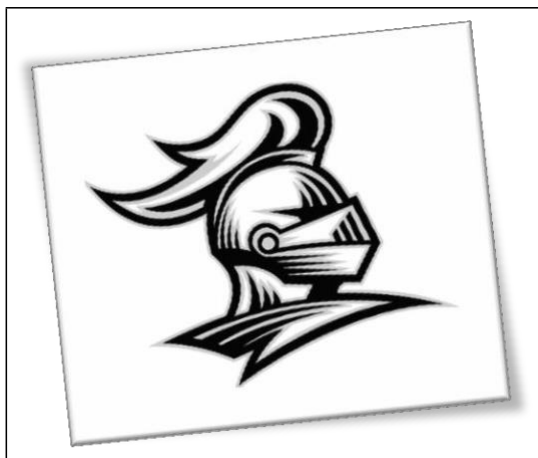


DR. ROBERT G. O'DONNELL MIDDLE SCHOOL



STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021 School Year

211 Cushing Street
Stoughton, MA 02072
(781) 344 – 7002
FAX (781) 297 – 5263
oms.stoughtonschools.org

Responsibility Effort Spirit Pride Excellence Compassion Teamwork

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sandra Groppi
Chair of the School Committee

Katie Pina-Enokian
Vice-Chair of the School Committee

Molly Cochran
Anita Hill
Joseph McDonough

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Dr. John M. Marcus, Ph. D.

DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Jonathan Ford

PRINCIPAL

Matthew Colantonio

ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

Hallie Burak

Katrina Crowley

TRANSLATION NOTIFICATION

The Stoughton Public Schools will ensure that, when requested, specific components of the school handbooks and district codes of conduct will be made available in the primary language of a parent or student whose primary language is not English. Parents may also request that, to the extent possible, school notices and reports be provided in a language that they understand.

[Arabic]

سرادم لفكك سرادمل تابي نك نم قنوعم ثانوكم رغنيس، بلطلا دنع، اهراب فيموكحل نونولس

دودح يفو، اضيا ل دلأا عيطسويو. فيزبلجلال اغللا ريغ فيسيزلا مهتغل نيدلاو دلأا وأ نيلثلا فيساسلا اغللاب ققطنملا سرادم يف كولسلا دواوو
اهزومم في عك قسردملا ريراقتو تاراعشلا نوكن اب اويلطي نأ، ناكملا.

[Chinese] 如果主要語言不是英語的家長或學生提出請求，Stoughton 公立學校保證將以家長或學生的主要語言提供學校手冊和學區行為守則的具體章節部份。家長還可以請求在可能的情況下以他們能夠理解的語言提供學校通知和報告。

[French] Le système scolaire de Stoughton (Stoughton Public Schools) assurera à ce qui en feront la demande que des passages des manuels scolaires et des codes de conduite du système scolaire seront fournis dans la langue maternelle d'un parent ou d'un élève dont la langue maternelle n'est pas l'anglais. Les parents pourront aussi demander que, dans la mesure du possible, les annonces, avis, et rapports scolaires soient fournis dans une langue qu'ils comprennent.

[Gujarati] Jo CataR Aqavaa vaDilaao naI paaqa-maIk BaaYaa AMgaroP naqaI, Aomanaa AnaauraoQa Jpar, sTaoTna paiblak skUlsa; skUla hOMDbauk Anaoo Plaa kaoD AacarLa naI ivaiSaYT GaTkao paaqa-maIk BaaYaa maa JpalabQa kravaSaaoo. jyaa sauQaI samBava haoya, skUla naaoiTsa Anaoo irpaaOT-, vaDilaao samaxaI Sako Ao BaaYaa maa JpalabQa kravaa maaTo; vaDilaao AnaauraoQa krI Sako Co.

[Portuguese] As Escolas Públicas de Stoughton asseguram que, quando requeridos pelos pais, certos requerimentos específicos dos livros de regulamentos escolares sejam disponíveis na primeira língua dos encarregados de educação ou de qualquer aluno(a) cuja língua primária não é o Inglês. Os encarregados de educação também poderão requerer que, enquanto possível, as informações e relatórios escolares sejam fornecidos numa língua que os mesmos entendem.

[Russian] По просьбе родителей или учеников, родной язык которых – не английский, школьный округ Stoughton Public Schools готов предоставлять определенные разделы школьных руководств и сводов правил школьного округа на их родном языке. Родители могут также попросить, чтобы школьные уведомления и отчеты об успеваемости предоставлялись - по мере возможности - на понятном для них языке.

[Spanish] Las Escuelas Públicas de Stoughton asegurarán que, cuando pedido, componentes específicas de las guías escolares y códigos de conducta del distrito estarán disponibles en el idioma principal de un padre o estudiante de quiénes idioma principal no es inglés. También los padres pueden pedir – a la medida posible – que las noticias y reportes escolares estarán proveído en una lengua que ellos entienden.

[Tagalog] Titiyakin ng Pampublikong Paaralan ng Stoughton na, kung inyong hihilingin, ang mga partikular na bahagi ng Aklat-Pampaaralan at Pang Distritong Kodigo ng Pag-aasal, ay maaring makuha at maisalin sa wika ng mga magulang o ng mga estudyante na ang pangunahing salita ay hindi Ingles. Maaari ring hilingin ng mga magulang na mailathala sa naiintindihan nilang wika ang mga patalastas at mga ulat na magmumula sa paaralan.

Dear Stoughton Families-

Welcome to another exciting year in the Stoughton Public Schools! With the unprecedented new demands of schooling in a pandemic, the administration, teachers, and staff have worked hard for the last several months planning a robust experience for all of our students. Whether we are fully in-person, fully remote, or in a hybrid model, our mission to provide the best educational opportunities for our students remains strong. Within the guidelines established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and using our experiences in the Spring of 2020 as a base, SPS planning teams took on the challenge with grit and determination. Taking on challenges with a sense of optimism and hope led us to give this year the theme of "The Year of Great Adventures."

This handbook is intended to provide families with a solid understanding of the expectations of the schools so each child can have a rewarding and enriching experience in the Stoughton Schools. The handbook also provides ways to communicate with school and district staff should you have any questions or concerns.

I sincerely hope you and your children have a great year and find success in any adventures you take on! Should you have any questions for me as district superintendent, please don't hesitate to connect.

Go Black Knights!

Dr. John M. Marcus



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SPS DISTRICT CALENDAR 2020-2021

Please visit <https://www.stoughtonschools.org/district/media-relations/pages/calendars> for the most updated Stoughton Public Schools calendar.

OMS MARKING PERIODS 2020-2021

	Trimester 1	Trimester 2	Trimester 3
Start Date	September 14, 2020	December 4, 2020	March 17, 2021
Mid-Term Progress Reports	October 16, 2020	January 26, 2021	May 4, 2021
End Date	December 3, 2020	March 16, 2021	Last Day of School
Report Cards Issued	December 10, 2020	March 23, 2021	Last Day of School

THE O'DONNELL MIDDLE SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

The O'Donnell Middle School, in partnership with families and the community, will maintain a safe environment that fosters the intellectual growth and social development of each student.

We will empower students to be active participants in their school community by demonstrating the values of **R.E.S.P.E.C.T.**

Responsibility

Effort

Spirit

Pride

Excellence

Compassion

Teamwork

VISION

We believe the schooling process involves the cooperative participation of students, parents, teachers, and administrators in the development and implementation of the curriculum.

It is our vision that students be engaged in learning activities, which encourage them to:

- Develop the academic abilities and skills to become life-long learners;
- Possess a positive sense of self-worth;
- Feel capable as they take on new developmental tasks and challenges;
- Behave ethically and act responsibly toward others;
- Develop sound work habits, motivation, and values;
- Have a perspective on the future that provides a source of positive direction and energy;
- Appreciate the benefits of a diverse society and respect the values of others;
- Develop communication skills which enable them to get along with others and develop long-term interpersonal relationships;
- Engage in health enhancing and health protective behaviors; and
- Become positive, contributing members of their peer group, family, school, and community.

CORE VALUES

Recognizing that a child's education is a partnership between home and school, the O'Donnell Middle School Council has identified four core values for families and school to share:

- Families and school should nurture children by encouraging them to work hard, persevere, and strive for academic excellence.
- Families and school should encourage children to accept responsibility for their own behavior and act with integrity.
- Families and school should encourage children to treat each other with respect and value diversity.
- Families and school should encourage children to mediate disagreements, reduce conflicts, and prevent violence.

DR. ROBERT G. O'DONNELL MIDDLE SCHOOL

Stoughton Junior High School was opened on October 1, 1960. In September 1994, Stoughton Junior High became the Stoughton Middle School and shortly thereafter, it was named the Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School (O.M.S.).

The school is named for Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell who contributed thirty-five years of service to the Stoughton School System. He started in 1959 as Director of Science at Stoughton High School. In 1960, Dr. O'Donnell became Principal of Stoughton Junior High School, a position he held until his retirement in 1991.

ACADEMICS & STUDENT LIFE

Message to 6th Graders

Welcome to our middle school family! You are now in the first year of your O.M.S. experience. You are assigned to an interdisciplinary team of four teachers; each team of teachers works together to teach you math, science, social studies, and language arts. In addition, your program will include many exploratory and enrichment subjects.*

You will have many opportunities in your three years at O.M.S. to become involved in school and community activities. We encourage you to participate and do your best. The O.M.S. faculty and staff look forward to helping you prepare for the future in developing your personal goals, improving your abilities, acquiring new skills, and expanding your horizons.

Message to 7th Graders

You are now in the second year of your middle school experience. You are assigned to an interdisciplinary team of four teachers; each team of teachers works together to teach you math, science, social studies, and language arts. In addition, your program will include world languages, exploratory and enrichment subjects.*

As middle school students you are ready to assume more responsibility for your class work, behavior, and homework. Your teachers, guidance counselor and administrators are here to support and guide you through the school year. You are encouraged to ask questions and seek their advice at any time. Many opportunities for involvement in school and community service will exist. We encourage you to participate.

Message to 8th Graders

To our most senior family members, welcome back to O.M.S. as an eighth grade student. O'Donnell Middle School is fun but it also means new responsibilities. Remember that the grade 6 and 7 students look up to you. Set a good example for them. Participate in activities that this school has to offer, volunteer your time to help others.

Realize that grade 8 is a very important year for high school preparation. Complete all of your assignments and use consistent study habits to prepare for tests. You are assigned to a disciplinary team of four teachers; each team of teachers works together to teach you math, science, social studies, and language arts. In addition, your program will include many exploratory and enrichment subjects. *

You are expected to continue your personal and academic growth, keeping in mind that your teachers, guidance counselor, and administrators are here to assist you at any time.

**For a complete and up-to-date listing of the academic offerings at OMS, please see the "Academic Program" on our school website (oms.stoughtonschools.org).*

**Have a great school year OMS.
Be kind to one another, and be sure to do your very best.**

ACCEPTANCE OF PAYMENTS

Bank checks, money orders or cash will be the only forms of payment accepted by Stoughton Public Schools for bus transportation, lost books, facilities, preschool tuition, summer school and evening school.

AFTER-SCHOOL REMEDIATION PROGRAM

ENTRANCE CRITERIA

Any student who earns two failing grades (F) on a Progress Report or Term Report Card in their Math, English, Science, or Social Studies course may be required to enroll in the After-School Remediation Program.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Students will receive additional instruction in the content area(s) for which they are enrolled. The After-School Remediation Program will begin at the conclusion of the regular school day. This program is an extension of the school day for participating students. Therefore, absences from the program and behavior that violates our student code of conduct will be treated according to the policies of the student handbook. For those students who need it, a late-bus service will be made available for the After-School Remediation Program.

EXIT CRITERIA

Students will be withdrawn from the After-School Remediation Program when they demonstrate a passing grade, in the content area(s) in which they were enrolled, on a mid-term progress report or report card.

APPOINTMENTS

Whenever possible, dental and medical appointments should be held during your free time or after school hours, not for any part of the school day.

ARRIVING LATE AND LEAVING EARLY

The hours for a normal school day are 7:35 A.M. to 2:12 P.M. Students and families should make every effort to arrive on time and stay until the regular dismissal bell. We do understand that doctor's appointments, religious commitments, and family emergencies do occur. Students will not be considered late if their school bus arrives late.

