between private interests and public duties, foster integrity in public service, and promote the public's trust and confidence in that service by placing restrictions on what municipal employees may do on the job, after hours, and after leaving public service, as described below. The sections referenced below are sections of G.L. c. 268A.

When the Commission determines that the conflict of interest law has been violated, it can impose a civil penalty of up to \$10,000 (\$25,000 for bribery cases) for each violation. In addition, the Commission can order the violator to repay any economic advantage he gained by the violation, and to make restitution to injured third parties. Violations of the conflict of interest law can also be prosecuted criminally.

#### I. Are you a municipal employee for conflict of interest law purposes?

You do not have to be a full-time, paid municipal employee to be considered a municipal employee for conflict of interest purposes. Anyone performing services for a city or town or holding a municipal position, whether paid or unpaid, including full- and part-time municipal employees, elected officials, volunteers, and consultants, is a municipal employee under the conflict of interest law. An employee of a private firm can also be a municipal employee, if the private firm has a contract with the city or town and the employee is a "key employee" under the contract, meaning the town has specifically contracted for her services. The law also covers private parties who engage in impermissible dealings with municipal employees, such as offering bribes or illegal gifts.

#### II. On-the-job restrictions.

##### **1. Bribes. Asking for and taking bribes is prohibited. (See Section 2)**

A bribe is anything of value corruptly received by a municipal employee in exchange for the employee being influenced in his official actions. Giving, offering, receiving, or asking for a bribe is illegal.

Bribes are more serious than illegal gifts because they involve corrupt intent. In other words, the municipal employee intends to sell his office by agreeing to do or not do some official act, and the giver intends to influence him to do so. Bribes of any value are illegal.

##### **2. Gifts and gratuities. Asking for or accepting a gift because of your official position, or because of something you can do or have done in your official position, is prohibited. (See Sections 3, 23(b)(2), and 26)**

Municipal employees may not accept gifts and gratuities valued at \$50 or more given to influence their official actions or because of their official position. Accepting a gift intended to reward past official action or to bring about future official action is illegal, as is giving such gifts. Accepting a gift given to you because of the municipal position you hold is also illegal. Meals, entertainment event tickets, golf, gift baskets, and payment of travel expenses can all be illegal gifts if given in connection with official action or position, as can anything worth \$50 or more. A number of smaller gifts together worth \$50 or more may also violate these sections.

Example of violation: A town administrator accepts reduced rental payments from developers.

Example of violation: A developer offers a ski trip to a school district employee who oversees the developer's work for the school district.

Regulatory exemptions: There are situations in which a municipal employee's receipt of a gift does not present a genuine risk of a conflict of interest, and may in fact advance the public interest. The Commission has created exemptions permitting giving and receiving gifts in these situations. One commonly used exemption permits municipal employees to accept payment of travel-related expenses when doing so advances a public purpose. Another commonly used exemption permits municipal employees to accept payment of costs involved in attendance at educational and training programs. Other exemptions are listed on the Commission's website.

Example where there is no violation: A fire truck manufacturer offers to pay the travel expenses of a fire chief to a trade show where the chief can examine various kinds of fire-fighting equipment that the town may purchase. The chief fills out a disclosure form and obtains prior approval from his appointing authority.

Example where there is no violation: A town treasurer attends a two-day annual school featuring multiple substantive seminars on issues relevant to treasurers. The annual school is paid for in part by banks that do business with town treasurers. The treasurer is only required to make a disclosure if one of the sponsoring banks has official business before her in the six months before or after the annual school.

**3. Misuse of position. Using your official position to get something you are not entitled to, or to get someone else something they are not entitled to, is prohibited. Causing someone else to do these things is also prohibited. (See Sections 23(b)(2) and 26)**

A municipal employee may not use her official position to get something worth \$50 or more that would not be properly available to other similarly situated individuals. Similarly, a municipal employee may not use her official position to get something worth \$50 or more for someone else that would not be properly available to other similarly situated individuals. Causing someone else to do these things is also prohibited.

Example of violation: A full-time town employee writes a novel on work time, using her office computer, and directing her secretary to proofread the draft.

Example of violation: A city councilor directs subordinates to drive the councilor's wife to and from the grocery store.

Example of violation: A mayor avoids a speeding ticket by asking the police officer who stops him, "Do you know who I am?" and showing his municipal I.D.

**4. Self-dealing and nepotism. Participating as a municipal employee in a matter in which you, your immediate family, your business organization, or your future employer has a financial interest is prohibited. (See Section 19)**

A municipal employee may not participate in any particular matter in which he or a member of his immediate family (parents, children, siblings, spouse, and spouse's parents, children, and siblings) has a financial interest. He also may not participate in any particular matter in which a prospective employer, or a business organization of which he is a director, officer, trustee, or employee has a financial interest. Participation includes discussing as well as voting on a matter, and delegating a matter to someone else.

A financial interest may create a conflict of interest whether it is large or small, and positive or negative. In other words, it does not matter if a lot of money is involved or only a little. It also does not matter if you are putting money into your pocket or taking it out. If you, your immediate family, your business, or your employer have or has a financial interest in a matter, you may not participate. The financial interest must be direct and immediate or reasonably foreseeable to create a conflict. Financial interests which are remote, speculative or not sufficiently identifiable do not create conflicts.

Example of violation: A school committee member's wife is a teacher in the town's public schools. The school committee member votes on the budget line item for teachers' salaries.

Example of violation: A member of a town affordable housing committee is also the director of a non-profit housing development corporation. The non-profit makes an application to the committee, and the member/director participates in the discussion.

Example: A planning board member lives next door to property where a developer plans to construct a new building. Because the planning board member owns abutting property, he is presumed to have a financial interest in the matter. He cannot participate unless he provides the State Ethics Commission with an opinion from a qualified independent appraiser that the new construction will not affect his financial interest.

In many cases, where not otherwise required to participate, a municipal employee may comply with the law by simply not participating in the particular matter in which she has a financial interest. She need not give a reason for not participating.

There are several exemptions to this section of the law. An appointed municipal employee may file a written disclosure about the financial interest with his appointing authority, and seek permission to participate notwithstanding the conflict. The appointing authority may grant written permission if she determines that the financial interest in question is not so substantial that it is likely to affect the integrity of his services to the municipality. Participating without disclosing the financial interest is a violation. Elected employees cannot use the disclosure procedure because they have no appointing authority.

Example where there is no violation: An appointed member of the town zoning advisory committee, which will review and recommend changes to the town's by-laws with regard

to a commercial district, is a partner at a company that owns commercial property in the district. Prior to participating in any committee discussions, the member files a disclosure with the zoning board of appeals that appointed him to his position, and that board gives him a written determination authorizing his participation, despite his company's financial interest. There is no violation.

There is also an exemption for both appointed and elected employees where the employee's task is to address a matter of general policy and the employee's financial interest is shared with a substantial portion (generally 10% or more) of the town's population, such as, for instance, a financial interest in real estate tax rates or municipal utility rates.

**5. False claims. Presenting a false claim to your employer for a payment or benefit is prohibited, and causing someone else to do so is also prohibited. (See Sections 23(b)(4) and 26)**

A municipal employee may not present a false or fraudulent claim to his employer for any payment or benefit worth \$50 or more, or cause another person to do so.

Example of violation: A public works director directs his secretary to fill out time sheets to show him as present at work on days when he was skiing.

**6. Appearance of conflict. Acting in a manner that would make a reasonable person think you can be improperly influenced is prohibited. (See Section 23(b)(3))**

A municipal employee may not act in a manner that would cause a reasonable person to think that she would show favor toward someone or that she can be improperly influenced. Section 23(b) (3) requires a municipal employee to consider whether her relationships and affiliations could prevent her from acting fairly and objectively when she performs her duties for a city or town. If she cannot be fair and objective because of a relationship or affiliation, she should not perform her duties. However, a municipal employee, whether elected or appointed, can avoid violating this provision by making a public disclosure of the facts. An appointed employee must make the disclosure in writing to his appointing official.

Example where there is no violation: A developer who is the cousin of the chair of the conservation commission has filed an application with the commission. A reasonable person could conclude that the chair might favor her cousin. The chair files a written disclosure with her appointing authority explaining her relationship with her cousin prior to the meeting at which the application will be considered. There is no violation of Sec. 23(b) (3).

**7. Confidential information. Improperly disclosing or personally using confidential information obtained through your job is prohibited. (See Section 23(c))**



Municipal employees may not improperly disclose confidential information, or make personal use of non-public information they acquired in the course of their official duties to further their personal interests.

### III. After-hours restrictions.

#### **1. Taking a second paid job that conflicts with the duties of your municipal job is prohibited. (See Section 23(b)(1))**

A municipal employee may not accept other paid employment if the responsibilities of the second job are incompatible with his or her municipal job.

Example: A police officer may not work as a paid private security guard in the town where he serves because the demands of his private employment would conflict with his duties as a police officer.

#### **2. Divided loyalties. Receiving pay from anyone other than the city or town to work on a matter involving the city or town is prohibited. Acting as agent or attorney for anyone other than the city or town in a matter involving the city or town is also prohibited whether or not you are paid. (See Sec. 17)**

Because cities and towns are entitled to the undivided loyalty of their employees, a municipal employee may not be paid by other people and organizations in relation to a matter if the city or town has an interest in the matter. In addition, a municipal employee may not act on behalf of other people and organizations or act as an attorney for other people and organizations in which the town has an interest. Acting as agent includes contacting the municipality in person, by phone, or in writing; acting as a liaison; providing documents to the city or town; and serving as spokesman.

A municipal employee may always represent his own personal interests, even before his own municipal agency or board, on the same terms and conditions that other similarly situated members of the public would be allowed to do so. A municipal employee may also apply for building and related permits on behalf of someone else and be paid for doing so, unless he works for the permitting agency, or an agency which regulates the permitting agency.

Example of violation: A full-time health agent submits a septic system plan that she has prepared for a private client to the town's board of health.

Example of violation: A planning board member represents a private client before the board of selectmen on a request that town meeting consider rezoning the client's property.

While many municipal employees earn their livelihood in municipal jobs, some municipal employees volunteer their time to provide services to the town or receive small stipends. Others, such as a private attorney who provides legal services to a town as needed, may serve in a position in which they may have other personal or private employment during normal working hours. In recognition of the need not to unduly restrict the ability of town

volunteers and part-time employees to earn a living, the law is less restrictive for "special" municipal employees than for other municipal employees.

The status of "special" municipal employee has to be assigned to a municipal position by vote of the board of selectmen, city council, or similar body. A position is eligible to be designated as "special" if it is unpaid, or if it is part-time and the employee is allowed to have another job during normal working hours, or if the employee was not paid for working more than 800 hours during the preceding 365 days. It is the position that is designated as "special" and not the person or persons holding the position. Selectmen in towns of 10,000 or fewer are automatically "special"; selectman in larger towns cannot be "specials."

If a municipal position has been designated as "special," an employee holding that position may be paid by others, act on behalf of others, and act as attorney for others with respect to matters before municipal boards other than his own, provided that he has not officially participated in the matter, and the matter is not now, and has not within the past year been, under his official responsibility.