Late Arrival Procedures:

1. Check in at the main office and get a pass first.
2. Report to either your homeroom or class even if there is but a minute left to get your assignment.
3. Students tardy and not reporting with a note at the time of the tardiness may be subject to a session.

Early Dismissal Procedures:

1. When you arrive in the morning, give a note to your homeroom teacher from your parents giving your full name, the time you are to be dismissed, and the name of the person dismissing you. The office will call your class when your parent/guardian arrives.
2. Report to the main office to meet your parent/guardian and have your parent/guardian sign you out.

An I.D. will be required of the person signing a student out of the building. If there is any court decision and documentation, which would restrict dismissal to only certain identified adults, we need to know this and receive a legal copy of the information.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school regularly, in accordance with State law. State law requires the school

system to investigate cases of excessive school absence. For this purpose, the Committee defines excessive absence as more than ten (10) unexcused absences per school year. All absences (even those authorized by parents) are considered unexcused unless the required documentation is provided.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine (with a doctor's note)
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- For Observance of major religious holidays

- Legal (with documentation from the court, lawyer etc.)
- Other – a student may be excused for other absences with approval from the school administrator.

Documentation for the above absences should be provided to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days of the absence. Documentation provided after ten (10) school days may require a meeting with a principal or designee.

Clear communication between parents and the school is imperative to ensure the safety of students and to reinforce a student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork. Accordingly, parents should provide a written explanation for the absence of a child. This should be provided in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

Family vacations are not considered excused absences. The School Committee strongly discourages families from taking vacation during the school year. When children are absent from school for the purpose of family vacations, their learning is interrupted and their progress may be affected. Teachers will not be required to provide work prior to a student leaving for vacation. The student will be required to make up all missed work upon their return to school.

Truancy is any intentional unauthorized or illegal absence from school or class. The term describes absences caused by students of their own free will, and usually does not refer to legitimate "excused" absences, such as ones related to medical conditions. This includes absence from any class or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. It also includes any after-school special help session or disciplinary session that the student has been directed to attend by a teacher or administrator. In such cases when a student has been identified as truant, the school will notify the parent or guardian, classify the day or class as an unexcused absence, and refer the student for discipline as established by the Code of Conduct.

If a child is absent, he or she cannot participate in after-school or evening events on the day(s) on which he or she is absent. The principal will have the authority to excuse a student's absence and allow the student to participate, based on the principal's understanding of the events surrounding the absence.

Each school Principal will be responsible for ensuring a pupil absence notification program is in place in their respective schools. The program shall be designed to ensure that each school notifies a parent or guardian of the child's absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the parent or guardian within 3 days of the absence.

Additionally, principals must ensure that notification is provided to the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences within a school year. At the secondary level, with regard to parental notification, for any student that has two or more unexcused periods of attendance within a single school day, the day in its entirety will be considered an unexcused absence and contribute to the total number of unexcused absences used to determining if parental notification is required. School Principals, or a designee, must make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop a plan that includes the specific action steps necessary to address the student's poor attendance. The plan, including the action steps, shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian, and may include suggestions from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

If a plan cannot be agreed upon, the Principal may declare an impasse and ask the Superintendent, or a designee, to meet with the student and his / her representative(s), as well as the school administration, to develop an appropriate plan. The plan developed by the Superintendent, or a designee, will be final and not be subject to appeal.

In a case where parents are unresponsive to the school administration's efforts to develop a plan and implement action steps designed to address poor attendance, or in the case where a plan is in place and poor attendance continues, excessive unexcused absences will require unilateral assessment and intervention by the school administration. Interventions may include involvement of a School Resource Officer and the Stoughton Police Department, case management services, and service referrals. In situations in which attendance does not improve despite additional intervention by the school administration, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- A Failure to Send, Criminal Complaint, against the parent will be sought at the Stoughton District Court
- A 51A for parental neglect will be filed with the Department of Children and Families
- A Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) petition will be sought at the Dedham District Juvenile Court.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:2; 76:16; 76:20; 119:39E; 119:51A

Approved by School Committee: March 22, 2016

BUILDING SECURITY

All school building exits will be locked during school hours. The main entrance to the O'Donnell Middle School is equipped with a monitoring and communication system. All visitors must use the main entrance to gain access to the building and must report immediately to the school office upon entering the building.

The Stoughton Public School System is a chemical-free and weapons-free district. The guidelines for student behavior and the discipline code adopted for each building are designed to protect students from the irresponsible behavior of others. Most importantly, all students are directly accountable for the consequences of their behaviors.

To ensure the safety and security of all students in the schools, the Stoughton Public School system reserves the right to conduct warrantless searches of students, their possessions, and school lockers, providing that there is a reasonable basis for the search. Therefore, students should not have expectations of privacy in these areas. The School Committee also authorizes unannounced searches using drug sniffing dogs in any one of the school buildings to make certain that illegal drugs are not being brought onto school grounds and into the schools.

CARE OF PERSONAL PROPERTY

Middle school students are responsible for taking care of their own personal property. The school cannot be responsible for student valuables. We strongly encourage students to leave money and valuable items at home whenever possible.

**The school assumes no financial responsibility for lost or stolen articles.*

CARE OF TECHNOLOGY

Students will be given the opportunity to use lots of educational technology here. It is the student's responsibility to treat all technology with proper care. School-issued technology should only be used for educational purposes. Devices that are distributed to individual students for daily use are the responsibility of the student. If a student damages a school-issued device intentionally that student may be asked to replace the device. Students and parents/guardians will be asked to sign a user agreement for school-issued devices that are distributed to individual students for daily use.

CARE OF TEXTBOOKS

Teachers may distribute books to students for personal use. Students are responsible to return these books in June in the same good condition. Students are responsible for the care of their books and for protecting them from damage. Students will have to pay for lost or damaged books.

COMMUNICATION (School-Related Problems and Concerns)

From time to time, parents may wish to bring problems or concerns to the attention of appropriate school officials. To assist parents in this regard, the following general guidelines may be helpful:

1. Any concern regarding a school-related matter should first be raised by the parent with the staff member most directly involved. For instance, questions regarding the content of instructional materials or homework assignments should be raised with the teacher involved.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the building Principal. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the office of the principal involved.
3. If the matter still is unresolved, the parent may wish to speak to the Superintendent. For an appointment, contact the Superintendent's Office.
4. If the matter still remains unsolved, the parent may wish to bring it to the attention of the School Committee by communicating directly with the Chairperson of the School Committee.

We urge that parents use the progressive steps outlined above as most problems can be addressed satisfactorily by the teacher or other staff member most directly involved. Starting out at the top inevitably results in no decision and the matter being remanded to the staff member most directly involved.

The following are examples (not an all-inclusive list) of issues which are more appropriately addressed at the levels indicated:

1. **Teachers**
 - a. Student homework assignments, quizzes, and tests;
 - b. Course content, instructional materials, academic progress, and extra help;
 - c. Issues related to classroom discipline, relationships with other pupils and the teacher;
 - d. Athletic issues with the teacher/coach involved and then, to the Athletic Director.
2. **Guidance Counselors**

- a. Problems between school and home; teacher and pupil; pupil and other pupils;
- b. Personal matters relating to student development, behaviors, and interactions with others.

3. Assistant Principals/Principal

- a. Any issue arising out of a school building when no other staff member can be specifically identified;
- b. Student placement issues (in a class, program, instructional level);
- c. Instructional and co-curricular program issues (athletics, music, drama, etc.);
- d. Matters related to the physical plant;
- e. Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel;
- f. Student records; school-wide discipline issues; bus conduct issues.

4. Superintendent/Assistant to the Superintendent

- a. Questions regarding School Committee policies and administrative procedures;
- b. School Committee meeting and agenda items;
- c. Any school system records or documents;
- d. Budgetary matters;
- e. Hiring and supervision of staff;
- f. Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel or services which have not been resolved at the Principal's level;
- g. Suggestions or requests for change in the curriculum;
- h. Transportation matters (if not resolved by transportation coordinator/business manager).

5. School Committee

- a. Matters pertaining to policy (class size; student trips; fund-raising activities, etc.);
- b. Requests specific courses and programs are included in the program of studies;
- c. Complaints regarding the Superintendent;
- d. School Board minutes and agenda items (Chairperson of School Board);
- e. Budgetary matters; long-range planning (facilities, programs, etc.).

CUSTODIAL STAFF

The custodians work very hard to keep the school in a clean and safe condition. Their job is very difficult, and students are expected to help keep the school a clean and pleasant place to learn. Students share a responsibility for taking care to see that the classrooms, the corridors, the cafeteria, and the outside grounds are kept litter free. Students are encouraged to help keep their school clean, to pick up and throw away any litter they see, and to take pride in the overall appearance of their school.

DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMMODATION PLAN

To further meet the needs of all students, school districts in Massachusetts, including Stoughton, have developed a plan to help ALL students succeed in school. For more information on this plan, please contact your building principal.

EIGHTH GRADE CLASS DAY

The Class Day Ceremony celebrates the successful academic completion of the O'Donnell Middle School. Students who have not met the criteria for promotion do not participate in the Class Day Ceremony; this includes students who will repeat eighth grade as well as those who will need to complete Summer School in order to be promoted to ninth grade. 8th grade students with an outstanding financial obligation may not be allowed to participate in the Class Day Ceremony.

EXTRA HELP

Extra help is available after school from every teacher at least Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday of each typical week. Students are encouraged to talk with their teachers about getting extra help if needed. Students, at the middle school level, are also encouraged to arrange their own transportation for staying after school. On certain days during the school year, late bus service is available for students. If students need a little guidance in setting up after school help, their guidance counselor can assist them in doing so. Some students may be required to attend after school programs for remediation.

FIELD TRIPS

Quality learning takes place both within and beyond the walls of the middle school. High standards of behavior must be maintained during field trips because you represent our school, our community, and in some cases, our state. Leaving school grounds for learning experiences is a privilege that must be earned; it requires students to be able to make good

decisions and to behave responsibly. Students have the opportunity throughout the school year to demonstrate to their teachers a respect for rules and an ability to make good decisions independently. It is in this way that students earn trust and respect.

A field trip is just like any other school day. Field trips are planned to teach you in a special way, and it is up to you to get as much value from it as you can.

1. Follow all instructions of your supervisors and adhere to all bus safety rules.
2. Respect public property.
3. Please remember that people judge your school and Stoughton by the way you behave.
4. Please remember that you are responsible for any school- work or homework that you miss when you are on a field trip.
5. For health and safety issues, the parent may be asked to accompany the child.
6. Students not participating in a field trip must be in attendance at school.

Field trips are an extension of the classroom. They provide students with the opportunity to visit different areas of the region and acquire valuable lessons along the way. There are four reasons a student may be excluded from a field trip.

1. Absence from school.
2. Out of school suspension from school the day of the trip.
3. Required attendance in the Academic Behavior Center the day of the trip.
4. Students who have been placed on social exclusion by administration. (Please see Code of Conduct)

Trips that require an overnight stay have a detailed contract approved by the school administration that must be signed by students and parents in order for a student to attend.

Students in danger of not attending an overnight trip or excluded from the trip for violation of the contract will be contacted by the teacher(s) organizing the trip.

FIRE DRILLS/BUILDING EVACUATIONS

Fire drills will be held to practice the safest ways to empty our building. When the alarm rings, students should line up quickly and quietly. Teachers will then escort you out of the building by the proper exit. Students must move quickly, without shoving or talking. Outside the building, students will stay together with their class so that teachers can take attendance. A sign is posted in every room showing which fire exit is to be used by the people in that room. Students should listen for and follow all instructions from their teacher.

FOOD AND DRINK IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING

Aside from drinking water, beverages and food of all types are only allowed in the cafeteria. Only water is allowed to be carried in the hallways and in classrooms by students. Breakfast is offered every morning in our cafeteria from 7am until 7:30am. Lunch is offered every day, in the cafeteria, according to the lunch schedule for each grade and team.

Gum chewing is not allowed anywhere in the school building because it creates a major problem in keeping the school clean. The Wellness Policy can be found in the last section of this handbook.

GIFTS TO SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Students and their parents are discouraged from the presentation of gifts to school employees on holidays and at the end of the school year. This policy reflects a growing sentiment among professional educators that gift giving to teachers may tend to bring about tension at home or competition in school, when children in a class feel a compulsion to match the generosity of their peers. The most appreciated gifts are those which the children make themselves or the writing of letters which express your gratitude or appreciation.

GRADING SYSTEM

A+ = 97 – 100	B + = 87 – 89	C + = 77 – 79	D + = 67 – 69	F = below 60
A = 94 – 96	B = 83 – 86	C = 73 – 76	D = 64 – 66	
A – = 90 – 93	B – = 80 – 82	C – = 70 – 72	D – = 60 – 63	

Most classes use the grading scale above.

Some enrichment and academic support classes will use a three-letter grading scale. The three letters and their corresponding grading descriptions are as follows:

E = Excellent performance; S = Satisfactory performance; U = Unsatisfactory performance

In some circumstances, a student may be graded on a pass or fail basis. The grades for these classes will read as either P (passing) or F (failing).

HEALTH CLINIC

Student health and physical well-being are very important to us. If a student becomes ill or is hurt during the school day, our school nurse, Mrs. McDonnell, is available to help.

We hope that students never have an accident in school, but if one should occur or if a student should become ill in school, the school nurse will provide first aid and notify a parent. When this occurs, the parent has the responsibility of providing transportation home and any further necessary care.

Except in an emergency, a student needs a pass to see the school nurse. If the nurse determines that the student is too ill to remain in school, she will call the student's home to make arrangements for dismissal. When a student returns to school after an absence because of illness, he/she must bring to the homeroom teacher a note from the parent indicating the reason for the absence. If you are absent three days or more because of personal illness, your homeroom teacher will send you to the nurse on the day you return with an absence note or your doctor's certificate. If the illness was a contagious disease such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, or strep throat, a student may **ONLY** be readmitted by the school nurse after the designated period of isolation and/or treatment. If you are absent three or more days, you must obtain a pass from your teacher to report to the clinic on the day you return with your absent or physician note.

Each year, Student Emergency Information Forms are distributed to students to be brought home so that parents may accurately fill them out. The form needs to be returned to the homeroom teacher. The form is kept on file in the nurse's office to help in emergency care for a sick or injured student and in contacting the parents of the student.

This form must be updated by the family as changes occur in family situations i.e., work schedule, new phone numbers, emergency contacts. Please do not list emergency contact individuals who are without transportation.

HEALTH INFORMATION

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Law 603 CMR 23.06 (3), all students' health records will be destroyed within five years of the date a student withdraws from the Stoughton Public Schools.

Student Health Guidelines

If there are any changes to your child's health history, please contact the school nurse right away.

If your child is not covered by health insurance, please speak with your school nurse. She can provide you with information about the Children's Medical Security Plan, a health insurance plan for children under the age of 18.

For your child's welfare and for the protection of others, we would like to ask your cooperation in keeping your child home from school if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- ☐ Fever within the last 24 hours
- ☐ Sore throat with swollen glands
- ☐ Other contagious symptoms such as vomiting; diarrhea; frequent productive cough; nasal discharge; red, draining eyes
- ☐ Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions

If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please leave a message on the OMS absence line or contact your school nurse.

INJURIES/EMERGENCY ROOM VISITS

Students who are injured, whether at home, school, or during recreational sports, may require written medical clearance from a health care provider to return to school or physical activities (such as gym or recess). Students who are seen/treated in the emergency room should obtain a written note from the health care provider stating that the student is able to return to school. The emergency room discharge papers do not qualify as a doctor's note and do not provide clearance to return to school. When returning to school, the student is to report to the health office, with the health care provider's note, prior to going to the classroom.

Students who return to school with casts, air casts, crutches, splints, arm slings, wheelchairs, walkers, canes and/or immobilizers require a written doctor's note that includes:

1. Clearance for student to attend school
2. Any restrictions from physical education and recess
3. Confirmation from the physician that the student has been properly instructed in the use of medical equipment provided

STITCHES/STAPLES or SURGICAL PROCEDURES

Upon return to school, a written doctor's note needs to be given to the school nurse that includes:

1. Clearance for student to attend school
2. Any restrictions from physical education and recess

Inspection of Hair for Signs of Head Lice

Children are not routinely screened for head lice in school. If you discover that your child has head lice, please notify the school nurse as soon as possible.

Immunizations

Records are continually inspected so that all children will be immunized according to the requirements and standards set up by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Your school nurse will notify you if your child is due for immunizations. To avoid possible exclusion from school, please follow up with the school nurse as soon as possible after receiving a notice.

Mantoux Testing

Per Massachusetts Department of Public Health recommendations, any student entering or returning to school from a country deemed to have a high prevalence of tuberculosis may require a TB risk assessment completed by a licensed medical provider.

Medications

Medication regulations are governed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Therefore, ALL medication, including prescription and over the counter medication, must follow the same procedure.

1. Medication cannot be brought to school by a child. Medicine should be delivered to school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by a parent or a responsible adult. Medicines will not be given unless they are in their properly labeled container.
2. When medicine must be given in school, please contact your school nurse to be advised of the proper procedure and to obtain required medication forms.
3. All medication must have a parent permission form and a physician order form. The prescribing doctor must provide written instructions to dispense the medication at school, including the time the medication is to be given.
4. In cases of a prescription medication, no more than a 30-day supply of the medication should be provided to the school.

Physical Examinations

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law 105 CMR 200.000: Physical Examination of School Children. 200.100, the school health program should encourage the performance of the physical examination by the student's own physician, nurse practitioner or physician assistant. Said health care provider shall record the results of the physical examination on health record forms approved by the Department of Public Health and provide a copy of this record containing the results of the examination and any recommendations to the school. The physical exam needs to be done within one year prior to entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry and at intervals of either three or four years thereafter. A student transferred from another school system shall be examined as an entering student. Health records transferred from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement. We ask that all students in grade 7 provide a copy of their most recent physical exam to fulfill this state regulation.

MANDATED SCREENINGS

All screenings are conducted per Massachusetts Department of Health Regulations. Parents and legal guardians can choose to not have a child participate in any of mandated screenings by sending a note to your school nurse identifying which screening you would like your child exempt from.

Height and Weight Measurements

All seventh grade students will have their height and weight measured and Body Mass Index (BMI) score and corresponding percentile calculated. This information shall be maintained in the student's school health record. Every effort shall be made to protect the privacy of the student during the screening. Trained school personnel or other personnel with access to the student's health information or records shall not disclose the height, weight or BMI calculations of an individual student, either verbally or in written form, to anyone other than the parent and/or legal guardian without written permission of the parent and/or legal guardian.

SBIRT

Each Massachusetts school district is required to utilize a verbal screening tool to screen pupils for substance use disorders. Screenings shall occur annually at 2 different grade levels as recommended. At the middle school, eighth grade students will participate in the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) program. This is a confidential, interview based screening conducted as a one-on-one session with the school nurse. Students who are not using substances will have their healthy choices reinforced by the screener. The screener will provide brief feedback to any student who reports using substances, or is at risk for future substance use. If needed, the student will be referred to our guidance department for further evaluation. Results of the screening will not be included in your student's school record, nor will results be shared with any staff other than the SBIRT Team. Additionally, screening is voluntary and students may choose not to answer any or all of the screening questions. Please contact the school nurse if you have any questions about this screening. Notices will be sent to parents before screening begins with additional information.

Scoliosis Screening

All students will have postural screenings. This screening is done in PE class. Notices will be sent to parents before screening begins with information regarding the entire screening procedure.

Vision/Hearing Screening

All eighth grade students are screened for vision and hearing. The parents of any child who fails the hearing and/or vision examinations will be notified. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's hearing or vision, please contact your school nurse.

HONOR ROLL

In order to make the Honor Roll at O'Donnell Middle School, you must have A's and B's in all subjects and exhibit good conduct. Students with straight A's will receive High Honors. If you receive the comment, "poor conduct" you automatically lose your right to be on the Honor Roll. The Knights of Honor Roll recognizes students who have been nominated by their teachers for exhibiting the values of R.E.S.P.E.C.T. in the O'Donnell Middle School mission statement.

HOMEWORK

Homework is an important extension of classroom learning because it continues your educational development through preparation, extension, practice and creative reinforcement. It helps develop individual research skills, study habits, personal responsibility and accountability.

Homework typically consists of, but is not limited to, reading, skill development activities, writing assignments, and other appropriate learning tasks. It is expected that homework will be monitored by parents and is factored into the student's grade by teachers. Students will have homework/study assignments every night. Even if there is no homework due the next day, students can read and review notes, or the chapter for an upcoming quiz or test.

Students are encouraged to set aside a home study time every day. Students will use a student agenda for their homework assignments. Homework will consist of work within these four categories:

1. *Practice* - given to help students master specific skills and to reinforce material presented in class.
 2. *Preparation* - given to prepare students for upcoming lessons.
 3. *Extension* - given to decide if students can transfer new skills and ideas to new situations. Extension assignments require abstract thinking skills.
 4. *Creative* - given to help students integrate many skills and ideas while producing a requested response. These assignments usually take more time to complete, several days, even weeks.
- Sixth grade students should be engaged in no more than 1 hour of homework each night.
 - Generally, seventh and eighth grade students should be engaged in about 1 to 1.5 hours of homework each night.
 - Seventh and eighth grade students who take advanced course offerings will have more homework than students who are not enrolled in advanced course offerings.
 - Each teacher and/or team will explain their grading and homework policy.
 - Though teachers have their own grading policies, homework will not count for more than 15% of a student's overall grade in any class.
 - Though teachers have their own grading policies, there will be no automatic zeros for missed homework. All grading policies will have a system for accepting make-up work in some way.
 - All homework assignments will be posted in a common location.
 - All students and teachers will use the student agenda books for recording homework.
 - Parents, students, and teachers all share responsibilities of homework.

PARENTS

Please take an interest in your child's lessons to gain a better understanding of the learning, which is taking place at school.

- Establish a set time and place for your child to do homework.
- Place a strong emphasis on the value of completing homework regularly.
- Parents are asked to supervise homework and to check assignments daily.
- Parents are asked to check and initial the completion of assignments as outlined in the student agenda.

STUDENTS

Write down your homework assignments in your agenda. If you are unsure about your assignment, ask the teacher for help at the end of the class or after school. Keep your papers from each class well organized. Remember to put your best effort into completing your assignments and turning them in on time.

THE LEARNING COMMONS

The Learning Commons is a research and technology center for all. This space was designed to support teaching and learning in the twenty-first century. Teachers may take their entire class for a lesson, using the technology and materials there. Students may use the Learning Commons individually with permission. The Learning Commons will continue to offer a large collection of print materials for students (fiction, non-fiction, reference, and periodicals) to access and checkout for personal use.

LEGAL DOCUMENTATION

Copies of ALL legal documents related to the child (e.g. custody, restraining orders) must be filed in the office at the registration of the child and again when any changes are made.

LOCKDOWN DRILLS

Lockdown drills are an important part of our overall safety plan, and we conduct these drills on a regular basis throughout the school year. A crucial component of the A.L.I.C.E. protocol that is foundational to our school safety plan, lockdown drills are designed to train students and staff to respond immediately to any situation that would require a real lockdown of the building.

Faculty and staff are given full A.L.I.C.E. training. Students learn about lockdown drills and are given more general safety training during assemblies, team meetings, and classroom discussion during actual lockdown drills.

LOCKERS

Students will be given a locker with a built-in combination. Do not give your combination to others. Please do not leave money or expensive items in your locker. The school is not responsible for any lost items. Lockers are the property of the school department and therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time.

LOST AND FOUND

A “Lost and Found” box is located in the cafeteria. Students who misplace personal items should check the box to see if it has been deposited there. In general, students are encouraged to return more expensive items (mostly electronics) directly to the main office and everything else (clothing, bags, etc.) to the “lost and found” box. A few times each school year, the unclaimed contents in the “lost and found” box are donated to local charities. Students and parents/guardians are given ample notice before the donations are made.

MAIN OFFICE & OFFICE PHONES

Located here are the Principal, Assistant Principals, and the office staff. Students who are late for school report to the main office first. If a student has lost or found an item, it should be reported to this office. Parents/guardians are encouraged to call the office if their student will be absent, late or is in need assistance and or direction. Students who need to call home during the school day will do so in the main office, as cell phone use is prohibited during the school day. Parents/guardians who need to get a message to their student and/or speak to them during the school day should call the main office in order to do so. All visitors must report to the main office and all dismissals take place from the main office.