Example: A school committee member who has been designated as a special municipal employee appears before the board of health on behalf of a client of his private law practice, on a matter that he has not participated in or had responsibility for as a school committee member. There is no conflict. However, he may not appear before the school committee, or the school department, on behalf of a client because he has official responsibility for any matter that comes before the school committee. This is still the case even if he has recused himself from participating in the matter in his official capacity.

Example: A member who sits as an alternate on the conservation commission is a special municipal employee. Under town by-laws, he only has official responsibility for matters assigned to him. He may represent a resident who wants to file an application with the conservation commission as long as the matter is not assigned to him and he will not participate in it.

**3. Inside track. Being paid by your city or town, directly or indirectly, under some second arrangement in addition to your job is prohibited, unless an exemption applies. (See Section 20)**

A municipal employee generally may not have a financial interest in a municipal contract, including a second municipal job. A municipal employee is also generally prohibited from having an indirect financial interest in a contract that the city or town has with someone else. This provision is intended to prevent municipal employees from having an "inside track" to further financial opportunities.

Example of violation: Legal counsel to the town housing authority becomes the acting executive director of the authority, and is paid in both positions.

Example of violation: A selectman buys a surplus truck from the town DPW.

Example of violation: A full-time secretary for the board of health wants to have a second paid job working part-time for the town library. She will violate Section 20 unless she can meet the requirements of an exemption.

Example of violation: A city councilor wants to work for a non-profit that receives funding under a contract with her city. Unless she can satisfy the requirements of an exemption under Section 20, she cannot take the job.

There are numerous exemptions. A municipal employee may hold multiple unpaid or elected positions. Some exemptions apply only to special municipal employees. Specific exemptions may cover serving as an unpaid volunteer in a second town position, housing-related benefits, public safety positions, certain elected positions, small towns, and other specific situations. Please call the Ethics Commission's Legal Division for advice about a specific situation.

#### IV. After you leave municipal employment. (See Section 18)

- 1. Forever ban. After you leave your municipal job, you may never work for anyone other than the municipality on a matter that you worked on as a municipal employee.**

If you participated in a matter as a municipal employee, you cannot ever be paid to work on that same matter for anyone other than the municipality, nor may you act for someone else, whether paid or not. The purpose of this restriction is to bar former employees from selling to private interests their familiarity with the facts of particular matters that are of continuing concern to their former municipal employer. The restriction does not prohibit former municipal employees from using the expertise acquired in government service in their subsequent private activities.

Example of violation: A former school department employee works for a contractor under a contract that she helped to draft and oversee for the school department.

- 2. One-year cooling-off period. For one year after you leave your municipal job you may not participate in any matter over which you had official responsibility during your last two years of public service.**

Former municipal employees are barred for one year after they leave municipal employment from personally appearing before any agency of the municipality in connection with matters that were under their authority in their prior municipal positions during the two years before they left.

Example: An assistant town manager negotiates a three-year contract with a company. The town manager who supervised the assistant, and had official responsibility for the contract but did not participate in negotiating it, leaves her job to work for the company to which the contract was awarded. The former manager may not call or write the town in connection with the company's work on the contract for one year after leaving the town.

A former municipal employee who participated as such in general legislation on expanded gaming and related matters may not become an officer or employee of, or acquire a financial interest in, an applicant for a gaming license, or a gaming licensee, for one year after his public employment ceases.

**3. Partners. Your partners will be subject to restrictions while you serve as a municipal employee and after your municipal service ends.**

Partners of municipal employees and former municipal employees are also subject to restrictions under the conflict of interest law. If a municipal employee participated in a matter, or if he has official responsibility for a matter, then his partner may not act on behalf of anyone other than the municipality or provide services as an attorney to anyone but the city or town in relation to the matter.

Example: While serving on a city's historic district commission, an architect reviewed an application to get landmark status for a building. His partners at his architecture firm may not prepare and sign plans for the owner of the building or otherwise act on the owner's behalf in relation to the application for landmark status. In addition, because the architect has official responsibility as a commissioner for every matter that comes before the commission, his partners may not communicate with the commission or otherwise act on behalf of any client on any matter that comes before the commission during the time that the architect serves on the commission.

Example: A former town counsel joins a law firm as a partner. Because she litigated a lawsuit for the town, her new partners cannot represent any private clients in the lawsuit for one year after her job with the town ended.

**Curriculum Accommodation Plans – Policy IHBA**

Norwell Public Schools strives to develop programs and learning opportunities for all students in the least restrictive environment in the spirit of appropriate state and federal law. General and special education staff, in partnership with administration and parents, are encouraged, as a matter of school committee policy, to work together to develop comprehensive educational programs for students in need to curriculum accommodations.

The District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) holds that all students may benefit from interventions that focus on curriculum accommodations. For some students, these accommodations may enable them to meet success within the general education classroom without the need to be identified as a student with a disability or impairment. Such curriculum accommodations may include, but are not limited to, small group instruction, individualized tutoring, and supplemental services. Conversely, there are those students who may require alternative teaching methodologies or strategies and additional support through the special education delivery model that provides a flexible system of opportunities for all eligible students.

It is the goal of the Norwell Public Schools' DCAP to strengthen and continually improve the general education program for all students through:

- Assistance to general education classroom teachers, such as professional development to support their analysis and accommodation of various learning profiles, including students with English Language Learners, and student behavior management;
- Support services that are available to students through the general education program, including those students whose behavioral or social-emotional presentations may interfere with learning;
- Direct and systematic instruction and support in reading, literacy, and mathematics for all students;
- Encouragement of teacher mentoring and collaboration; and
- Encouragement of parental involvement in each student's education.

Each building principal, in collaboration with the School Council and Executive Director for Instruction, shall develop a Curriculum Accommodation Plan (CAP) to address the needs of all students in their school consistent with the DCAP. Each school's CAP shall be published in the student/parent handbook and will support the maintenance of school cultures that strive to meet the needs of all students.

**LEGAL REFS:** M.G.L. 38Q1/2; 59C

Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

### **Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Use by Students Prohibited – Policy JICH**

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 the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the screening 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 REF: M.G.L. 71:2A; 71:96; 71:97; 272:40A

### **Emergency Closings – Policy EBCD**

The Superintendent may close the schools or dismiss them 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 has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

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 schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

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

### **Emergency Preparedness**

Each classroom has a prominently displayed Crisis and Emergency Manual, developed with the safety and security of Norwell students as its imperative. This manual is updated

each summer with information that we have learned through the school year. The single most effective way of dealing with a critical incident or crisis situation is through the use of a Crisis Management Team. Each building has staff members identified for specific roles and responsibilities should an emergency arise.

#### Fire Drill, Lockdown, Evacuation

Each school practices evacuation and lockdown procedures each year. Procedures for leaving the building are posted at the front of each room. Students should leave the building with teachers as quickly as possible and go quietly to their designated areas. Teachers explain the purpose of these drills using developmentally appropriate language. The drills are conducted with the collaboration and support of the Norwell Police and Fire Department.

#### Emergency Notification

In case of an emergency that affects all students, the Superintendent of Schools makes an emergency phone call that will reach the emergency numbers that you have submitted to your school office. The principal may also access this emergency notification system in the case of a building emergency. Parents are responsible to ensure that your school office has updated phone numbers for an emergency.

#### **Equal Educational Opportunities – Policy JB**

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, Norwell Public Schools 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, 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. 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.

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 (known as Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971), which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, support services, 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.

**SOURCES:** MASC February 2019, MASC August 2022

**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  
The McKinney-Vento Act and Title 1 Part A, as Amended by the  
Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015  
Acts of 2022, Chapter 117

### **Family Life/Sex Education – Policy IHAMA**

The Norwell School Committee recognizes the fact that sexuality is fundamental to all life and is of primary importance in nature, in society, and in the life of every individual. Since the acquisition of knowledge related to those areas is important, the School Committee accepts the responsibility to provide information concerning sexuality as a part of the educational opportunities available to students. The Superintendent of Schools, or designee, is authorized to develop and implement such programs in accordance with this policy.

The School Committee further recognizes that the family has the primary responsibility for the education of children in the area of human sexuality. Although the district has a responsibility to provide information concerning sexuality, it is the family that provides the specific value system through which students translate knowledge into decision and action. In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 32A, the School Committee recognizes 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 in the district will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Building Principal shall be 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 child 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 school 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 of Schools.

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 for review of the issue. The Superintendent 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'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.

A copy of this policy shall appear annually in the Student-Parent Handbooks of each school.

**LEGAL REFS:** M.G.L. 71:1

### **Food Service Account Management – Policy EFDA**

Norwell Public Schools Food Service Department strives to provide students with healthy meals each day. However, unpaid charges place a financial burden on the district. In order to maintain compliance with federal reporting requirements for the USDA Child Nutrition Program, and to provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances, the Norwell School Committee hereby establishes uniform meal account procedures. The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced school lunch meals only. While the USDA Child Nutrition Program does not require that a student who pays for regular priced meals be served a meal without payment, Norwell Public Schools provides this service as a courtesy to its students.

#### **Full-Pay Students**

Students at all grade levels will pay for meals at the district's published standard rate each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of three (3) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. A student will not be allowed to charge a la carte items once they have a negative balance on their account; however, after the three meals have been charged, he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: cheese sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's meal account at the standard rate.

### **Free Meal Benefit**

Students eligible for free lunch will be allowed to receive a lunch each day. A la carte purchases must be prepaid.

### **Reduced Meal Benefit**

Students eligible for reduced lunch will be allowed to receive a lunch for \$.40 each day. A student will be allowed to charge a maximum of six (6) meals to their account after the balance reaches zero. A student will not be allowed to charge a la carte items once they have a negative balance on their account; however, after the six meals have been charged, he/she will be offered a designated menu alternate. Sample: cheese sandwich, veggie sticks, fruit and milk. This designated menu alternate will be charged to the child's meal account at the reduced rate.

### **Outstanding Balance Notification Procedures**

Parents/guardians are responsible for meal payment to the food service program. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent to parents/guardians on a weekly basis during the school year. If a student's account becomes deficient by twenty dollars (\$20) or more, then notices will be sent by the appropriate building principal. All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student, and said records are available by setting up an account online or by speaking with the Director of Food Services.

Students/parents/guardians may pay for meals in advance online, with a check payable to Norwell Food Service or with cash at a register. Further details are available on our webpage at <http://www.norwellschools.org/domain/34>. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student will be carried over to the next school year. Refunds are granted for graduating students; a written request for a refund of any money remaining in their account must be submitted. An e-mail request for refund is also acceptable for non seniors. Students who are graduating at the end of the year will be given the option to transfer to a sibling's account with a written request. Unclaimed funds must be requested within one school year. Unclaimed funds will then become the property of the Norwell Public School Food Service Program.

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration will investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child.

## **First Aid – Policy EBB**

Norwell Public Schools 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 child 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.

At each school, 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. No young child who is ill or injured will be sent home alone, nor will any older child unless the illness or injury is minor. A young child who is ill or injured will not be taken home unless it is known that someone is there to receive him or her.
4. 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.
5. The teacher or other staff member to whom a child 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.
6. All accidents to students and staff members will be reported as soon as possible to the Superintendent and, if the Superintendent deems appropriate, to the School Committee.

## **Harassment**

It is the policy of the Norwell School Committee, as an agent of the Town of Norwell, to promote a learning environment and workplace that is professional and which treats all of those who learn and work here with dignity and respect. Harassment in any form, as defined below, is unlawful and will not be tolerated in Norwell Public Schools. Because the Norwell School Committee takes allegations of harassment seriously, all complaints of harassment will be responded to promptly and, when appropriate, disciplinary action will be taken in accordance with this policy.

Harassment in school or the workplace occurs when a student's or adult's behavior or inappropriate language creates a hostile, offensive or intimidating school or work environment. Harassment can include any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct which offends, denigrates or belittles any individual because of race, color, religion, national origin, marital status, sex, sexual orientation or disability. Such conduct includes, but is not limited to, unsolicited derogatory remarks, jokes, demeaning comments or behavior, slurs, mimicking, name calling, graffiti, innuendo, gestures, physical contact, stalking, threatening, bullying, extorting or display or circulation of written materials or pictures.

### Definitions

*Racial and Color Harassment.* Racial or color harassment includes unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's race or color, such as nicknames emphasizing stereotypes, racial slurs, comments on manner of speaking, and negative references to racial customs.

*Religious (Creed) Harassment.* Harassment on the basis of religion or creed is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's religion or creed, such as derogatory comments regarding surnames, religious tradition or religious clothing, religious slurs, or graffiti.

*National Origin Harassment.* Harassment on the basis of national origin is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct, directed at the characteristics of a person's national origin, such as negative comments regarding surnames, manner of speaking, customs, language, or ethnic slurs.

*Marital Status Harassment.* Harassment on the basis of marital status is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's marital status, such as comments regarding pregnancy or being an unwed mother or father.

*Sexual Orientation Harassment.* Harassment on the basis of sexual orientation is unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's sexual orientation, gender identity such as negative name-calling and imitating mannerisms.

*Disability Harassment.* Includes harassment based on a person's disabling mental or physical condition and includes any unwelcome verbal, written or physical conduct directed at the characteristics of a person's disabling condition, such as imitating manner of speech or movement, or interfering with necessary equipment.

*Sexual Harassment.* Consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal and physical conduct of a sexual nature, when such conduct unreasonably interferes with school or work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile, offensive, or uncomfortable educational or work environment for either student or staff. It is sexual harassment if submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or

condition of an individual's employment or academic advancement, or submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions or academic decisions affecting such individual.

The courts have placed sexual harassment cases into four general categories:

*Quid pro quo:* If a supervisor clearly indicates that an employee must submit to unwanted sexual advances or provide unwanted sexual favors to keep the job, get promotions, raises, assignments, etc.

*Hostile environment:* Except for extreme cases, such as grabbing in a sexual way, a single incident does not constitute sexual harassment. Usually hostile environment cases involve repeated, pervasive, and harmful incidents that are harmful to the student/victim's emotional well-being.

*Sexual favoritism:* Employers have been found to contribute to sexual harassment when they allow supervisors to reward only those workers who provide sexual favors, because this denies other workers the opportunities for reward without sexual favors.

*Harassment by non-employees:* Such cases only arise when an employer tolerates sexual harassment by non-employees, when some action by the employer could reduce or eliminate the incidents.

### Retaliation

It is a separate and distinct violation of this policy for any member of the school community to retaliate against any person who reports alleged harassment or against any person who testifies, assists or participates in an investigation, proceeding or hearing relating to such harassment. It is possible that an alleged harasser may be found to have violated this anti-retaliation provision even if the underlying complaint of harassment is not found to be a violation of this policy. Retaliation includes, but is not limited to, any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment and may be redressed through application of the same reporting, investigation, and enforcement procedures as for harassment.

### Consequences/Disciplinary Action

Any school employee or student that is found to have violated this policy may be subject to action including, but not limited to, warning, remedial training, informal or formal reprimands, reduction in pay, reduction in duties, education or counseling, suspension, exclusion, expulsion, transfer, termination or discharge.

In addition, a person who knowingly makes a false report may be subject to the same action that the school system may take against any other individual who violates this policy. The term "false report" refers only to those made in bad faith and does not include a complaint that could not be corroborated or which did not rise to the level of unlawful harassment.

### Privacy Counseling Option

If a person believes he/she is the student/victim of harassment, in addition to the right to file a complaint, he/she may also seek advice from a designated school member of the counseling staff. These persons are available to discuss any concerns the complainant may have and provide information to him/her about the policy on harassment and the complaint process. If the complainant desires, this individual will work with him/her to find a way of resolving his/her concerns in an informal manner acceptable to him/her and in a manner which would offer him/her as much privacy and confidentiality as is possible.

### **Student Complaint Procedure for Harassment**

Any student who believes he/she has been harassed by another student should report the incident to the Principal, Guidance Department or any staff member. In the case of student-to-student harassment, it is the belief of Norwell Public Schools that education is the first step in resolving harassment complaints.

Any student who believes that he/she has been a student/victim of harassment by a member of the school staff should make a report to the Harassment Complaint Officer: Suzan Theodorou, Director of Student Services, 322 Main Street, Norwell MA 02061, 781-659-8800, or the Alternate Complaint Officer: Warren MacCallum, Director of Finance, Operations & Technology, 322 Main Street, Norwell MA 02061, 781-659-8800. Harassment Complaint Forms are available in each school principal's office and in the central office.

### Student-to-Student Education Procedure

The complainant meets with the Guidance Counselor and/or School Psychologist. The student is given the opportunity to meet with the alleged harasser face-to-face or, if that is not possible, to write a letter to the alleged harasser. The conversation or the letter should include the following:

1. An exact description of the behavior, including when and where it occurred;
2. A description of how the behavior made the student/victim feel – embarrassed, intimidated, angry, etc.;
3. A request that the behavior stop because it is harassment and is against the law; and
4. An agreement that if the behavior stops, nothing further will be said and no further action is to be taken.

The Guidance Counselor and/or School Psychologist will meet with the accused to discuss and resolve the issue either with the complainant or by going over the letter. A statement of resolution will be signed. The Guidance Counselor and/or School Psychologist will document the complaint, the meeting and the resolution. The Guidance Counselor and/or School Psychologist will provide the Principal and/or Assistant Principal a brief report which documents the intervention. This documentation shall be kept in the Guidance Counselor's Office. Within a reasonable time following this meeting, the Guidance

Counselor and/or School Psychologist will meet with the complainant to confirm resolution of the situation.

In cases where the harassment is determined to be severe, persistent, when there is retaliatory behavior or when it is not resolved through the above procedure, the situation will be immediately referred to the administration (Principal and/or Assistant Principal) for disciplinary action.

In cases where the complainant is not satisfied with the outcome, the student has the option of filing a Harassment Complaint form with the Harassment Complaint Officer: Suzan Theodorou, Director of Student Services, 781-658-8800. Harassment Complaint forms are available in each school principal's office and in the central office.

### Complaint Procedure

When harassment reports are filed with the Harassment Complaint Officer, or the Alternate Harassment Complaint Officer, the complaint procedure is as follows:

#### Step 1

The complainant shall fill out a Harassment Complaint Form. This complaint form shall be kept in a centralized and secure central location in the Office of Instruction. The complaint form shall detail the facts and circumstances of the incident or pattern of behavior. If a student under 18 years of age is involved, his/her parents shall be notified immediately unless, after consultation with the student it, it is determined not to be in the best interests of the student.

#### Step 2

The Harassment Complaint Officer or the Alternate Harassment Complaint Officer shall complete an investigation within 14 calendar days from the date of the complaint or report. The investigation may consist of personal interviews with the complaining student, the alleged harasser and any other individuals who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. In determining whether alleged conduct constitutes a violation of this policy, the harassment complaint official should consider the surrounding circumstances, any relevant documents, the nature of the behavior, past incidents or past or continuing patterns of behavior, the relationships between the parties involved, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. Whether a particular action or incident constitutes a violation of this policy requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

In addition, Norwell Public Schools may take immediate steps, at its discretion, to protect the complaining student, alleged harasser, witnesses, students, and school employees pending completion of an investigation of alleged harassment and may make any appropriate referrals for assistance, including but not limited to counseling, rape crisis intervention, etc.

The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable, but no later than fourteen (14) calendar days from the complaint or report. The Harassment Complaint Officer shall make a written report to the Superintendent and the School Principal upon completion of the investigation. The report shall include a determination as to whether the allegations have been substantiated as factual and whether they appear to be violations of this policy.

### Step 3

Following the investigation, the Harassment Complaint Officer/Alternate Complaint Officer shall recommend to the Superintendent and/or School Principal what action, if any, is required. Norwell Public Schools shall take appropriate action in all cases where the Harassment Complaint Officer concludes that this policy has been violated. Any person who is determined to have violated this policy shall be subject to action including, but not limited to, warning, exclusion, suspension, expulsion, transfer, termination, discharge or any other remedial action including, but not limited to, training, education, or counseling. Action taken for violation of this policy shall be consistent with the requirements of any applicable collective bargaining agreement, School Committee policy, state and federal law including, but not limited to, the due process protections for students with disabilities.

### Step 4

The complaining student and the alleged harasser shall be informed of the results of the investigation, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether there was a violation of the policy, and whether disciplinary action was or will be taken. The Superintendent and/or School Principal shall receive and maintain the written report of the investigation and results submitted by the Harassment Complaint Officer in his/her office.

### Confidentiality

Norwell Public Schools recognizes that both the complaining student and the alleged harasser have strong interests in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligation.

### **Hazing (See MGL Chapter 269, Sections 17-19)**

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

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of



any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

#### Hazing- Reporting

Whoever knows that another person is the student/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 (\$1,000).

#### Hazing – Requirement

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

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-

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

### **Holidays**

Appropriate ceremonies and observances of national holidays and events of national, state, and local significance shall be encouraged and shall conform to statutory requirements of the Commonwealth. In addition, at various times throughout the school year, classes set aside time for activities that celebrate such holidays as Halloween and Thanksgiving. However, it is recognized that not all families wish to observe or have their children observe these holidays. These activities are ordinarily planned in advance and parents should assume that some sort of celebration would usually occur during these times of the year. Parents who would like their child to be exempted from specific celebrations should contact the principal.

### **Home and Hospital Tutoring – Policy IHGB**

Norwell Public Schools provides home and hospital tutoring for students who, in the judgment of their physician, should remain at home or in the hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination or both, for a period of not less than fourteen school days in any school year. Upon receipt of a physician's written order verifying that a student enrolled in the Norwell Public Schools must remain at home or in the hospital for medical reasons, the principal of the school that the student attends shall arrange for tutoring services in the home or hospital. Before a student can receive these services, a licensed physician must complete the state required form. Forms are available through the Guidance Office or the Office of Instruction.

Home or hospital tutoring is considered short-term and is not a replacement for regular attendance at school. According Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, The goal of home/hospital tutoring is to "...minimize the educational loss that might occur during the period the student is confined at home or in a hospital" (603 CMR 28.03 (3)(c)).

## **Home Schooling – Policy IHBG**

Massachusetts General Law requires the School Committee to determine that a Home School 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 child from public school:

The parent/guardian must submit written notification of establishment of the home-based program to the Office of Instruction 14 days before the program is established, and submit notification on an annual basis as long as the child or children are being educated in a home-based environment.