MAKE-UP WORK DUE TO ABSENCE

Make-up work is the student’s responsibility. Teachers are available for make-up work after school. The time in which to make up work assigned while absent is the number of days absent plus one (i.e. absent Monday, work is due on Thursday). Previously assigned work will be due on the day after return from absence. Incomplete grades should be made up by the end of the next mid-term period.

MID-TERM PROGRESS REPORTS

All students will receive mid-term progress reports. These reports will be sent home electronically and posted on the Parent Portal, though families are able to request these reports be sent home in the mail. Remember, this is only halfway through the trimester. You still have time to improve your grade, study harder and seek extra help from your teacher.

PARENT PORTAL

The Parent Portal provides instant, electronic access to your child’s grades, attendance, schedule, and contact information. Parent/guardians are able to see the current grades for their child in each class. Mid-term reports and report cards are issued electronically through the Parent Portal.

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES & OPEN HOUSES

The purpose of these conferences is to allow parents to meet with your teachers and talk with them about your progress. These talks are limited, so if more time is needed, please schedule an appointment with the teacher at a mutually convenient time. Back to School Night takes place in September, and teachers will introduce themselves and their courses to families. The OMS Knight of Excellence is an open-house held in the spring, showcasing a variety of student work.

Parents are welcome to call make appointments to see teachers, teams, guidance counselors, or administrators at any time during the year. Every attempt will be made to return your phone call within 24 hours.

PARENT TEACHER STUDENT ORGANIZATION

The purpose of the P.T.S.O. at the Middle School is to keep parents actively involved in their children’s education and to provide support for the Middle School’s programs and for special events. Membership is open to all parents and we hope you will contact the officers for this year to volunteer your assistance. Please see the OMS PTSO Facebook page for more information; you can get to this page from the school website as well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The physical education programs at the middle school are designed to improve physical fitness and develop safe practices for students to follow whenever they are involved in physical exercises or sports. There are no gym uniforms. However, students may be required to bring a change of clothing to participate in the gym program, depending upon the grade level. Students and families will be provided with the requirements for participation, including dressing for the gymnasium, by each teacher for each grade level. In order to be excused from gym, students must bring a note from

home explaining the reason and give this note to the school nurse. In order to be excused from gym activities permanently or for a lengthy period of time, a form from a doctor must be provided.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION POLICY

In order to be promoted to the next grade:

1. A student cannot fail more than one of the following classes for the year – Math, Science, Social Studies, English.
2. A student may attend summer school, at the students' cost of \$225, if he/she has failed two subjects for the year.
3. A student failing 3 or more subjects for the year may only attend summer school with the permission of the principal. All grades, behavior and other factors will be taken into consideration.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards will be issued about a week after marks close for each trimester. Report cards will be sent home electronically and posted to the Parent Portal. Any parent/guardian may request a paper copy of the report card from their child's guidance counselor.

SCHOOL COUNSELORS

School counselors are available to help students with any problems they may have. School counselors are available to help students with any social, emotional, or learning need they may have in order to help them be successful in school (making new friends, getting along with classmates, organizing time to complete all assignments, making responsible decisions, or plans for the future).

Located in the Guidance Office are Ms. Coughlan, Mr. Cronin and Ms. Brookshire. Also available are three adjustment counselors, Ms. Cusak, Mr. Anderson and Ms. Blaney.

SCHOOL DANCES

In cooperation with the P.T.S.O., dances are held throughout the school year. Typically, sixth grade dances are held separately from grades seven and eight. Times, themes, and ticket prices are advertised well in advance of each dance. The students decorate the cafeteria, a DJ adds the music and special lighting, and the P.T.S.O. sells refreshments.

Please remember these few rules so that the dances will continue to be a success:

1. All rules for good conduct, which apply during the school day, also apply at school dances.
2. Our dances are for OMS students ONLY.
3. Parents are requested to arrive promptly at the conclusion of their child's/children's dance.
4. You must attend school on the day of the dance if you want to be admitted that evening.

STOUGHTON SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Stoughton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S-SEPAC) is a Chapter 766 mandated organization which includes parents of children who have Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), teachers, and other interested parties. Monthly support meetings, workshops, a lending library, and newsletters help provide information and support to families and teachers. For membership information, call the Administrator of Special Education (781) 344 - 7009 ext. 7322.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Students at the O'Donnell Middle School have a wide variety of after-school, extracurricular activities available to them. These activities include: Student Council, Peer Leadership, National Junior Honors Society, Spectrum, Concert Band, Jazz Band, Drum Club, Woodwind Ensemble, Chorus, Drama, Math Team, School Newspaper (OMS Scoop), Morning Announcements (Knightly News), Peer Leadership, Science Club, Yearbook, Homework Help, Robotics, Art Club, Intramural Sports, Creative Writing Club, Video Game Club, Movie Club.

STUDENTS DEBTS

If money is owed for books and/or materials, report cards will not be sent home. Instead, a notice will be sent home informing the parent/guardian of the debt and advising the parent/guardian that he/she may pick up the report card in the Middle School Office. 8th grade students with an outstanding financial obligation may not be allowed to participate in the Class Day Ceremony at the end of the school year.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

If the regular classroom teacher is absent and a substitute teacher is teaching for the day, students are expected to act in the same courteous and cooperative way as they do when their own teacher is present. A substitute teacher is a member of the community and will form an impression of the middle school from his or her experiences in the classroom. It is important for students to treat all staff members, including substitute teachers, with the same respect they would afford their own teachers.

TRANSPORTATION

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE BY CAR

It is very busy at drop-off and pick-up time. Please be patient and cautious during these busy times. The upper parking lot will be used for OMS faculty and SHS student parking only. There will be no parent drop off or pick-up in the upper parking lot. Please remember that students can be dropped off as early as 7am. If you enter the front parking lot for drop off, please pull your car all the way to the second crosswalk. There are two morning entrances for students, and both crosswalks lead to an entrance. At the end of the school day, you may pull into the drop off/pick up area of our front parking lot. You may want to use the curb along Cushing and Simpson streets. You may also want to consider a safe meeting point that is not directly in front of the building.

BICYCLES

In good weather you may decide to ride your bicycle or scooter to school. Please be sure to lock your bicycle or scooter to the bike racks in the front of the building. The School cannot be responsible for your valuables.

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND GUIDELINES – BUSSING

The Stoughton Schools will transport students on a daily basis according to the policy and guidelines listed below.

Student handbooks for elementary, middle and high schools outline the responsibilities of the students with regards to their conduct on the bus. Violations of the rules or conduct outlined in the handbook may result in temporary or permanent suspension of bus riding privileges. No refunds will be issued for students suspended from bus services.

Parents/guardians are responsible for students between the time they leave the residence and the time they enter the bus and again once the student leaves the bus.

Student transportation is a privilege, not a right, and is dependent upon the student's good behavior while on the bus.

ELIGIBILITY

1. The Stoughton Public Schools follow the State requirements for transporting students, which is any student in grades kindergarten through sixth, who lives more than 2 miles from the school they are entitled to attend, shall be eligible for transportation at no cost. *(MGL., c71, sec 68)
2. Students in grades kindergarten through sixth living less than 2 miles from their school and in grades 7 through twelve are not eligible for free transportation.
3. Mileage is determined by the "Transfinder Pro" transportation software system. This is a scheduling and routing package that contains a GPS (Global Positioning Satellite) system to determine mileage. Transfinder measures from the midpoint of a lot, along the street of the listed address to the assigned school.
4. Massachusetts General Law and the Department of Education define the route to a school as a "commonly traveled route" and the distance between the residence and the school is a "walkable distance" not necessarily the route a bus may take.
5. Students with temporary medical disabilities who are not eligible, or who require additional assistance, may be approved for transportation on a short-term basis with permission of the building principal and upon the presentation of a doctor's note. Students will be assigned to the special education vehicles that have monitors.
6. Elementary "out of district" students are not eligible for transportation.

ROUTES AND STOPS

1. Bus routes and their corresponding stops are developed initially through the Transfinder system. The route is driven and each stop checked using a set of criteria (see enclosed). The routes and stops are forwarded to the Stoughton Police Department for review, and changes are made and recorded in Transfinder.

2. Drivers are given their routes prior to the start of school in order that they may be driven and to make suggestions for any changes.
3. Once the routes are finalized, a postcard is sent to all students assigned to buses listing their bus number, stop location and times. These postcards serve as bus passes for the first three days of school.
4. Routes and stop times are listed on the postcards and are “estimates.” Weather, traffic, the number of stops on a route, and the number of students at a stop effect pick-up/drop-off. Students must be at the stop at least “10 minutes” prior to the scheduled pick-up times. Buses will not wait for students.
5. The Stoughton Public Schools responsibility for a student begins once the student boards the bus or enters the school property. Parents have the responsibility of supervising and transporting students until they board the bus in the morning and once they are discharged from the bus in the afternoon.
6. Students riding the bus will be picked up and dropped off at their assigned stop five days a week.
7. If a change of stop or bus is requested and approved, this will become the new assigned stop five days a week *for pick-up and drop off*. Requests to change stops or buses must be submitted to the building principal in writing, stating the reasons for the request and the name, address and telephone number of the person who will now be responsible for the student prior to boarding or after leaving the bus.
8. When a change of location of a stop is requested, students/parents/guardians may recommend a new location but this does not imply the ultimate decision is theirs. The new location must meet the criteria outlined in the bus stop determination worksheet.” On a case by case basis new location requests will be reviewed by the School Department and all decisions are final.”
9. Kindergarten students will not be dropped off at a bus stop unless a parent, responsible adult or older student is there to escort them home. If no one is present to meet the student, they will be returned to their school.
10. The same buses transporting the elementary students are used to transport secondary students. Due to time constraints, the number of stops on secondary routes are reduced and secondary students may be required to walk further to their assigned stops. Students may be required to walk up to one-half mile to their scheduled bus stop.
11. In certain situations, schools may remain open but sidewalks may not be completely clear. Under those circumstances, the Superintendent of Schools may implement the use of the “snow emergency stops.” These stops may be used by “walkers” who will then be transported to school.
12. Maintaining the sidewalks and roadways is the responsibility of the Public Works Department and they should be notified for repairs or maintenance.
13. Bus drivers do not determine stops, nor can they change stops. Drivers will not allow students not assigned to a route onto a bus. Drivers cannot, by law, drive a bus with student numbers greater than its capacity, except in a very specific case of emergency and then only at the direction of the School Department. Drivers will not allow non-students (including parents) onto buses.

Questions or comments about routes or stops should be forwarded to your student’s school administrative office.

PAY AND RIDE

1. Those students who are not eligible for transportation may “at the discretion of the School Committee” pay to ride a bus. “See eligibility requirements above.”
2. Pay and ride will be a self-sustaining program, i.e.: the students riding the buses must cover the cost of the bus.
3. Pay and ride students will be assigned to “existing” stops unless unusual circumstances are present.
4. Pay and ride students will receive their pass once an application has been completed and the fee is paid in full. “Students cannot ride buses without a pass.” Students who submitted applications prior to the deadline will receive postcards showing their stops with the “approximate” pick-up and drop-off times. This postcard will serve as their pass for the first three days of school. Permanent passes will be issued during those three days. If a student does not have a pass, they will be given one day to acquire a new pass from their school office. On the second and subsequent days, if the student still does not have a pass, they will not be allowed to ride the bus.
5. Replacement passes are available at the administrative office of your child’s school for a fee of \$2.00. Students submitting late applications will be placed on a waiting list in the order that they are received. After the first week of school, students will be placed on buses if there is space on the bus and there is time available on the route.
6. Fees for the pay and ride program will be set by the School Committee.
7. The annual fee per child will be determined by the School Committee. Full non-refundable payment, in the form of credit card, bank check, money order or cash, is due on or before a date determined by the School Committee, in your child’s school office.