The parent/guardian must certify in writing the name, age, place of residence, and number of hours of attendance of each child in the program.

The Superintendent 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 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 children,
3. The textbooks, workbooks and other instructional aids to be used by the children and the lesson plans and teaching manuals to be used by the parents.
4. Periodic standardized testing of the children 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.

A student, with the approval of the School Committee, may be awarded a high school diploma if he/she or she has satisfied the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's competency requirements and has met the District's educational standards for graduation.

<b>LEGAL</b>	M.G.L. 69:1D; 76:1, Care and Protection of Charles
<b>REFS:</b>	Care and Protections of Charles - MASS. Supreme Judicial Court 399 Mass. 324 (1987)

## **Information to be Translated into Languages other than English**

Translated versions of all information and documents (e.g. handbooks and codes of conduct) can be provided into the major languages spoken by parents or guardians with limited English skills. Requests for translated documents should be made to the school principal. To the extent possible, Norwell Public Schools will communicate with families in their native languages, as identified on the Home-Language Survey that is completed

upon student registration.

Additionally, the district has established a system of oral interpretation to assist parents/guardians with limited English skills, including those who speak low-incidence languages. To access this service for school-based meetings, please notify your school principal. To the extent possible, Norwell Public Schools will automatically establish this service for families in their native languages, as identified on the Home-Language Survey that is completed upon student registration

All school and/or program recruitment and promotional materials are disseminated to residents in the area served by the school or programs are translated into the major languages spoken by residents with limited English skills.

### **Internet, Digital Information and Communication Technologies Acceptable Use – Policy EGAEC**

It is the policy of the Norwell School Committee, and an agent of the Town of Norwell, to provide safe and reliable internet, digital information and communication technologies to students and staff. The Internet and other digital information and communication technologies allow users to communicate with people and organizations all over the world through a number of discussion forums and websites, as well as through electronic mail and media. In addition, many files of educational value are available for downloading. Because of their widespread use, the potential of these digital technologies is without boundaries. It is possible to communicate with prominent scientists, world leaders, other educators, and close friends. With such great potential for education also comes the potential for transmission or retrieval, intentionally or inadvertently, of inappropriate material.

The Norwell School Committee recognizes its responsibility relative to the Children's Internet Protection Act (P.L. 106-554,47 USC Sec. 254 (i)) and has implemented appropriate filtering tools to promote the safe and appropriate use of the Internet and other digital information and communication technologies in the schools. A copy of this policy is to be published in each school's Student-Parent Handbook and Faculty Handbook. Furthermore, a contract acknowledging and agreeing to follow this policy shall be executed by all students and staff utilizing any of these digital resources in school.

All users should keep in mind that when they use the Internet and other digital information and communication technologies, they are entering a global community, and any actions taken by them will reflect upon Norwell Public Schools. In that regard, all users must behave in an ethical and legal manner.

The district's primary purpose in making these digital technologies available to users is educational, and not for personal or social use. Personal or social use of these technologies will not be permitted if, in the judgment of the school district, such use is excessive, inappropriate to the school setting, disruptive to the learning environment, inconsistent

with the position of an educator or student or in conflict with one's job duties or studies. In addition, anyone using the district's network or gaining Internet access through the district's resources for purposes other than classroom-related instruction may be required to log off at any time.

The use of the district's digital information systems, network and technology resources is a privilege and not a right. These privileges may be revoked, limited or suspended as appropriate, and appropriate disciplinary measures may also be imposed, for inappropriate or abusive conduct committed by use of the district's resources, including the computer network. In addition, the school's electronic mail (email) system is a resource that is provided as a communication tool for our employees and students. All users of Norwell Public Schools' email system must use good judgment in the composition of electronic mail and in the selection of recipients. Any information sent via email becomes a record that may be accessed and its contents disclosed by Norwell Public Schools.

Such inappropriate or abusive conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Using any profane, vulgar, threatening, abusive, prejudicial, discriminatory, libelous, or criminal language or media in any form.
2. Cyberbullying in any form (see Norwell School Committee Policies JFCJK and GBEBD).
3. Posting false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or posting information that could cause damage, panic, or disruption.
4. Accessing any prohibited sites on the Internet.
5. Bypassing or interfering with the operation of the content filtering software used on school computers or its network.
6. Overriding or encouraging users to override any firewalls used to prevent unauthorized access into another computer or network, commonly called "hacking," or bypassing or attempting to bypass the district's filtering tools to gain access to blocked sites or content.
7. Permitting another individual to use their password, using another person's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer network.
8. Disseminating passwords, codes, access telephone numbers, or account numbers and, if a student, revealing one's residential address or telephone number over the Internet.
9. Accessing Norwell Public Schools' networks without authority to view or modify data that contain private student records and information.
10. Attempting to harm, modify, or destroy data of another user.
11. Discussing highly sensitive or confidential school department information in email communications, except where such communications are necessary to comply with the provisions of educational plans or in the discharge of one's job duties. Email communications are to be treated with the same discretion and judgment as all other forms of written communication.
12. Exhibiting any other action whatsoever that would in any way subject the employee and/or employer to a possible criminal action.

13. Placing unlawful and/or inappropriate information on a system.
14. Sending messages that are likely to result in the loss of a recipient's work or systems.
15. Sending "chain letters" or "broadcast" messages to lists or individuals.
16. Participating in other types of use which would cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
17. Using the Internet in a manner that would violate any U.S. or state law including, but not limited to copyright infringement, spreading of computer viruses or using public resources for political campaigning purposes.
18. Installing or modifying software or data on any component of the district system without first having the information scanned by the technology department personnel for viruses or other incompatibility.
19. Failing to log off the computer at the conclusion of a work session or at the request of administration.
20. Damaging or vandalizing computers, computer systems, or networks either through physical alteration or through the introduction of malicious digital agents.
21. Vandalizing, damaging, or disabling the property of another person or organization, or disrupting equipment, software, or system performance.
22. Creating, accessing or transmitting materials, including but not limited to emails, pictures and/or videos, that are obscene, sexually explicit or harmful to minors.
23. Any behavior or use of the district's digital information systems, network or technology resources that is inconsistent with our policies or the district's mission.

Many kinds of materials eventually find their way to the Internet, even with the use of filtering tools. If a user finds materials which are inappropriate while using a Norwell Public Schools account, he or she shall refrain from downloading this material and shall not identify or share the material. It should be understood that the transfer of certain kinds of materials is illegal and punishable by a fine or jail sentence. Additionally, Norwell Public Schools takes no responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through our network or over the internet with district resources and shall not be held liable for the actions of users of the district's network or technology resources when those actions are inconsistent with our policies.

Norwell Public Schools makes no guarantees, implied or otherwise, regarding the quality or reliability of our network resources. Norwell Public Schools shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the Internet or our network. Additionally, Norwell Public Schools takes no responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through our network or over the internet with district resources and shall not be held liable for the actions of users of the district's network or technology resources when those actions are inconsistent with our policies.

By authorizing use of the school district technologies, the school district does not relinquish control over any of the components of the system, materials stored in the system, or files contained in the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school district system. Norwell Public Schools reserves the right to examine all data stored in the machines and on the network to make sure that all users are

in compliance with these regulations. Network storage areas may be treated like school lockers. Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that all users are using the system responsibly. Users should keep in mind that email is considered a written communication subject to public records laws. As such, the district is required to maintain, store and produce such communications, depending on their content, to the same extent as any other record created or maintained by a public entity. Email messages, and all files or attachments included therein, sent and received by Norwell Public Schools' staff or students via the Norwell Public Schools email system are backed up and archived by the district in accordance with state and federal law.

During school time, teachers of younger students will guide them towards appropriate materials. All students may be provided individual access passwords and may have the opportunity to communicate via email and access the World Wide Web in connection with independent, self-directed research.

No user shall use the school's network to perform any act that may be construed as illegal or unethical, including the use of the network to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network. Norwell Public Schools strongly condemns the illegal distribution (otherwise known as pirating) of software. Any users caught transferring such files through our network, and any whose accounts are found to contain such illegal files, shall immediately have their accounts permanently revoked. In addition, all users should be aware that software piracy is a federal offense and is punishable by a fine or imprisonment.

Except as otherwise specifically provided, Norwell Public Schools assumes no responsibility for:

1. any unauthorized charges or fees, including telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line costs incurred by individual users;
2. any financial obligations arising out of unauthorized use of the system for the purchase of products or services;
3. any cost, liability or damages caused by a user's violation of this policy;
4. any information or materials that a user transmits over the Norwell Public Schools computer network;
5. any other inappropriate use of electronic resources of the Norwell Public Schools.

Norwell Public Schools reserves the right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the school district, including legal fees, for such user's inappropriate use of electronic resources. Norwell Public Schools reserves the right to change these rules at any time without notice.

#### **Motor Vehicle Idling on School Grounds – Policy EEAJ**

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 and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground.

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 district has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety or are not cost effective.

Norwell Public Schools 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 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.

**Non-Custodial Parents’ Rights – Policy KBBA**

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 Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Regulations. Norwell Public Schools will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Department 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**

M.G.L. 71:34D; 71:34H

**REFS.:**

603 CMR 23.07 (5) Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

20 U.S.C. §1232g Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

**Non-Discrimination Including Harassment and Retaliation – Policy AC**

Norwell Public Schools is 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 Norwell Public Schools.

Norwell Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of NPS 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 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. Maintained 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.

Norwell Public Schools 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)  
Acts of 2022, Chapter 117

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 August 2022

### **Complaint Procedure for Discrimination – AC-E1**

Any student or staff member who feels he or she has been a victim of discrimination because of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions should make a report to the Complaint Officer: Suzan Theodorou, Director of Student Services, 322 Main Street, Norwell MA 02061, 781-659-8800; or the Alternate Complaint Officer: Warren MacCallum, Director of Finance, Operations & Technology, 322 Main Street, Norwell MA 02061, 781-659-8800. *Civil Rights Complaint Forms* are available in all school principal's offices and in the central office.

### ***ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES***

In addition to, or instead of, filing a discrimination complaint through this policy, a person may choose to exercise other options, including but not limited to filing a complaint with outside agencies or filing a private lawsuit.

### **Civil Rights Violations Agencies**

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)

350 Main Street  
Malden, MA 02148  
(781) 388-3000

*The Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education's Problem Resolution System allows students, parents and others to file a complaint if they believe they have been harassed or discriminated against.*

Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General, Civil Rights Division

One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 727-2200

*The Attorney General's Civil Rights Division reviews complaints of harassment, intimidation and discrimination in schools and determines appropriate legal action, including obtaining a restraining order.*

United States Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights

John W. McCormack Building  
Post Office and Court House, Room 701  
Boston, MA 02109  
(617) 223-9662

*The Office for Civil Rights receives and investigates complaints of discrimination and harassment.*

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)

One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 994-6000

*The MCAD investigates complaints about discrimination in any public school program or course of study. Filing must occur within 6 months of the alleged discriminatory educational practice or harassment incident.*

Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS)

1-800-KIDS-508: Statewide Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Line  
1-800-792-5200: Child at Risk Hotline/evenings, nights and weekends

*DSS investigates reports involving a student under 18 years old who suffers physical or emotional injury from abuse (including sexual abuse) or severe neglect (including malnutrition).*

United States Department of Justice - Community Relations Service (CRS)

99 Summer Street, Suite 1820  
Boston, MA 02110  
(617) 424-5715

*CRS is a specialized federal conciliation service that assists school districts to manage and prevent racial and ethnic conflicts and disruptions in schools.*

*Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)*  
One Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108  
(617) 727-3990 or (413) 739-2145

The MCAD investigates complaints about discrimination in any public school program or course of study. Filing must occur within 6 months of the alleged discriminatory educational practice or harassment incident.

*Massachusetts Department of Children and Families (DCF)*  
1-800-KIDS-508: Statewide Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Line  
1-800-792-5200: Child at Risk Hotline/evenings, nights and weekends

DCF investigates reports involving a student under 18 years old who suffers physical or emotional injury from abuse (including sexual abuse) or severe neglect (including malnutrition).

*United States Department of Justice: Community Relations Service (CRS)*  
99 Summer Street, Suite 1820  
Boston, MA 02110  
(617) 424-5715

CRS is a specialized federal conciliation service that assists school districts to manage and prevent racial and ethnic conflicts and disruptions in schools.

### **Non-Discriminatory Administration of Scholarships, Prizes and Awards**

Scholarships, prizes and awards sponsored or administered by Norwell Public Schools are free of restrictions based upon race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions. Norwell Public Schools does not post or print information regarding private restricted scholarships

nor will any staff member advise or suggest to a particular student that he or she apply for such a scholarship.

### **Observation of Education Programs by Parents and/or Designees for Evaluation Purposes**

Norwell Public Schools is committed to working collaboratively with parents/designees to ensure that families participate fully and effectively in determining the appropriate educational program for a student found eligible for Special Education and/or related services. To this end, Norwell Public Schools ensures that all parents and or their designees are afforded ample opportunity and proper access within the context of the school day to observe their child's current and/or proposed special education programs, in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71B, Section 3.

Norwell Public Schools will accept verbal or written observation requests from the parent or designee, directed to the Building Principal/Assistant Principal or Special Education Case Manager. Should a designee contact the school directly, the parent/guardian must confirm in writing that the designee is acting on their behalf.

Norwell Public Schools will provide timely access for an observation following such a request. Scheduling will be determined based on the student's individual educational program. It is reasonable for the district to designate certain periods of the year in which observations are not generally scheduled (e.g., MCAS testing, first/last week of school, etc.).

Norwell Public Schools will provide an observation of sufficient duration and extent to allow the parent/designee to participate fully and effectively with school personnel in determining an appropriate educational program. Each request will be scheduled on an individual basis taking into consideration the complexities of the student's educational needs as well as the nature and scope of the individual education program. Typically, observations will range in time from 30-60 minutes per academic or non-academic period.

Norwell Public Schools will not condition or restrict observations except when necessary to protect: (a) the safety of the children in the program during the observation, (b) the integrity of the program during the observation, and (c) confidential or personally identifiable information of children obtained while observing the program. The Building Principal, in collaboration with the Director of Special Education, will be responsible for determining any safety, integrity or confidentiality issues related to a requested observation.

### **Parental Involvement – Title I**

In accordance with Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act, the Norwell School Committee welcomes the participation of parents in support of student learning and recognizes that parental involvement increases the opportunities for student success. It is the policy of Norwell Public Schools to foster and maintain ongoing communications

with parents concerning their opportunities for involvement, their children's eligibility for special programs, their children's educational progress, the professional qualifications of their children's teachers, and the status of their children's schools. Norwell Public Schools strives to provide such information in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request and, to the extent practicable, in a language that parents can understand. To the extent practicable, Norwell Public Schools shall also provide full opportunities for the participation of parents with limited English proficiency, parents with disabilities, and parents of migratory children, including providing information and school reports required under Section 1111 of the No Child Left Behind Act in a format and, to the extent practicable, in a language such parents understand. Communications with parents shall, at all times, respect the privacy of students and their families.

### **Pest Management – Policy EBAB**

Norwell Public Schools are 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.

#### **1. OVERVIEW AND GOALS**

1. Norwell Public Schools shall develop and implement an integrated pest management program.
2. 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.
3. Pesticides and herbicides will be used only as a last resort, based on a review of all other available options.
4. 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.

## 2. 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.

## 3. 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.

## 4. 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.

## 5. 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 out.
- b. Ongoing education of all appropriate District staff will be a priority to ensure a safe and clean environment.



## **Physical Restraint of Students and Regulations – Policy JKAA**

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 as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

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 603 CMR 46.02.

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

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00;
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

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

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

**LEGAL REFS:** M.G.L. 71:37G; 603 CMR 46.00

### **Recruiting Information (Armed Forces Recruiter Access to Students)**

According to the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA Section 9528), schools are now required to provide students' directory information upon request to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education. If you do not want your son or daughter's name, address and telephone number to be released to third parties, please notify Norwell High School in writing.

### **Safe Schools Memorandum of Understanding**

#### **General Principles**

It is the overriding objective of Norwell Public Schools and the Norwell Police Department to educate and develop healthy, safe and law-abiding student citizens. To that end, Norwell Public Schools and the Norwell Police Department agree to coordinate their knowledge of and response to violent, delinquent, or criminal acts, and alcohol and other drug use by students wherever they may occur. To ensure a safe educational environment in Norwell,

this collaborative effort is support between Norwell Public Schools and the Norwell Police Department for drugs, alcohol, weapons, hate crimes, and violence. Both students and non-students involved in such acts on school property or at any school function or event shall, in addition to and exclusive of any discipline action which may be taken or imposed by the Norwell School Department under its own policies and procedures, be reported to the Norwell Police Department for appropriate legal action. This policy is intended to supplement and not supplant any policies adopted by the Norwell School Committee pursuant to Standards for Classroom Safety adopted by the Board of Education pursuant to M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B.

It continues to remain the sole prerogative of school officials to impose discipline for infractions of school rules and policies. In cases where the school has reported an incident to the police, as described below, the school agrees to notify the police department when suspending a student under the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H or 37H1/2 and 37H3/4.

M.G.L., Chapter 71, Section 37H requires each school district to have a written Code of Conduct reflected in student handbooks stating standards and procedures to assure building security and safety of students and school personnel, and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism or civil rights violations. A copy of this Memorandum shall also be placed in these handbooks at the middle and high school levels.

### Objectives

1. To create a safe, secure, and healthy school and community environment for students, staff, and residents.
2. To work with the Police Chief or designee who should make recommendations to the appropriate school officials and parent groups concerning more effective ways to promote an awareness of the dangers of drug and alcohol use and abuse and sound preventative measures.
3. To develop and implement a process for school officials and local police to coordinate a response to criminal/delinquent behavior and to refer appropriate first time or early offenders, ages 7-17, to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Juvenile Diversion Program. The Juvenile Diversion Program is an alternative to the court system. Participating youth are required to attend counseling/education programs, perform community service and in some cases pay restitution. Under present court procedures, youths who successfully complete the Juvenile Diversion Program will have no court record.

### Procedures for Reportable Acts

While acknowledging school officials are not agents of the police or Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and police are not agents of the

school, the school and police agree to develop policies and protocols for coordinated efforts.

The Superintendent of Schools and the various school Principals or their designees are responsible for reporting acts. The Police Chief shall designate an officer (or officers) to coordinate all reported criminal acts.

1. A reportable act on school grounds or at school-sponsored events shall include:
  - a. Any serious incident of assaultive behavior, destruction of property, or theft;
  - b. Violation of a restraining order;
  - c. Possession of a dangerous weapon;
  - d. Finding any student who is in actual or constructive possession of alcohol and/or what is reasonably believed to be a controlled substance defined by state law, except that possession of drugs pursuant to a valid prescription is a discretionary reportable act;
  - e. Having a reasonable belief that any student has sold or offered to sell or otherwise distributed alcohol and/or a drug which is believed to be a controlled substance under the law;
  - f. Finding any student, regardless of age, who is reasonably believed to be under the influence of alcohol or other drugs;
  - g. Any threat to commit a crime against a person or property of another, e.g., threats over the Internet;
  - h. Any so-called “hate crime” meaning for purposes of this section, any violation of Massachusetts General Laws c. 265, § 37 or 39;
  - i. Any student’s violation of a criminal statute which warrants reporting but is not as urgent as reportable acts described above; and
  - j. Any incident not included in (1) – (9) above which, in the opinion of Norwell Public Schools, constitutes a health or safety emergency as defined in 34CFR 99.36 and 603 CMR 28.08 (7).
2. Any teacher or other school employee who has reasonable grounds to believe that a student has committed a reportable act, as defined above, shall take (or cause to be taken) the student to the Principal or designee. The Principal or designee shall ask the reporting teacher/employee what happened and take custody of any physical evidence.

3. The Principal or designee shall inform the student and his/her parent or guardian of the nature of the offense and inform them that such an offense will be reported to the Norwell Police Department. The Principal or designee may offer the student the opportunity to respond to the teacher/employee's report. The principal shall, as soon as practicable, report all communications to the Norwell Police Department. All contraband seized by the principal or designee (drugs, alcohol, firearms, and dangerous weapons) shall be immediately secured and surrendered to the appropriate police department as soon as practicable. The Principal or designee shall also notify the Superintendent of all reportable acts. In the event that the principal or designee has any question regarding the nature or scope of any search for or seizure of contraband, the principal shall first contact the police department for assistance.
4. Upon notice of a reportable act, Norwell police may, in its discretion, exercise its power to arrest or place in protective custody. Norwell Public Schools, parents and students are advised that standard operating procedure for arrests and protective custody by Norwell Police Department involves the use of handcuffs.
5. When notice of a reportable act is received by the Norwell Police Department, the police shall investigate and, where appropriate, refer such cases to the District Attorney's office. The police will provide a follow-up report to the Superintendent and the building principal if permitted by law.
6. In addition, the principal will comply with Massachusetts General Laws c.71, §37L requiring that an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time to be reported in writing to the Chief of Police. This report must be submitted in any case involving a student's use or possession of a dangerous weapon on school premises, regardless of whether it occurred during school hours, and whether or not the student has been expelled.

### Searches

In order to maintain a safe environment in its schools, Norwell Public Schools reserves the right to search all school property including, but not limited to lockers assigned to students, for contraband or controlled substances in accordance with state and federal laws. Searches of school property, including lockers, may be conducted on a periodic basis and may include the use of trained K-9 units whose specific mission is drug detection. The police department designee and the appropriate building administrator and Superintendent of Schools will coordinate these searches in an effort to minimize disruption and maximize the security of the search.

School officials may search students and their personal belongings if there are reasonable grounds to believe the student is in possession of contraband or illegal substances. Searches of students and their personal effects, such as coat and pockets, purses, knapsacks, and/or other bags, will be reasonable at their inception and in their scope. Students who

drive automobiles to school and park on school property are advised that by accepting the use of school drives and parking lots, they consent to a search of the vehicle consistent with state and federal laws.