8. To pay by credit card please access the school store at: www.parentonline.net and click on the link labeled Transportation. Credit card payments will only be accepted through a date determined by School Committee. All payments made after that date must be in the form of bank check, money order or cash.
9. No payments will be refunded.
10. The School Committee reserves the right to make adjustments to the annual fee at any time during the year, even if the school year has started. In the event the School Committee elects to raise the fee during the school year, you will be notified of the amount of the fee increase, the effective date of the increase, and the date by which the additional payment is due. If the additional payment is not received by the due date, your child will not be allowed to ride the bus after the effective date. Also, in the event you elect not to pay the additional fee, or otherwise do not pay the additional fee, and your child's transportation privileges are terminated, you are not entitled to a refund on any fees already paid.
11. Applications are available at the administrative office of the school your child attends and by going on-line to <http://www.stoughtonschools.com/Merchant2/merchant.mv> and clicking on the link labeled Transportation. Applications should be completed and returned to the office of the school your child will be attending in September, by the date noted above.
12. Students who meet federal low-income guidelines will have their pay and ride transportation fees waived. Applications shall still be submitted and all other transportation procedures.

LATE BUS

1. The decision to provide a "late bus" is solely at the discretion of the School Committee.
2. Plans for transporting eligible students as well as pay and ride students do not encompass plans for a late bus, and there is no entitlement to a late bus, regardless of whether your child is an eligible student or a pay and ride student.
3. Late bus service may be instituted or discontinued at any time by vote of the School Committee.
4. Fees for the late bus may be charged at the discretion of the School Committee.

BUS RULES

1. The driver and/or bus supervisor is in full charge of the bus students. He or she will have the right to assign students to specific seats within the bus and shall accept as his or her responsibility the obligation to report to the Assistant Principal the names of any students who seriously misbehave. There is to be no smoking aboard any school bus at any time. This is a requirement of the state laws.
2. Possession and/or use of weapons, controlled substance or alcoholic beverages aboard a bus is subject to the same disciplinary action and policy as applies to possession or use in school.
3. Windows and doors are not to be opened or closed except by the bus driver or supervisor. At no time are objects of any kind or size to be thrown within the bus or through the window or door.
4. Do not enter a bus once it is in motion. There is to be no movement within the bus once having been seated.
5. Improper language is not to be tolerated and shall be proper cause for a report to the Assistant Principal. Shouting and/or screaming is not allowed and is to be regarded as a basis for disciplinary action; radios and/or other electronic devices are not to be brought aboard buses and, if present on the vehicle, are subject to confiscation at the discretion of the driver.
6. The following are to be considered infractions of the rules during transport for which students may be reported and disciplinary action invoked: refusing to obey the driver, fighting, lighting matches or cigarette lighters, hanging out a window, spitting, possession or use of a weapon, disobeying a bus monitor, bothering others, or any other behavior which distracts the driver from the safe operation of the vehicle and jeopardizes the safety of all passengers.
7. Damage to the school bus shall be considered to be the same as damage to school property; those who deface or otherwise destroy such property are to be held responsible for its repair or replacement.
8. Under no circumstances will students be allowed to transfer to another bus. Discretion will be afforded by building administrators for established special groups and individual requests. A student may be allowed to transfer to another bus for baby-sitting and emergency purposes provided that the parents send a note of request to the Assistant Principal including telephone numbers of persons to be contacted in case of emergency. The Assistant Principal will forward the request to the bus driver by use of the standard form. Parental notes for this purpose are to be kept in the building and, as necessary, a log sheet maintained of issued approvals.
9. Students are reminded that a violation of this code of conduct may be cause for suspension and/or exclusion from school.

TEMPORARY STUDENT TRANSFERS FROM ONE BUS TO ANOTHER

1. Transfers will only be granted on a space-available basis. If space is not available, it is the parents' responsibility to provide transportation.
2. Transfers will be granted by the school administrator or their designee for family emergencies, baby-sitting and/or parental vacation. These requests must be submitted in writing at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance.

If the transfer is rejected, the parent/guardian requesting said transfer may appeal, in writing, to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee. The Superintendent's decision is final.

BUS EVACUATION DRILLS AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

These are situations which require evacuation:

1. Fire or imminent danger of fire.
2. Unsafe position due to an accident, mechanical failure or human failure.
 - a) In the path of a train or on railroad tracks.
 - b) Near a body of water when the bus might roll or near a cliff.
 - c) When the driver cannot see the path of other oncoming vehicles.
 - d) When the bus cannot be seen by other oncoming vehicles.

These are several ways to evacuate a bus:

1. Everyone exits through the rear emergency door.
2. Everyone exits through the front entrance door.
3. The front half of the bus goes forward; the rear half exits through the rear door.
4. The use of kick-out windshields and pop-out windows (if available) should be shown in case all doors are blocked. Drivers should know how to work them. The procedure will be demonstrated to students during Evacuation Drill.

All drills will be supervised by the Principal or by persons assigned to act in her place.

1. Students need to pay close attention to whomever is conducting the evacuation. Whether it is a drill or a real emergency, everyone needs to listen to directions and follow them without panic, pushing or shoving.
2. In an emergency the driver might be hurt or unconscious and unable to direct students. It is important that students know how to do the following:
 - a) Turn off ignition switch.
 - b) Set emergency brake.
 - c) Summon help if needed.
 - d) Use fire axe or kick-out windows.
 - e) Set up flags or flares.
 - f) Open and close doors, account for all students.
 - g) Help small children off the bus.
3. Getting students off the bus safely in the shortest time possible and in a calm and orderly manner is the most important part of an evacuation.
4. Do not take your books or any other belongings, except for a pocket- book and money. Be concerned with your personal safety not your belongings.
5. When you leave the bus in an "emergency drill," move at least 100 feet from the bus and remain there in a group until you are given further instructions by the leader.

All students will be given an opportunity to participate in a bus evacuation drill, including those who will only ride the bus on special field trips.

VACATION STATEMENT

Families are encouraged to take vacations during the regularly scheduled school vacations and holidays. However, we do recognize that circumstances may cause families to be away from home during the time that school is in session.

Introduction to new material occurs daily, these absences will severely affect your progress. All students are required by the State Department of Education to pass the MCAS (Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System) test in grade 10 in order to receive a Stoughton Public School diploma from Stoughton High School. Therefore, the responsibility of

learning new material presented during this absence will belong to you and your parents since it is not always possible for the school to provide introductory material in advance; however, reinforcement material shall be provided upon the student's return to school. Incomplete work due to vacation or poor quality of work/testing may adversely impact term grade. In addition, vacation time during scheduled school time counts as absence time.

The following procedure will be followed: Parents are requested to give at least one week's written notice to the Principal and your child's teachers stating the dates of the anticipated absence. Students will be responsible to complete class and home assignments missed due to absence. Students will need to stay after school upon their return to school for support of the curriculum including testing.

VOLUNTEERS/CHAPERONES

Massachusetts State Law requires every volunteer to fill out a CORI before he or she can participate in our volunteer programs, classroom activities or field trips. A CORI must be completed every year. You are encouraged to fill one out in September so that you are covered for the year.

The following is information with regards to the finger-printing policy for the Stoughton Public Schools.

Parents who help out at the school and do not have direct, unmonitored contact with children will not be required to undergo fingerprinting but you must have a current CORI on file.

In addition to a current CORI form, volunteers for daytime and overnight field trips will be required to undergo fingerprinting since they may have the opportunity for direct and unmonitored contact with children.

MorphoTrust USA has been contracted by the State to conduct fingerprinting. Registration for a fingerprinting appointment may be made online by visiting: <http://www.identogo.com/FP/Massachusetts> and select Online Scheduling. Appointments may also be made over the phone at (866) 349-8130. You will need to provide Stoughton Public Schools DESE Organization Code: 02850000. There is a fee of \$35.00 associated with this process.

Fingerprints will not be taken without acceptable identification presented at your fingerprinting appointment. All documents must be verifiable and unexpired with an identifiable photo, the applicant's name and date of birth. The following are considered acceptable forms:

- Driver's license from any U.S. state or territory
- Valid State Identification Card from any U.S. state or territory
- U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport Card

Once fingerprinting has been completed, individuals will be provided with a fingerprinting receipt which can be brought to the school so a copy can be submitted to the Superintendent's office which will confirm your fingerprints have been captured.

CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT

We recognize that a child's education is a partnership between home and school. Parents/guardians are the first and foremost educators of their children. Their role as educators is critical to the development of their children's positive attitudes toward school.

Responsibility of Parents:

1. To become familiar with the Student and Parent Handbook and its policies
2. To discuss the contents of this handbook with their children
3. To work with school personnel to assist their children in developing self-discipline
4. To contact their child's teacher or building administrators should a concern arise
5. To help in the enforcement of any disciplinary procedure
6. To make appointments when a conference is needed

GROUNDS FOR STUDENT DISCIPLINE

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

You have the duty to be an honest and responsible person. Your honesty about any situation is the MOST IMPORTANT factor in any decision. HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.

1. You may not forge any note, pass, academic report, or other official paper work for yourself or for another student.
2. You may not cheat on any quiz, test, or other academic exercise. Dishonesty and cheating deprive you of your most prized possession--your good name and reputation.
3. Without indicating that it is copied, you may not copy from published library sources or someone else's paper and submit this to your teacher for credit as your own work.
4. Allowing others to copy is also considered cheating.
5. Plagiarism is a form of cheating.

Any student who is proven to have cheated on any academic assignment will receive no credit. Parent(s) will be notified by the involved teacher.

DRESS CODE/APPEARANCE

The Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School is an academic institution. It is expected that all persons associated with this school will dress in a manner which is appropriate for a formal educational environment.

The Stoughton School Committee Student Dress Code Policy can be found under "Student Dress Code" in the policy section of this handbook.

The Principal or his/her designee is authorized to:

- ☐ have students change their clothing in school and/or
- ☐ send the offending student home to change their clothing
- ☐ take disciplinary action if clothing or jewelry is determined to be offensive, disruptive, and/or unsafe;
- ☐ subject repeat offenders to disciplinary action

The final decision on the appropriateness of any student's attire rests with the school administration.

CORRIDOR BEHAVIOR AND PASSES

When you are walking in the corridors, keep to the right. No shoving, pushing, playing; no banging, slamming, or kicking of locker doors is allowed. Do not yell or run in the corridor. Talk to friends as you walk along so that you do not block the flow of traffic. Unless you are changing classes or going to lunch, you must have a valid, signed pass in your possession. This pass will state your name, destination, time, and the teacher's signature. While changing classes, you are expected to be on time for the next class. If you are late for any class for a valid reason, you should have a pass from the person who prevented you from being on time. If you arrive late to class without a pass, the teacher will refer your name to the office.

CELL PHONES & ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We understand that students have cell phones for before and after school use. All cell phones must remain inside lockers and turned off during the entire school day. This includes watches and other items that function as cell phones. All classrooms and offices are equipped with telephones. Students and parents should use the school telephones should it be necessary to communicate during the school day.

Students may only use school-issued and/or school-approved technology (computers, lap-tops, tablets) at school. Students are not allowed to bring their own devices to school without prior approval from administration. Students may bring their own headphones to school for classroom use on approved, school issued technology and with permission of the teacher. Students may not use personal headphones for personal use at any time during the school day.

UNACCEPTABLE ITEMS

ANY ITEM THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED DANGEROUS AND/OR THAT MAY INTERFERE WITH THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IS NOT ALLOWED IN SCHOOL.

Students are not allowed to have bags of any kind on their person during the school day; this includes backpacks, book-bags, drawstring bags, and fanny packs. Students are allowed to have pencil cases with their school supplies and to use a small bag to transport gym clothes to and from the gym only. Unapproved electronic devices, including cell phones, tobacco in any form or paraphernalia including lighters, all forms of nicotine-containing products and nicotine delivery

devices, snaps, stink bombs, laser pointers (for non-educational use), and any other item which may be considered dangerous or which interfere with the learning environment are not allowed in school. Photos and videos are not acceptable at school unless authorized for an event.

TOBACCO

Tobacco products in any form and paraphernalia are not allowed in school, on school property or at school-related activities as mandated by the Massachusetts State Legislature, through the Education Reform Act of 1993.