#### Records and Collaboration

1. Norwell Public Schools and the Norwell Police Department will maintain appropriate records for all school incidents including acts or suspected acts of violence, drug and alcohol use, and criminal acts.
2. The Superintendent of Schools, Chief of Police, middle and high school principals and other designated administrators and police officers will meet to collaborate on the implementation of this Memorandum of Understanding and establish communication lines to support a safe, secure school and community. They will then continue meeting on at least a semi-annual basis.
3. The Norwell Police Department will continue to provide police services to Norwell Public Schools with a high priority response to reported crimes in progress in and around school facilities. The Norwell Police Department will also maintain visibility of uniformed Norwell police officers when requested by Norwell Public Schools.
4. In addition to the above responsibilities, the designated liaisons from Norwell Public Schools and the Norwell Police Department will meet regularly for the following purposes: (1) to discuss the scope of drug and alcohol possession and use and violence in the school setting; (2) to identify strategies to reduce such activities; and (3) to suggest the necessary action plan for implementation of such strategies.

#### Police Department Reports to Norwell Public Schools

1. Subject to applicable state and federal law, the Norwell Police Department will provide Norwell Public Schools with a written report of the arrest or filing of a complaint application against any student from Norwell Middle School or Norwell High School. The appropriate Police Department designated liaison shall report to the appropriate Norwell Public School designated liaison any criminal and non-criminal activity involving students of Norwell Public Schools if the activity poses a serious and imminent threat to the safety of the student, other students, faculty, staff, or administrative personnel, or is in violation of Norwell School Committee and Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association policy.
2. The Norwell Police Department will, subject to state and federal law and if in its discretion this disclosure will not impede the progress of an investigation, report to Norwell Public Schools all reports of missing or abducted children. The appropriate authorities will notify parents.

### Training

Prior to the effective date of this Memorandum of Understanding and thereafter, Norwell Public Schools and the Norwell Police Department shall provide agency-wide training to their respective staffs to inform them of their roles and responsibilities under this agreement. Said training is to include a review of this Memorandum of Understanding, school policies and procedures contained in the Student-Parent/Handbooks, Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association Regulations, and related rules and regulations. On an ongoing basis, the same training will be provided to new staff members.

### Disclaimer

This Memorandum of Understanding is voluntarily entered into with the consent of both parties and is an internal document between the parties and does not confer any rights, privileges or obligations nor is it enforceable as against the parties hereto in any court, administrative hearing, or other forum. Any written or oral communication between the parties to the Memorandum of Understanding will be protected by all laws relating to privacy and confidentiality. This Memorandum of Understanding is in addition to, and does not supplant policies of Norwell Public Schools with regard to disciplinary procedures and codes of student conduct that are now or may be formulated and published in student handbooks.

### Agreement

Agreement will be interpreted in a manner consistent with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and applicable federal regulations. If any provision of this Agreement is determined to be illegal or in conflict with the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or applicable federal regulations, the validity of the remaining provisions shall not be affected, and the Agreement shall be construed as if it did not contain the provision held to be invalid. Nothing in this agreement shall supersede or contravene any school or police department administrative procedures or any collective bargaining agreement.

### **School Admission & Non-Discrimination (M.G.L. c. 76, s. 5)**

Every school-aged resident of Norwell has the right to attend Norwell Public Schools. Norwell Public Schools is not required to enroll any individual who does not reside in the Town of Norwell. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to Norwell Public Schools, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of Norwell Public Schools on account 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.

## **School District Wellness Program – Policy ADF**

The Norwell School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

### **Wellness Committee**

Norwell Public Schools will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1): parent, student, nurse, school food service representative, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. The school committee designates the following individuals as wellness program coordinators: Executive Director for Instruction and the Director of Food Service. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
  1. foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
  2. foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
  3. foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities; and
  4. refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day; and
  5. specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives.

### **Nutrition and Physical Education**

The school district will provide nutrition education aligned with standards established by the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program in all



grades. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition and physical education.

#### Nutrition Education

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.
- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the food
- service staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
- The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate.

#### Physical Education Activities

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before-and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade or skateboard safely to and from school.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Schools provide training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

#### Other School-Based Activities

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.

- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally-friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.
- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

#### Evaluation

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the School Committee annually.

#### **Student Absences and Excuses – Policy JH**

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Norwell School Committee recognizes that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for reasons necessitated by: medical reasons documented by a medical professional, for visits with active-duty military parents or guardians; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; observance of major religious holidays; school-sponsored field trips; or court appearances.

A child 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 their character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly. Accordingly, parents must provide either written or verbal explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. 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**

Each 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.

Each 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 or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

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

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

### **LEGAL REFS:**

M.G.L. 76:1; 76:1B; 76:15E; 76:16; 76:18; 76:20

### **Student Conduct – Policy JK**

The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the Principal and the professional staff of each building. In order to do this, school staff in Norwell Public Schools shall develop specific rules consistent with the law and aligned with School Committee policy. These building rules shall be an extension of the District policies by providing greater specificity as they relate to the individual schools.

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

needs and the individual circumstances, and shall be consistent with adopted School Committee policy.

Students violating any of the policies on student conduct 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.

### **Student Discipline – Policy JIC**

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

Each principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication and made available to students and parents/guardians.

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

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

### **Principal's Discretion**

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed (except for offenses referenced at the end of this policy), the principal, or his/her designee, shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense. The principal shall consider ways to re-engage the student in learning and shall attempt to avoid long term suspension as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. These alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

## **SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION**

Short-term suspension is defined as the exclusion of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for a specified period of not more than ten school days.

### **Short-Term Suspension Procedures**

The principal, or his/her designee, may suspend students on a short-term basis. Unless a student poses a danger to persons or property, substantially and materially disrupts the order of school, possesses a firearm, controlled substance, or assaults a school staff member, the student will receive the following prior to a short-term suspension:

1. Oral and written notice of the charges in English and the primary language of the home if other than English. This notice shall include:
  1. The disciplinary offense;
  2. The basis for the charge;
  3. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the suspension;
  4. The opportunity to have a hearing with the principal and the parent concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
  5. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
  6. The right of the parent and student to interpreter services at the hearing; and
  7. If the student may be placed on a long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
    1. The rights set forth under the "Procedures for Long-Term Suspension"; and
    2. The right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
2. At the hearing, if the student and/or parent elects to attend, the student shall have the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts and any mitigating circumstances. The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
3. Based on the available information, the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offences and what remedy shall be imposed. The principal shall notice the student and parent in writing of his/her decision, the reasons for it, and, if applicable, the type and duration of the suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and other academic work.

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

### **Emergency Removal**

If the student's continued presence 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, the principal shall temporarily remove the student from the school. This temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) days following the day of the emergency removal and the superintendent shall be immediately notified of the removal. Additionally, the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the emergency removal, and the other information required in a short-term suspension notification.

The short-term suspension notice shall be provided in writing to the student and parent. The opportunity for a hearing with the principal shall occur within two (2) school days, unless otherwise extended by the school and parent. A decision regarding the student's continued suspension or other removal shall be rendered the same day as the hearing and written notice shall be provided the following school day. This written notice shall include all the information required based on the type of discipline imposed (short-term suspension, in-school suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion).

The principal may also remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on a student's misconduct. This type of removal is not subject to the procedures for suspension and expulsion outlined in this policy.

### **In-School Suspension**

An in-school suspension may be used as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary events. An in-school suspension means the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in one school year.

If the principal chooses this alternative, the principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for that charge and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charge and explain the circumstances surrounding the charge. If an in-school suspension is issued, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the offense, and the length of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the

behavior. This meeting shall be schedule on the day of the suspension, if possible, or as soon as possible thereafter. The principal shall also send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent the above described meeting, if such meeting has not already occurred.

### **LONG-TERM SUSPENSION**

A long-term suspension is defined as the exclusion of a student from school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten school days.

The principal, or his/her designee, may issue long-term suspensions at the building level. The principal may also issue expulsions for the offenses set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, §37H and §37H½. Expulsions for other offenses are handled by the School Committee pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, §16 and §17.

1. In the event of a long term suspension or expulsion, the student will be provided oral and written notice of the charges in English and the primary language of the home if other than English. This notice shall include:
  1. The disciplinary offense;
  2. The basis for the charge;
  3. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the suspension;
  4. The opportunity to have a hearing with the principal and the parent concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
  5. The date, time, and location of the hearing; and
  6. The right of the parent and student to interpreter services at the hearing.
2. The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct the hearing without the parent, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
3. In advance of the hearing, the student shall have the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student.
4. The student shall also have the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person at the choice and expense of the student/parent.

5. At the hearing, if the student and/or parent elects to attend, the student shall have the opportunity to present his/her version of the relevant facts and any mitigating circumstances. The student shall also have the right to produce witnesses and the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school. The student may request that the hearing be audio recorded by the principal and may request a copy of the recording. All parties must be made aware that the hearing is recorded in advance of the hearing.
6. The parent, if present, shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and other information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
7. The principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offences and what consequences shall be imposed. The principal shall notice the student and parent in writing of his/her decision, including the following information:
- a. The disciplinary offence, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants in the hearing;
  - b. The key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
  - c. The length and effective date of the suspension and the date of return to school;
  - d. The notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the suspension;
  - e. The student's right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee if a long-term suspension has been imposed. This notice of appeal shall include the process for appealing the decision, which requires the parent or student to file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension.
- i. The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless an extension is mutually agreed to.
  - ii. The superintendent shall make a good-faith effort to include the parent in the hearing.
  - iii. The hearing shall be conducted to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, what the consequence shall be. The hearing shall be audio recorded and a copy of the recording shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.
  - iv. All the same rights as are afforded in the above long-term suspension principal's hearing shall apply to the student in a superintendent's hearing.
  - v. The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or lesser consequence than the principal.
  - vi. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district.
- f. If the student is in grades K-3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for the suspension before the suspension takes effect.



## **EXPULSION**

Expulsion is the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) days, indefinitely, or permanently. Conduct that may lead to expulsion includes but is not limited to possession of a dangerous weapon, assault on school personnel or upon other students, possession of a controlled substance, and certain criminal convictions and charges. See also, the Policies and Laws Relating to Student Conduct section of the handbook. Procedures associated with expulsion are set forth under the Procedures for Expulsion section of the handbook.

### **ADDITIONAL PROCEDURAL PROTECTIONS FOR ELIGIBLE STUDENTS UNDER IDEA AND SECTION 504**

In general, special education students may be excluded from their programs for up to ten school days per school year just as any other student. However, when the district seeks to exclude a special education student from his/her program for more than ten school days in the school year, the student's special education team must first determine whether the student's behavior was caused by, or was directly and substantially related to his/her disability or whether the conduct in question was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the student's IEP (a "manifestation determination"). If the team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability or was caused by a failure to implement the IEP, it must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavior plan (or review and modify an existing plan, if necessary), and return the student to his/her current program, unless the student's parents and the district agree to a change in placement.

If the team determines the behavior was not caused by, or directly and substantially related to the student's disability or failure to implement the IEP, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that during the period of suspension or expulsion, the district must continue to provide the student with a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and, if appropriate, conduct a functional behavior assessment and provide intervention services and modifications to prevent the conduct from recurring. If the conduct involves weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury, a special education student may be removed to an interim alternative educational placement for up to 45 school days regardless of the behavior's relationship to his/her disability.

### **POSSESSION OF WEAPONS OR CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ASSAULT OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL**

Massachusetts General Law Ch. 71, §37H authorizes the principal to expel students as follows:

1. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined

in Chapter Ninety-Four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

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

3. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (1) or (2) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

a. After said hearing, a principal may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).

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

5. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

6. Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

7. Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

A copy of this law may be obtained in the main office.

### **SUSPENSION/EXPULSION BASED UPON A FELONY CHARGE/CONVICTION M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½**

Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal of a school may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal 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. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

The principal may expel a student who has been convicted, adjudicated, or admitted guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency, 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. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five

calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

A copy of this law may be obtained in the main office.

### **EDUCATIONAL SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS DURING SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSION**

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, test, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom. The principal shall inform the student and parent of such opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

Any student 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 a school-wide education service plan. This plan will be developed by the principal and shall describe the services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days. The plan will include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging the services.

**LEGAL** M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H  
**REFS.:** M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½  
M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾  
M.G.L. c. 76, § 21  
M.G.L. c. 76:17  
603 CMR 53.00

[Chapter 222 An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School](#)  
[Supporting Students with Disabilities and Avoiding the Discriminatory Use of Student Discipline under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Questions and Answers Addressing the Needs of Children with Disabilities and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act's \(IDEA's\) Discipline Provisions.](#)

### **Student Dress Code – Policy JICA**

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.

**LEGAL REFS.:** M.G.L. Chapter 71 Section 82  
Acts of 22, Chapter 117

### **Student Fundraising Activities – Policy JJE**

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

Exceptions to this policy will be:

1. Sale of advertising space in school publications.
2. A fundraising activity for the purpose of raising funds for recognized non-profit organization and/or fundraising to collect funds to sponsor a student activity approved by the building principal.
3. Proposals to raise funds for charitable purposes or for benefit of the school or community provided the building principal and Superintendent have individually approved such proposals.

No money collections of any kind may be held in the school without the specific consent of the building principal.

### **Student Gifts and Solicitations – Policy JB**

Due to issues relative to equity, students are discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel. For the same reason, there will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

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

## **Student Records**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Massachusetts Student Record Regulations together are designed to insure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in carrying out their responsibilities under state and federal law.

The regulations apply to all information kept by a school or school district on a student in a way that the student may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into two parts: the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school district for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results; class rank; school-sponsored extracurricular activities; evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons; disciplinary records; and other information. The temporary record is destroyed within seven years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of the major provisions of the Student Record Regulations concerning the rights of parents and eligible students. Under the regulations, "eligible students" are at least 14 years old or have entered the ninth grade; they may exercise these rights just as their parents may.

Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school corrects records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.

## **Confidentiality of Records**

With a few exceptions including judicial orders, no individuals or organizations but the parents/guardians, student and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent/guardian or the student. Parents/guardians will be notified if the court has ordered records.

The Norwell Public Schools also discloses student records without parent/guardian/eligible student consent to officials of other elementary or secondary schools in which a student enrolls, or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll, upon the receipt of a request from such officials as long as the disclosure is for purposes related to enrollment. Parents/guardian/eligible student seeking to send records to any other institution will need to provide written consent to the district.

All student-related information – whether spoken, written or in electronic format – involving academics, discipline, attendance, family, special needs or other educational records is strictly confidential.

**Legal Reference:** 603 CMR 23.06(3)

### **Student Surveys**

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) (20 U.S.C. section 1232h; 34 CFR Part 98) applies to programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED). PPRA is intended to protect the rights of parents and students in two ways:

1. It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors make instructional materials available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with an ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and
2. It seeks to ensure that schools and contractors obtain written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any ED-funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
  - a. Political affiliations
  - b. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and his/her family;
  - c. Sex behavior and attitudes;
  - d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior;
  - e. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  - f. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers; or

- g. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).

Parents or students who believe their rights under PPRA may have been violated may file a complaint with ED by writing the Family Policy Compliance Office. Complaints must contain specific allegations of fact, giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of PPRA occurred.

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-4605  
TDD Federal Information Relay Service 1-800-877-8339

### **Student Transportation in Private Vehicles – Policy EEAG**

The School Committee recognizes the need for employees and volunteers (students, parents, and others) to use their own vehicle for school purposes, activities or events, regularly or occasionally. To safeguard the district, employees, and volunteers in matters of liability particularly as this policy relates to the transportation of students, the following policy shall be observed:

1. A “Student Transportation in Private Vehicles Liability Advisory” relating to private transportation for school business or to school related events or activities shall appear in school handbooks and personnel packets.
  2. Permission slips for student drivers and passengers are required for school business or school related events or activities that will contain the “Student Transportation in Private Vehicles Liability Advisory” or a reference to this Advisory in the student handbook.
  3. Any other known volunteers will be provided with a copy of the “Student Transportation in Private Vehicles Liability Advisory”.
  4. Drivers are responsible for proper licensing, and vehicles must be properly inspected and insured as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Drivers should seek the advice of insurance providers as to appropriate coverage.
1. Reimbursement for use of a private vehicle will be made only when the responsible administrator gives prior written approval.



## **Student Travel – Policy JJH**

### **International**

The Norwell School Committee recognizes the educational benefits of travel to other countries to enhance and support classroom instruction and the School Committee further encourages staff members to organize international excursions. Students may have access to multiple opportunities for international travel throughout their high school experience. The School Committee is mindful, however, of the financial burden such travel may place on families and the potential for disparate educational opportunities for students. The School Committee also wishes to minimize any disruption or interference for the remaining students when large numbers of students are absent from classes.

Consequently, the School Committee directs the school administration to establish regulations that establish a formal process for the review, adoption, and planning of all international travel, taking the following points into consideration:

1. International excursions shall occur, to the extent possible, during non-school times.
2. Limited to students in grade 10 and above and/or students engaged in advanced course work (year three or higher).

The school administration, through the establishment of regulations, is further directed to incorporate a formal process to review any exceptions to these points. Prior School Committee approval is required for all international excursions and travel.

### **Class Trips**

The Norwell School Committee recognizes the benefit of travel as an opportunity for students to develop socially and celebrate their school experience with classmates. Occasionally, during the academic career of a student, class trips will be permitted that do not specifically relate to the school curriculum. Such trips may be approved by the principal, followed by formal notification of the Superintendent (or designee) provided they are, to the extent possible, during non-school time, and comply with the conditions set forth in the regulations associated with this policy. Class trips during the school day may only be approved by the Superintendent of Schools.

### **Co-Curricular Trips**

Co-curricular and extracurricular activities are those that, though they are not addressed in the classroom setting, form an integral part of the school's educational program. These activities include, but are not limited to, athletics, student government, student publications, music, drama, subject-related clubs, as well as social, political, hobby, and service organizations. These programs provide students with opportunities to pursue established interests and explore new interests. The Norwell School Committee recognizes the importance of co-curricular activities to the overall educational experience of students. Nonetheless, co-curricular trips should not, to the extent possible, occur during the school day. Such trips may be approved by the principal, followed by formal notification of the Superintendent (or designee) provided they are, to the extent possible,

during non-school time, and comply with the conditions set forth in the regulations associated with this policy.

### **Domestic Out-of-State Travel**

To the extent that Student Activity Account funds are utilized and pursuant to MGL Chapter 71, Section 47, the School Committee is responsible for approving domestic, out-of-state travel. However, in the event that approval is required before a regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, said approval authority is delegated to the Superintendent of Schools who shall notify the School Committee of any such travel.

### **General Provisions**

Trips that include late night (between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m.) 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 Administration is directed to consider the educational value of the trip in relation to the cost prior to submitting for School Committee approval. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefit to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip.

Final approval will not be granted until all preparations for the trip have been completed as outlined in the regulations associated with this policy. The School Committee requires that final approval be sought no less than 30 days prior to the scheduled trip dates. In the event of an athletic MIAA state tournament or co-curricular competition that requires travel before a regularly scheduled School Committee meeting, approval authority is delegated to the Superintendent of Schools who shall notify the School Committee of any such travel.

Teachers and other school staff are prohibited from soliciting for privately run trips through the school system and in the schools. No district resources (human or otherwise) shall be used for any privately run trips. The School Committee will only review for approval school-sanctioned trips. In order to be considered “school sanctioned” the travel must have been approved and/or permitted by the Building Principal and/or the Superintendent of Schools. The School Committee will not review or approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

### **In-State Field Trips – Policy IJOA**

The Norwell School Committee recognizes that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the School Committee to encourage field trips as part of and directly related to the total school program and curriculum.

Field trips are intended to stimulate student interest and inquiry, providing them with insights, information, or knowledge that cannot be adequately developed through regular classroom instruction. To be educationally beneficial, field trips require thoughtful selection, careful advanced planning and preparation of the class, and relevant follow-up

activities. Moreover, field trips must not interfere with the overall academic program of the school due to repeated teacher and/or student absences.

### **General Provisions**

Specific regulations and appropriate administrative procedures shall be developed to screen, approve, and evaluate trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants. These guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall ensure that all field trips have the approval of the Principal.

Provisions for comparable instructional experiences during the school day must be made for students not participating in the in-state field trip.

Exchange programs and trips abroad are school-sponsored activities subject to the same regulations and consequences outlined in *this* Handbook.

### **Student Wellness and Physical Activity**

The Norwell School Committee 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.

Norwell Public Schools will:

- 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.

- 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 shall meet or exceed the district nutrition standards. Emphasis shall be placed on foods that are nutrient dense per calorie. To ensure high quality, nutritious meals, foods shall be served with consideration toward variety, appeal, taste, safety, and packaging. No soda or candy is to be sold or served on school grounds during the school day.

- 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 is included in the Norwell School's education program from grades pre-K through 12. Physical activity includes regular instructional physical education, as well as co-curricular activities, and recess.

D. Maintain a district-wide Wellness Committee to:

- provide guidance to explain this policy
- evaluate policy progress
- serve as a resource to school sites, and
- recommend revisions to this policy as necessary

### **Students Charged with a Felony**

The principal of a school may suspend a student who has been charged with a felony or is the subject of a felony delinquency complaint, 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. The principal may expel a student who has been convicted, adjudicated, or admitted guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency, 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.

**Legal Reference:** MGL Chapter 71 Section 37H1/2

#### **This is from the Student Discipline Policy: SUSPENSION/EXPULSION BASED UPON A FELONY CHARGE/CONVICTION M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½**

Issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal of a school may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal 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. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

### **Students 16 (or older) Leaving School (Drop-Outs)**

Within five (5) days from a student's tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) consecutive unexcused absence, Norwell High School provides written notice to students age 16 or over and their parents or guardians. The notice is in English and the family's native language and states that the student and the parent or guardian may meet for an exit interview with a representative of the district within ten days from the date the notice was sent. At least two meeting dates will be proposed for the exit interview. At the request of the parent or guardian, the district may consent to an extension of the time for the meeting of not longer than fourteen days.