VAPING DEVICES

Vaping devices (vapes, e-cigarettes) and paraphernalia are not allowed in school, on school property, or at school related events. These devices have the capability of carrying and delivering a variety of harmful and illegal substances. Vaping devices will be treated as drug paraphernalia. Possession and/or use will be considered a Type IV offense.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

It is nice to arrive in the cafeteria to a clean table. The cafeteria staff works very hard to prepare meals that you will enjoy and to keep the lunchroom clean. There are several lunch periods. It is important to leave tables and floors at the end of each lunch spotless, without paper or crumbs. To make the cafeteria a pleasant and safe place for everyone, we expect sensible and responsible behavior in the cafeteria. Lunch price: \$3.00

Cafeteria Rules:

- ☐ You must enter in an orderly manner. Please be patient in the lunch line. Pushing, crowding or cutting into the line will not help you get your lunch any faster.
- ☐ Please be polite to the cafeteria staff, use proper table manners, and enjoy the time with your friends by talking quietly at your table.
- ☐ Please stay in the seat you have chosen. Directions will be given as to the maximum number of people to be seated at one table. Wandering around makes the aisles between tables very crowded.
- ☐ As you do in the classroom, please show respect and listen to the team of teachers who supervise the cafeteria.
- ☐ You must have the permission of a teacher in the cafeteria if you need to leave the cafeteria for any reason.
- ☐ Do not touch the food or belongings of others. This is very important because what one person thinks is a joke can make another person very angry.
- ☐ If you are asked to help clean up, you are expected to do so.
- ☐ Eating in the lunchroom is a privilege. If you are uncooperative or disrespectful during this time, you will lose the privilege of eating lunch with your friends for a certain number of days.
- ☐ You may purchase lunch here or bring lunch from home. Food from take-out restaurants should not be delivered to the school at any time.

BULLYING/HARASSMENT

The O'Donnell Middle School is a place where everyone is accepted and has the right to feel safe and a sense of belonging. As a school community, we are committed to each student's success in a learning environment free from discrimination, violence, bullying, and harassment. These types of offenses will not be tolerated. More information on the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, the Anti-Harassment Policy, and the Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in the last section of this handbook.

FIGHTING

From time to time, we all become angry with someone. By far the worst way to handle anger is by fighting. The best way to handle a problem with another student is to get help from an adult. Believe it or not, counselors and Principals are experts at helping solve problems of anger between students. You can help problems or anger by not spreading gossip and by taking the positive step to alerting an adult of potential problems. Seek help from your counselor or the administrators. Fighting on school grounds is so dangerous and disruptive that suspension may result even on the first offense. Depending upon the circumstances, fighting may be considered assault and battery and be reported to the Stoughton Police.

GRAFFITI AND DEFACEMENT OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any student who defaces school property will be subject to disciplinary action. "Graffiti" means any inscription, word, figure, design, painting, writing, drawing or carving that is marked, etched, scratched, drawn, painted, or otherwise applied to school property. Offensive graffiti may constitute a violation of federal Civil Rights law. Examples of offensive graffiti include, but are not limited to, all derogatory words or symbols associated with any ethnic, racial, religious or socially recognized group.

All instances of graffiti will be reported to the building administration. The degree of discipline for defacement of school property/graffiti will be based upon the seriousness of the incident (refer to discipline section of the student handbook). In addition, any graffiti of an offensive nature will be reported to the Stoughton Police Department and possible police action may be taken against the individual(s) involved in the incident.

DRUGS, ALCOHOL/ WEAPONS/ASSAULT ON SCHOOL PERSONNEL

Possession or transfer of any weapon (firearm, knife, explosive, firecracker, finger knives, chains, jewelry or any other object capable of being used to harm or threaten an individual or that could be used as a weapon) is strictly prohibited.

Possession, sale, purchase, consumption or use, or the attempt to possess, sell, buy, or consume any drug, alcohol or drug paraphernalia, is also strictly prohibited. In accordance with the Education Reform Act of 1993, any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school-related events, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in the chapter 94C, may be subject to expulsion from the school by the principal. Also, any student who batters and/or assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school related event, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from school by the principal.

FELONY CHARGE OR CONVICTION

Effective April 4, 1994 Chapter 380 of the Acts of 1993 allows the principal to 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 welfare of the school. The statute also allows the principal to expel a student who has been convicted; adjudicated or admitted guilt to a felony or felony delinquency if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

DEGREE OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE

TEACHER OR OFFICE SESSIONS/DETENTIONS

Students will receive a 24-hour notice of after school session for academic assistance or behavior. However, if a teacher makes contact with a parent/guardian then the student is responsible to stay that day. This form will need to be signed by parent/guardian and returned the next school day or the teacher/Assistant Principal will call the parent.

You may be assigned a session for behaving in such a way that it causes disturbances in and around school. Sessions are assigned for not following school rules. Sessions take priority over all other activities. However, religious activities, medical appointments or counseling appointments verified by a parental note will result in a postponement of your session. The teacher will call the student's home before sending the student to the office for not attending the teacher's session. Failure to stay for a session could result in additional disciplinary action.

RESTORATIVE DISCIPLINE & DIVERSIONARY PROGRAM

When you make a mistake, you should always try to learn from that mistake. If you are referred to the office for an incident of poor behavior, you may be given a restorative consequence as an alternative to other, more traditional, consequences. Restorative consequences are designed to teach you about the impact of your poor behavior – on yourself and on others. You may be assigned to attend and/or assist in certain school activities. You may be asked to assist a teacher, the nurse, or a custodian. An essay may be assigned as part of any discipline action, with the intent that the student will use the essay to reflect on his/her more positive actions in the future. A restorative conference to address the impact of certain poor behavior may be held instead of traditional disciplinary hearings and punitive consequences. These conferences will include the administration and counseling staff, as well as other parties who have been impacted by the negative behavior (teachers, students, family members, etc.)

For instances involving alcohol, tobacco, vaping devices, or drugs, a Substances Diversionary Program may be used in place of the more traditional, solely punitive consequences outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

ACADEMIC/BEHAVIOR CENTER

Academic/Behavior Center (ABC) assignment occurs when your behavior is such that it becomes necessary to remove you from class on a temporary basis. Assignments will be given to the students in this program. Counselors will check with students when they are assigned to the ABC. Assignment to ABC for one to three periods (less than a full school day) is a detention. Assignment to ABC for an entire school day is an in-school suspension.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

Any student who continually fails to adhere to the Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School Code of Conduct and may be placed on "social exclusion" by the school administration. Students on social exclusion must leave school grounds immediately after dismissal and are not allowed to participate in extra-curricular activities and events (after-school clubs and/or athletics, school dances, field trips).

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION

Out-of-school suspension occurs when you are suspended from school and required to remain at home. You are then restricted from the school building and grounds and may not participate in any school activity or sport while on an out-of-school suspension.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION

Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. Students will be given an opportunity to hear the charges against them, present their side of the incident, have a parent/guardian present for an informal hearing with the principal or assistant principals prior to a suspension. Students on short-term suspensions will be able to make-up assignments and coursework missed during the period of their removal from school. Please see "Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions" below for details regarding notification and due process rights.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H3/4

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

Long-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in one school year. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) school days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, this will also be considered a long-term suspension. Please see "Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions" below for details regarding notification and due process rights. M.G.L. c. 71 §37H3/4

EXPULSION

The most severe form of discipline, an expulsion is a permanent exclusion from school. Some infractions of the code of conduct are so severe that they warrant consideration of exclusion upon the first offense. Under Chapter 71, Section 37H and 37H1/2 of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Principal has the authority to suspend or expel a student for possession of a dangerous weapon, selling or possessing drugs, assault on a staff member, or being charged or convicted of a felony. At all levels of the disciplinary process, the school system will attempt to involve the parents and/or legal guardian.

Where conduct prohibited by the discipline code is also a possible criminal offense, the administration may contact the police and/or institute criminal charges.

Special needs students are expected to abide by all facets of the discipline code. Discipline of special needs students will be a cooperative effort between the administration and the special education department and done in compliance with the student's IEP.

PROCEDURE FOR EXPULSION

The Principal will conduct any investigation and/or meetings which he/she deems appropriate. The student will be informed in writing as soon as practicable of the charges against him/her and will be given the opportunity to rebut the charges and present any relevant information to the Principal at a hearing, provided however that the student

may have representation along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, at his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student. A student who has been expelled shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have 10 calendar days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her 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 expulsion.

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS

SHORT-TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's in-school or out-of-school suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student will be given oral and written notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or assistant principals. The notice of hearing will be provided orally and in writing to both the student and the parent in English and the primary language of the home. There will be a minimum of two (2) attempts made and documented to contact the parent/guardian to attend the suspension hearing prior to holding the suspension hearing without the parent/guardian. The hearing is designed to discuss the potential consequences for the disciplinary offense. At the hearing, the student and parent/guardian will have the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident. It is strongly encouraged that the parent/guardian attend and/or participate in the hearing. The parent/guardian and student have the right to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. The principal or assistant principal will inform the parent/guardian and student orally and in writing of a decision on whether to suspend after the hearing has concluded. The decision may be made immediately at the conclusion of the hearing or the principal or assistant principal may take matter under advisement. If the decision after the hearing results in an in-school or out-of-school suspension, you have the right to appeal this decision in writing to the O'Donnell Middle School Principal, Matthew Colantonio, within ten (10) calendar days of receiving this letter or request an extension for filing for up to seven (7) calendar days. The suspension will remain in effect unless and until the principal decides to reverse the determination on appeal. The O'Donnell Middle School Office is located at 211 Cushing Street, Stoughton, MA 02072. The student will have the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The principal is the final authority in all matters that involve short term disciplinary sanctions. M.G.L. c. 71 §37H^{3/4}

LONG-TERM DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, the student will be given oral and written notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or assistant principals. The notice of hearing will be provided orally and in writing to both the student and the parent in English and the primary language of the home. There will be a minimum of two (2) attempts made and documented to contact the parent/guardian to attend the suspension hearing prior to holding the suspension hearing without the parent/guardian. The hearing is designed to discuss the potential consequences for the disciplinary offense. At the hearing, the student and parent/guardian will have the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present student's explanation of the alleged incident. It is strongly encouraged that the parent/guardian attend and/or participate in the hearing. The parent/guardian and student have the right to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. In advance of the hearing, the student shall have the opportunity to review their record and the documents upon which may be used in making a determination to suspend or not.

The student has the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense. The student has the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district. The student may make a statement on their behalf, but may not be compelled to do so. The parent/guardian and student have the right to request that the hearing be audio recorded and to receive a copy of the recording upon request. The principal or assistant principal will inform the parent/guardian and student orally and in writing of a decision on whether to suspend after the hearing has concluded. The decision may be made immediately at the conclusion of the hearing or the principal or assistant principal may take matter under advisement. If the decision after the hearing results in a long-term suspension, you have the right to appeal this decision in writing to the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. John Marcus within ten (10) calendar days of receiving this letter or request an extension for filing for up to seven (7) calendar days. If the notice of appeal is not timely, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or allow the appeal at his/her discretion. The Superintendent will hold the appeal hearing within three (3) school days of the request, unless the student or parent/guardian request and extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the Superintendent shall grant. The Superintendent will make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing and will send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing. As part of the hearing process, the Superintendent will notify all parties that an audio recording will be made of the proceeding and will be provided to student and parent/guardian upon request. During the hearing the student will have all the rights afforded them as part of the principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing, which meets the same requirements of the principal's determination for a long-term suspension. The suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the determination on appeal. The Stoughton Public Schools Offices are located at 232 Pearl Street, Stoughton, MA 02072. The student will have the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. In the case of a long-term suspension, a

student may not attend regular schooling during this suspension; however, O'Donnell Middle School will provide the student with an alternative educational setting in the Extended School Day Program. M.G.L. c. 71 §37H^{3/4}

EMERGENCY REMOVAL

When a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or substantially disrupts the order of the school, and in the principal's or assistant principal's judgement, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption, a student may be emergency removed for a period of up to two (2) school days at which time a suspension hearing will be setup to discuss the incident and allow the student to present an explanation and to dispute the charges. The principal/assistant principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation. At the time of the two-day emergency removal, the student will be given oral and written notice of the offense with which he/she is charged and an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or assistant principals. The notice of hearing will be provided orally and in writing to both the student and the parent in English and the primary language of the home. There will be a minimum of two (2) attempts made and documented to contact the parent/guardian to afford them the opportunity to attend the suspension hearing, which will occur prior to the expiration of the two (2) school days, before holding the suspension hearing without the parent/guardian, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal/assistant principal, student and parent/guardian. The hearing is designed to discuss the potential consequences for the disciplinary offense. At the hearing, the student and parent/guardian will have the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident. It is strongly encouraged that the parent/guardian attend and/or participate in the hearing. The parent/guardian and student have the right to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. The principal or assistant principal will inform the parent/guardian and student orally and in writing of a decision on whether to suspend after the hearing has concluded. The decision may be made immediately at the conclusion of the hearing or the principal or assistant principal may take matter under advisement. The principal or assistant principal will render a decision orally on the same day of the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, consistent with the principal's requirements for notice for short or long term suspensions, as applicable. If the decision after the hearing results in a suspension, you have the right to appeal this decision in writing to the O'Donnell Middle School Principal, Matthew Colantonio, within ten (10) calendar days of receiving this letter or request an extension for filing for up to seven (7) calendar days. The suspension will remain in effect unless and until the principal decides to reverse the determination on appeal. The O'Donnell Middle School Office is located at 211 Cushing Street, Stoughton, MA 02072. The student will have the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The principal is the final authority in all matters that involve short term disciplinary sanctions. M.G.L. c. 71 §37H^{3/4}

Where the student is long-term suspended/expelled in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the long-term suspension / expulsion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For long-term suspensions / expulsions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the long-term suspension / expulsion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. For long-term suspension / expulsions imposed by the school committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the long-term suspension / expulsion. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76 §17, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, §37H1/2.