At the exit interview the participants discuss the reasons that the student is leaving school and alternative educational or other placements. The student and parent or guardian are told that attendance is voluntary after the student turns 16 but are also informed of the student's right to return to school. Norwell High School sends annual written notice to former students who have not yet earned their competency determination and who have not transferred to another school to inform them of the availability of publicly funded post-high school academic support programs and to encourage them to participate in those programs. Such notice is sent via first class mail to the last known address of each such student who attended a high school in the district within the past two years.

### **Students with Limited English Proficiency**

It is the policy of the Norwell School Committee to comply with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

Two federal statutes protect LEP students:

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 [42 U.S.C. 2000d] prohibits discrimination by federally funded institutions based upon national origin.
2. The Equal Educational Opportunities Act, [20 U.S.C. § 1703 (f)] requires educational agencies to "take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs."

According to the Office for Civil Rights of the U.S. Department of Education "the question of need for an alternative program is resolved by determining whether language minority students are able to participate effectively in the regular instructional program. If they are not, an alternative program must be provided." In addition, "OCR allows school districts broad discretion concerning how to ensure equal educational opportunity for [LEP] students...The law requires effective instruction which leads to the timely acquisition of proficiency in English."

Students who were not born in the United States whose native tongue is other than English and who may be incapable of performing ordinary class work in English or students who were born in the United States of non-English speaking parents and who are incapable of performing ordinary class work in English must be tested by certified personnel for English proficiency upon entrance to Norwell Public Schools. Based on this test, the school principal and guidance counselor will determine with the parent the most appropriate course of study, and support services, if needed. Moreover, state and federal law also requires that LEP students be assessed annually in four areas: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

In addition, Norwell Public Schools encourages teachers and other professional staff certified in bilingual education to maintain that certification, and considers such certification as an asset in those candidates seeking a position in Norwell Public Schools.

### **Teaching About Drugs, Alcohol, and Tobacco – Policy IHAMB**

In accordance with state and federal law, Norwell Public Schools shall provide age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, evidence-based drug, alcohol and tobacco education and prevention programs in grades K-12.

The drug, alcohol and tobacco education program shall address the legal, social, and health consequences of drug, alcohol and tobacco use. The program also shall include information about effective techniques and skill development for delaying and abstaining from using, as well as skills for addressing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, or drugs.

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 Norwell Public Schools should be the education of children and youth on healthy decision-making:

- To prevent, delay, and/or reduce alcohol, tobacco, and drug use among children and youth.
- To increase students' understanding of the legal, social, and health consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.
- To teach students self-management skills, social skills, negotiation skills, and refusal skills that will help them to make healthy decisions and avoid alcohol, tobacco, and drug use.

The curriculum, instructional materials, and outcomes used in this program shall be recommended by the Superintendent of Schools, or designee. The Committee wishes to be informed of all new courses and substantive revisions in curriculum and will receive reports on changes under consideration. Its acceptance of these reports, including a listing of the high school program of studies, will constitute its adoption of the curriculum for official purposes.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents 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.

### **Tobacco and Smoking on School Premises – Policy ADC (also GBED)**

Smoking or the use of any tobacco and tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

For purpose of this policy, “smoking” will mean all uses of tobacco products and devices (including but not limited to chewing tobacco, cigars, cigarettes, and pipes) and the use of electronic, “vapor”, or other substitute forms of cigarettes and nicotine products.

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.

A visitor observed smoking or using tobacco products on school property will be asked to refrain from smoking and the use of tobacco products while on school property and s/he will be reminded that the District is required by law to keep school premises tobacco free.

If the individual fails to comply with the request, it may be deemed necessary to call upon the local law enforcement agency to enforce this policy.

### **Traffic and Parking Controls – Policy EDA**

Driving and parking on school property are privileges granted by the Committee to persons who have reasons to be in the schools or on school property.

The school administration will develop, in cooperation with local traffic authorities, a plan for accommodating the flow of traffic on school roadways, and traffic regulations.

The assignment of parking areas to staff, students, and visitors to the school will be the responsibility of the school administration.

### **Tutoring for Pay – Policy GCRD**

Maintaining a high quality instructional staff and providing a rich and varied program of studies should minimize the need for individual tutoring. Since there may, however, be exceptional cases where tutoring may help students with needed skills or content, and since some parents desire to retain the services of tutors for their children, the Norwell School Committee has established the following policy parameters:

1. A staff member, who has a student currently enrolled in his or her class or program, including athletics and performing arts, may not accept direct employment as a paid tutor for that pupil.
2. Staff members may privately tutor for pay students who are not in their class or program, providing that said tutoring is not done during the staff member's professional workday.
3. Norwell staff members privately tutoring Norwell students may not serve as agents for those students in any school-related activities or proceedings.
4. Staff members may use school facilities for tutoring students for pay with advanced authorization of the principal, submission of and compliance with the *Facility Request & Permit*, and upon payment of established rental fees.
5. Parents are responsible for making arrangements for the supervision of their children before and after tutoring sessions in school buildings, and principals may send home students for whom interim supervision arrangements have not been made.
6. Via attachment of this policy by the building principal to the *Facility Request & Permit* form, staff members acknowledge that when they are using a school facility as a privately paid tutor, they are acting as an independent contractor and not as a Town of Norwell employee, that no insurance or statutory indemnification extends to them, and that they are doing so entirely at their own risk.
7. The School Committee does not promote, endorse, or provide private tutoring, nor does it establish fees for tutoring. However, as a service for parents, the administration may maintain a list of tutors and tutoring services that may be made available for parents.

The above does not apply to homebound instruction that is authorized by the administration.

### **Use of Private Vehicles on School Business**

#### **Transportation in Private Vehicle Liability Advisory**

The Town's insurance covers volunteers who, under the direction and control of school personnel, transport students to and from school sanctioned or sponsored events or business. Signed permission slips are required for programs, activities and events. Permission slips will inform parents when the driver is a student.

If you volunteer to assist the school in transporting yourself and other students or staff to school-sponsored events in your own vehicle, please be aware that this does not relieve you of the existing legal obligation to be adequately insured under a motor vehicle



insurance policy in your own name. Drivers are responsible for proper licensing, and vehicles must be properly inspected and insured as required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Drivers should seek the advice of insurance providers as to appropriate coverage.

In the event of an accident, the Town's insurance provider may extend coverage only for injury or damage to others and their property that occurs while you are providing transportation in connection with school-sponsored events. Should you become involved in a motor vehicle accident, even if you are operating your vehicle as a volunteer for the school, you may still be responsible for payment of any damage to your vehicle. The Town's insurance carrier depending on the specific circumstances of each case determines coverage.

If you transport students, parents, teachers and/or coaches to activities that are not in the nature of school-sponsored events, or if you use your vehicle to intentionally injure someone or cause property damage, the Town's insurance provider would probably deny coverage under either of these circumstances.

### **Vandalism – Policy ECAC**

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

Every citizen of the town, 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 department, 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 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.

### **Video Surveillance – Policy ECAA**

Norwell Public Schools has a responsibility to maintain discipline and protect the safety, security, and welfare of our students, staff, and visitors while at the same time safeguarding district facilities, vehicles, and equipment.

As part of fulfilling this responsibility, the Norwell School Committee authorizes the use of video/digital surveillance cameras in any district building, on district property. Digital

or video recorder placements shall be based on the presumption and belief that students, staff, and visitors have no reasonable expectation of privacy in public areas or at events that occur in plain view of other students, staff, or visitors.

### Public Notice of Video Policy

Signs shall be posted on district buildings to notify students, staff, and visitors that video or digital cameras may be in use in school buildings. Parents and students shall also be notified through the student handbook that cameras may be in use in school buildings, on school grounds. Students and others will be held responsible for any violations of school rules or law recorded by the cameras.

### Retention and Access to Video

1. The district shall retain copies of video or digital recordings for 15 calendar days. Recordings may be erased by either deletion or copying over with a new recording.
2. Education records, including video or digital records, retain their status as such even when in the possession of a law enforcement unit and thus remain subject to the restrictions on the release of education records contained in FERPA and state student records laws and regulations. The district will store the time intervals of any recordings as long as there is an outstanding request to inspect and review them or a need to preserve evidence.
3. The right to inspect is generally limited to school department personnel and to those parents whose child's recorded behavior is the cause for the retention of the video recordings. All parental requests must be specific as to the date, time and location of behavior believed to be recorded.
4. Parents of students coincidentally recorded but not involved in the behavior giving rise to potential discipline may review the video as follows:
  1. Students' parents may view the video **without** first having to receive permission from the involved student's parent(s). None of the parents of the "incidental" students have to give their permission for the viewing of the video by the "involved" students' parents.
  2. The district is **not** obligated to give a copy of the video to the parent or their lawyer. If, however, the district chooses to give the parent a video, the faces of the "involved" students other than that of the parent's student must be redacted or parents will have to receive written permission from the parents of the other involved students.
    1. The rights of the parents and students to access student records will be consistent with state law and regulation.
    2. Once the video/digital records have been viewed by the parties requesting to view it, the law does not require that the video be kept. The district will retain the video at least until the school disciplinary process is completed and longer if requested by law enforcement.

Videos may be used by Norwell Public Schools and shown to law enforcement officials by the school department, as well as to parents of a student who has been recorded, at the sole discretion of the school department or in response to a lawful subpoena.

Viewing of education records may occur within a reasonable period of time, provided the request for viewing is made within 15 calendar days of the recording. The school will store the time interval of any recording as long as there is an outstanding request for review recorded by the school within the stated retention period or as needed for evidence.

### Role of Law Enforcement

Videos containing evidence of a violation of student conduct rules and/or state or federal law shall be retained until the issue of the misconduct is no longer subject to review or appeal under law or as determined by district policy or student handbook; any release or viewing of such records shall be in accordance with current law.

### Preservation of Equipment

Students who vandalize, damage, disable, or render inoperable surveillance cameras and equipment shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and referral to appropriate law enforcement authorities.

### Walkers and Riders – Policy EEAA

Students are 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.

Additionally, the Norwell School Committee additionally provides transportation for students as follows:

**Kindergarten - Grade 6:** All students, regardless of distance from school.

**Grades 7 -12:** All students, regardless of distance from school, with an assigned fee as determined by the Norwell School Committee.

Exceptions to these guidelines may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent.

### Weapons

Whoever not being a law enforcement officer, and irrespective of any license obtained by him under the provisions of MGL Chapter 140, carries on his person a firearm as hereinafter defined, loaded or unloaded, in any school building or on any school grounds without the written authorization of the School Committee or the Superintendent of Schools, shall be punished by a fine of not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. For the purpose of this paragraph, "firearm" shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle, or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet, or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.

Whoever carries on his/her person any dangerous weapons in any school building or on any school grounds without the written authorization of the School Committee or the Superintendent of Schools shall be punished by a fine of not more than One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. For the purpose of school discipline, weapons will include the above, as well as knives, any martial arts

weapons, incendiary devices, and any other objects and/or materials deemed to be dangerous by the building administration. Included as well are replicas, facsimiles, and toy weapons. They are not allowed on school buses, in school buildings, or on school grounds.

Faculty members and administrators shall report violations of the law or be subject to criminal charges.

Any student found to be in possession of a weapon will have that weapon confiscated by the principal or his or her designee. The weapon will be turned over to the police department.

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