When a student receives a long-term suspension/expulsion under the provisions of this section and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the Superintendent of the Stoughton Public Schools shall notify the superintendent of the receiving school of the reasons for the pupil's long-term suspension/expulsion.

SCHOOL-WIDE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PLAN

Students on short-term suspensions will be able to make-up assignments and coursework missed during the period of their removal from school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements. Services will be provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards for all students. Parents and students will be notified of their opportunity to receive services, and arrange for those services, at the time the student is expelled or placed on a long-term suspension. Upon selection of an educational service, the principal will facilitate and verify enrollment of the student.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, §37H1/2, §37H3/4

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES (IEP / Section 504)

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Federal Law and Regulations require that additional provisions be made for students with disabilities. The principal shall notify the Administrator of Special Education of the suspendable offense of a student with either an IEP or a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.

School personnel may exclude a student with a disability from school for a disciplinary violation for not more than 10 consecutive days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to students without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than ten days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change in placement) equivalent to discipline imposed on students without disabilities for the same offense. After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her placement for ten school days in the same year, during any subsequent days of removal, the child must continue to receive services that enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and the child must receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the district) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine if:

- a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability;
or
- b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP.

The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the district; the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that a condition in either paragraph (i) or (ii) of this section was met. The TEAM will make a finding, a, manifestation determination, as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her disability condition, conduct a functional behavioral assessment if appropriate, and modify or amend the IEP to provide special education services during the suspension, or to include a behavioral intervention plan. If the district, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must either:

- a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the district had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child; or
- b) If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and

Except as provided in 34 CFR 300.530(g) of this section, return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the district agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

There are some special circumstances in which the district may unilaterally remove a student and place them in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. Specifically, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child:

- 1. Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district;
- 2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district; or
- 3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district.

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR 300.504. The building principal will notify the

Administrator of Special Education; then will notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as required by law as to the course of action. Subsequent amendments to state or federal law will supersede contrary handbook provisions

A student not yet eligible for Special Education may be protected under IDEA 2004 regulations if the district can be deemed to have had knowledge that the student had a disability. The district must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
2. The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to Sec. 300.300 through 300.311; or
3. The teacher of the child, or other personnel of the district, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

The district would not be deemed to have knowledge if:

1. The parent of the child:
 - a) Has not allowed an evaluation of the child pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300 through 300.311; or
 - b) Has refused services under IDEA; or
2. The child has been evaluated in accordance with Sec. 300.300 through 300.311 and determined to not be a child with a disability under this part.

If the district does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability (in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section) prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors. If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures under 34 CFR 300.530, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.

Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the agency and information provided by the parents, the agency must provide special education and related services in accordance with this part, including the requirements of 34 CFR 300.530 through 300.536 and IDEA 2004 section 612(a)(1)(A).

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement in this context or the manifestation determination under or a district that believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals. See <http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea>

OFFENSE CATEGORY TABLE

Type of Offense	Some Examples of Behavior	Typical Consequences
Type I (less serious)	Hall pass violation, class disruption, failure to stay for a detention, tardiness to class, disrespectful behavior, possession of cell phone, IPOD, or any other electronic device during school hours, violation of dress code, misconduct on school bus	1 st offense: Teacher Session/Office Warning, parent contact 2 nd offense: Parent Conference with Teacher/Office 3 rd offense: Office Action (Restorative Conference, Extended Session, ABC)
Type II (serious)	Disturbing school function, possession of tobacco products, use of cell phone, IPOD or any other electronic device during school hours, insubordination, excessive unexcused tardiness or unexcused absences	1 st offense: Extended Session, parent contact 2 nd offense: Restorative Conference; ABC 1-3 days 3 rd offense: Restorative Conference; Social Exclusion; OSS 1-3 days
Type III (more serious)	Willful, repeated misbehavior, verbal abuse of classmate or staff member, actions which may cause injury to others, actions which may cause injury to others, violation of "Acceptable Use of Technology Policy," stealing, truancy, defacing school or staff property, intimidation of classmate(s) or staff member	1 st offense: Restorative Conference; ABC/OSS 1-3 days, parent contact 2 nd offense: Restorative Conference; OSS 3 or more days 3 rd offense: Restorative Conference; Social Exclusion; OSS 3 or more days
Type IV (very serious)	Gross misconduct, violation of district-wide Bullying and Harassment Intervention Plan, fighting, serious physical assault, possession of anything deemed a dangerous weapon, tampering with fire equipment, observed with or in possession of drugs/alcohol or drug/alcohol related paraphernalia or items purported to be either drugs, alcohol, or any illegal substance, on school property, under the influence of a controlled substance-	<i>Any behavior deemed a Type IV offense could result in out-of-school suspension for at least 3-10 days.</i> Also, it should be noted that a Type IV offense can result in: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hearing with the Principal for possible long-term discipline 2. Referral to Stoughton Police Department 3. Restitution for destruction, damage or theft of school property

DISTRICT & SCHOOL POLICIES

Acceptable Use Policy

SC Policy: IJNDA

The Stoughton Public School Computer Network (the "SPSNet") is established for the educational and professional use of students, faculty, and staff ("Users"). This technology and Acceptable Use Policy (the "Policy") is intended to govern users with respect to SPSNet and the Internet. In addition to this Policy, the Stoughton Public School District ("the District") regulates access to and use of the SPSNet by principles consistent with the educational mission of the district, and the rules and expectations published elsewhere (i.e., Student, Parent, or Faculty Handbook). Users are expected to conduct themselves on the SPSNet in an appropriate fashion. Users who violate this Policy will have their SPSNet privileges revoked and may be subject to further disciplinary action, including suspension or dismissal. The District may also report offenders to applicable law enforcement agencies.

The SPSNet provides access to the Internet. While the District has taken precautions to restrict access to controversial materials on the Internet, it is impossible to control what materials may be accessed. The District believes that accessing valuable information and interaction available on the Internet advances our educational goals. The smooth operation of the SPSNet relies upon the proper conduct of all Users.

SPSNet – Terms and Conditions (Acceptable Use and Illegal Actions)

Scope and Authority

The SPSNet includes all hardware, software, and network services used by the school community, including third party services that act as extensions of the District's internal network.

Privileges

The use of the SPSNet is a privilege, not a right. The use of an account must be consistent with educational objectives of the District. The Technology department in collaboration with the Superintendent's office deems what is inappropriate use and will refer any such conduct to the administration. The District, in its sole discretion, reserves the right to determine what conduct constitutes a violation of this Policy, and the discipline for any such violation. In addition, use of any other Internet connected resource must comply with the rules appropriate for that resource. Transmission of any material in violation of any U.S. or state law or regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, material protected by copyright, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade practice. Use of the SPSNet for commercial activities, product advertisement, or political lobbying is prohibited. Use of the SPSNet and the Internet must be consistent with this Policy and all policies and practices of the District. Any violations of this Policy and such other policies and practices may result in the suspension or loss of an account, loss of Internet access, or other forms of disciplinary action.

No Expectation of Privacy

The District routinely monitors usage of SPSNet and may review any communications on its systems. The District is able to override all passwords. Users do not have a privacy right in the contents of their computer system, including messages sent, received, or stored on the email systems or in their use of the Internet. Passwords to these systems exist for the benefit of the District. Users should have no expectation that the ability to choose a password for a system in any way limits the ability or right of the District to monitor all activity.

Security

Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many Users. No User may have access to another's files on the SPSNet. The following guidelines will help maintain SPSNet security:

- Users may not allow others access to their account or share passwords.
- Users may not access any account other than their own.
- Inappropriate attempts to access a server as an administrator will result in immediate cancellation of User privileges and/or discipline.
- Any User identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems will be denied access to the SPSNet.
- Any User that believes they have identified a security problem on the Internet must notify the Director of Technology immediately.

Inappropriate Access

Not all of the information freely available on the Internet is reliable or helpful. Users must evaluate the source of the information, as well as the information itself, to determine its appropriateness and usefulness.

The Internet may provide the means to communicate directly with others via "instant or private messaging" programs, video conferencing programs, and other means. There are many places and software technologies that will allow for the free exchange of files between computers over the Internet, such as email. Not all of these methodologies are appropriate for an educational environment as outlined in this document.

Downloading or loading software on District computers is prohibited. There is an enormous quantity and variety of free software available on the Internet. However, widespread downloading of such software on the District's computers has a cumulative negative effect, and can result in the substantial degradation of performance, additional maintenance time, and increased threat of virus infestation.

Users may not use District computers to access any Internet site or sites that contain information that is inappropriate for educational purposes.

Prohibited Access

Users may not access:

- Offensive material – Content that is in poor taste or could be considered obscene; abusive or sexually explicit, racist, illegal, harassing or inflammatory language.
- Dangerous material – Content that provides direction in the construction of explosives or similar devices, the use of firearms, or instruction or practices that could injure the students themselves or others.
- Inappropriate contacts – Materials that can lead to contact with strangers who could potentially threaten the student's health or safety.

Additionally, anyone who inadvertently accesses an inappropriate site must immediately leave the site and report it to his/her instructor or supervisor.

If a student is uncertain as to whether or not a site's material might be considered inappropriate, the student should consult their teacher or a member of the administrative staff for clarification.

Google Apps for Education Acceptable Use

Google Apps for Education is for educational use. Users may use Google Apps for Education for personal use subject to the restrictions below. Additional rules and policies apply when using this resource outside of the District. Student accounts are limited to communication within the District (i.e. faculty, administrators, students, etc.).

Privacy

As the District technology staff and administrators have access to User email accounts for monitoring purposes, users should have no expectation of privacy on the Google Apps for Education system.

Limited Personal Use

Users may use Google Apps for Education tools for personal projects but may not use them for:

- Unlawful activities.
- Inappropriate sexual or other offensive content.
- Threatening another person.
- Misrepresentation of the District or its staff, students, or School Committee members.

Access Restriction

Access to Google Apps for Education is considered a privilege afforded to students and staff, at the discretion of the District. Any User who is identified as a security risk may be denied access. The District maintains the right to immediately withdraw access and use of Google Apps for Education when there is reason to believe that violations of law or District policies have occurred. In such cases, the alleged violation will be referred to the principal or Director of Educational Technology for further investigation and account restoration, suspension, or termination. Due to the rapidly changing technology environment, the District reserves the right to determine that an action or conduct not listed in this Policy document is inappropriate, and to impose disciplinary action accordingly.

Hardware

The District computers are managed in order to allow for Users to use the systems only for educational purposes. Under no circumstances is a User to attempt to modify the existing hardware configuration of a District computer, either by opening the case or changing hardware settings. Users are responsible for reporting any damage discovered on District computers to the appropriate District employee immediately.

Under NO circumstances are Users allowed to connect their own personal computers, laptop or notebook computers or any other electronic device to any of the District's computers or to an internal network, without the expressed written consent of the Director of Educational Technology or his/her designee.

Plagiarism

Information obtained from the Internet as part of a research project must be attributed to its source, using a standard bibliography notation. Users may not violate a copyrighted source, or otherwise use another person's intellectual property without his or her prior approval or proper citation.

User Responsibility

Each User is responsible for all activity that occurs under his/her user account.

Users may not give out any personal information (e.g., address, phone number, user name, passwords, etc.) about themselves or about other people. Users may not use District computers for commercial purposes or political lobbying.

Summary of Prohibited Conduct

Following is a non-exclusive list of the things Users are specifically NOT permitted to do.

- Download any files, especially music and videos, from the Internet, unless the material is free for commercial use and royalty free.
- Use any form of "instant or private messaging" software.
- Install any applications or software onto District computers.
- Disable or modify any running tasks or services.
- Transfer and/or store music files from any personal devices to District systems.
- Play games, unless directed to by an instructor or supervisor for educational purposes, at any time on District computers, including Internet-based games.
- Use proxies or other means to bypass the content filtering systems in place and or defeat any settings that prevent the access of material deemed and flagged as inappropriate by the blocking devices.
- Use remote accessing software or hardware to take control of any network attached device or workstation.
- Remove License Decals or Inventory Control Tags attached to the systems.
- Disrupt systems used by other individuals by connecting to other District networks to perform any illegal or inappropriate act, such as an attempt to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network.
Infringe on or violate copyrights and licenses, or the legal rights of the software producers and network providers.
- Use of another person's user account and any access of credentials.
- Attempt to log onto the network as a system administrator.
- The deliberate infecting of a computer with a "virus", attempts at "hacking" computers using any method,

Consequences

Use of District computers and the internet is a privilege. Failure to abide by the terms of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

Damage of computer hardware, computer software (including the deletion of programs and/or files) and computer networks will result in the User being responsible for the current repair and replacement cost of the damaged software and/or equipment.

The Director of Educational Technology or his/her designee may close an account at any time as required. The administration, faculty and staff of the District may make a request to the Director of Educational Technology or his/her designee to deny, revoke or suspend specific user accounts based upon violations of this policy.

Improper Use – Bullying

Users may not use the SPSNet for purposes of harassment, intimidation or bullying of others.

Bullying is the repeated use of a written, verbal or electronic expression, physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at another student that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the student or damage to the student's property.
- Places the student in reasonable fear of physical injury or of damage to property.
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the student.
- Infringes on the rights of the student at school.
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Cyberbullying involves an act of bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including but not limited to electronic mail, internet communications, or instant messages. Cyberbullying also includes the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person; or, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions described in the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying also includes 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 described in the definition of bullying.

The District shall, at its sole discretion, determine whether such conduct violates this Policy and any other policies of the District.

Social Networking Sites

It is important that use of social media and networking sites, as well as personal websites and blogs, does not damage the District's reputation, or cause harm to the District's employees, students, or families. User use of non-District social networking sites is prohibited on District provided computers. For students, these guidelines apply to personal computer use outside of school. The District may monitor use of social media by students and may request access to a student's social media accounts, especially where a problem is brought forward to the attention of the District. Students may be disciplined for social media use or communication occurring during off hours. All members of the community should understand that the District takes seriously, and reserves the right to address, any inappropriate use of social media that may impact the educational environment. All Users should exercise care in setting appropriate boundaries between their personal and public online behavior, understanding that what is private in the digital world often has the possibility of becoming public, even without their knowledge or consent.

The District strongly encourages all employees, students and families to carefully review the privacy settings on any social media and networking sites they use (such as Facebook, Google+, Twitter, Flickr, LinkedIn, etc.), and exercise care and good judgment when posting content and information on such sites. When using a social media site, an employee may not include current students as "friends", "followers" or any other similar terminology used by various sites. If an employee has a community that extends to persons who are parents, alums, or other members of the District community, the employee must exercise good judgment about any content that is shared on the site.

Employees, students and families should adhere to the following guidelines, which are consistent with the District's community standards on harassment, student relationships, conduct, professional communication, and confidentiality:

- Users should not make statements that would violate any of the District's policies, including its policies concerning discrimination or harassment;
- Users must uphold the District's value of respect for the individual and avoid making defamatory or disparaging statements about the District, its employees, its students, their families, or School Committee members; and
- Staff may not disclose any confidential information obtained during the course of his or her employment concerning the District, administrators, organizations, students and/or their families.

The District has a strong interest in promoting a safe and supportive learning environment, as well as maintaining a positive reputation in the community. If employee or student activity on a social networking site, blog, or personal website may violate any District policy or otherwise have a detrimental impact on the learning environment, the District may request that the employee or student cease such activity. Depending on the severity of the incident, the employee or student may be subject to disciplinary action.

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION LAW

Effective March 10, 1994, the state law prohibiting discrimination against students in public schools includes protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation. As the result of enactment of Chapter 282 of the Acts of 1993, General Laws Chapter 76, section 5 now includes the following provision:

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, physical disability, or handicap.

Enactment of this law advances efforts to ensure that all students can attend school in a safe, supportive environment that is conducive to serious learning.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

STUDENTS

The Stoughton Public Schools does not discriminate in providing students with an education, and full access to all school related activities, on the basis of age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, physical disability, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, or handicap.

FACULTY & STAFF

Stoughton Public Schools is committed to providing a work environment free from all forms of unlawful discrimination because of age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, or disability, citizenship, veteran status, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy applies to all aspects of the employment relationship, such as recruitment, selection, training, promotion, salaries, benefits, discipline, terminations, and all other terms and conditions of employment.

All District policies are consistent with relevant governmental statutes and regulations, including those pursuant to Title IX of the Federal Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, M.G.L. Chapter 282 of the Acts of 1993, and M.G.L. Chapter 76 section 5.

NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITY

SC Policy: ACE

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

Section 504 is an Act prohibiting discrimination against anyone with a handicap in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who:

- has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, including activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working;
- has a record of such an impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Stoughton Public School System recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school system.

The Stoughton Public School System has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, afford access to educational services.

If the parent or guardian disagrees, with the determination made by the professional staff of the Stoughton Public Schools, she or he has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

If you have questions about Section 504, please feel free to contact the building principal or his/her designee, or the Section 504 Coordinator for the school district at (781) 344-4000, ext. 1251.

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

LEGAL REFS.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, as amended

Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975

M.G.L. [71B:1](#) et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)

Title II, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1992, as amended

Board of Education Chapter 766 Regulations, adopted 10/74, as amended through 3/28/78

CROSS REFS.: [IGB](#), Support Services Programs

ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

The Stoughton Public School System is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with Massachusetts Law Chapter 282 of the Acts of 1993, General Laws Chapter 76, section 5. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Stoughton Public School System requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

1. In General

Harassment includes communication such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, or disability.

Individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to School Administrators when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

2. Sexual Harassment

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a) Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of employment or education.
- b) The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student.
- c) Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extra-curricular activities.
- d) The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION PROHIBITED

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Stoughton Public Schools.

Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the Administration and/or School Committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

PROCEDURE FOR FILING A COMPLAINT

Any individual who believes he/she has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the Principal or the Civil Rights Representative for the school building and should fill out an Incident as soon as possible. The individual may seek an informal resolution to the matter or may file a formal grievance through the process provided by the Stoughton Public Schools Grievance Procedure. The individual may also contact the Assistant Superintendent, who holds the position of Civil Rights Coordinator.

Grievance Procedure

The Stoughton Public Schools has developed the following grievance procedure for students and employees to provide for a prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging harassment or discrimination. This grievance procedure may be used to address other issues when deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Level One

1. All grievances should be presented within 14 calendar days from the date the individual first became aware of, or should have become aware of, the cause of such grievance.
2. The grievant will present the grievance to the Principal, and if possible, it should be settled at the building level.
3. The Principal must investigate the grievance and provide a written response to the grievant of the complaint within seven (7) calendar days.

Level Two

1. If the grievant is not satisfied with the Level One response, or if a response is not provided within the prescribed time limit, the grievant may present the grievance in writing to the Assistant Superintendent. This shall occur:
 - A. Within 7 calendar days following the date the grievant received the Principal's response, or
 - B. Within 7 calendar days following the date the Principal's response was due, if the Principal fails to respond within the prescribed time limit.
2. The Deputy Superintendent must investigate, afford the grievant an opportunity to present his or her viewpoint, and provide the grievant a written response containing findings within 14 calendar days of receipt of the written grievance.

Level Three

1. If the grievant is not satisfied with the Level Two response, or if the Level Two response is not provided within the prescribed time limit, the grievant may present the grievance to the Superintendent of Schools. This shall occur:
 - A. Within 7 calendar days following the date the employee received the second step response, or

B. Within 7 calendar days following the date the second step response was due, if the second step response is not made within the prescribed time limit.

2. The Superintendent of Schools must review the Grievance, to include Level One and Level Two responses. Following the review, the Superintendent will conduct a hearing. Following the hearing, the Superintendent may conduct an independent investigation, if deemed appropriate by the Superintendent. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within 21 calendar days following the date the grievance entered the third level.

Summary Disposition of a Grievance

At any time after the filing of a written grievance, the Principal, Assistant Superintendent, or the Superintendent of Schools may dismiss the grievance on any of the following grounds:

1. The grievant does not work for or attend the Stoughton Public Schools.
2. The person against whom the grievance is filed does not work for or attend the Stoughton Public Schools.
3. The grievance has not been made in the required manner or within the prescribed period.
4. A decision on the grievance would be ineffective or moot.
5. The remedy requested cannot be granted.
6. The grievance has been determined to be frivolous.
7. The grievance is being used to impede the efficient operation of the Schools.
8. The grievant did not appear for the grievance hearing.

When a Principal, Deputy Superintendent, or Superintendent of Schools dismisses a grievance, he or she must notify the grievant and any school administrator(s) who received or heard the grievance.

Alternate Grievance Officers

A grievant may petition for an alternate grievance officer to hear their grievance. An alternate Level One grievance officer will be a Principal or Assistant Principal from another school. In the case of a Level Two grievance, the Director of Special Education will fulfill the role of grievance officer. When necessary or deemed appropriate, the Superintendent of Schools may appoint a hearing officer from outside the District to hear, investigate, and render a finding on a grievance.

SAMPLE GRIEVANCE FORMAT

DATE:

FROM:

TO: Level I – to the Principal,
Level II – to the Assistant Superintendent
Level III – to the Superintendent of Schools

SUBJECT:

1. This is a Level _____ grievance as defined under the Stoughton Public Schools Grievance Procedure.
2. The matter(s) that aggrieve(s) me occurred on [give date(s)] and is described in detail as follows: [Furnish sufficient detail to clearly identify the matter being grieved. Fully explain the basis for your grievance and provide all available evidence, documentation, and rationale to support your grievance and the relief that you seek.]
3. The personal relief I seek is: [Specify clearly. If it is already stated or implied above, restate it here]. [NOTE: "Personal relief" means a specific remedy directly benefiting you.]

[Signature]

[Attachments:]

[NOTE: It is preferable to make personal delivery when practicable. When mailing is used, the postmark usually determines the date of the grievance.]

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Stoughton Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, or disability in admission to, access to, employment in, or treatment in its programs and activities.

The Civil Rights Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 can be reached at 232 Pearl Street, Stoughton, MA 02045.

Inquiries regarding the application of the Stoughton Public Schools non-discrimination policy may be referred to the Coordinator as named above, or the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202, or the Regional Director, U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, Region One, John McCormack Building, Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

CIVIL RIGHTS REPRESENTATIVES

District Civil Rights Coordinator

Mr. Jonathan Ford, Deputy Superintendent

Stoughton High School

Ms. Juliette Miller, Principal
Mr. Alan Bontya, Assistant Principal

O'Donnell Middle School

Mr. Matthew Colantonio, Principal
Mrs. Hallie Burak, Assistant Principal

Dawe Elementary School

Mr. Robert Cancellieri, Principal
Mrs. Jennifer Jacobs, Teacher

Gibbons Elementary School

Mr. David Guglia, Principal
Mrs. Meghan Hayes, Guidance Counselor

Hansen Elementary School

Mrs. Christine Feeney, Principal
Mrs. Jacqui Harrison, Adjustment Counselor

South Elementary School

Mrs. Maureen Mulvey, Principal
Mrs. Meghan Drumm, Speech Therapist

West Elementary School

Mrs. Kathleen Monahan, Principal
Mrs. Katharine Pearl, Guidance Counselor

Jones Early Childhood Center

Mrs. Maureen Sacoco, Principal
Mrs. Aileen Costello, Adjustment Counselor

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Abbreviated Reference to the Legislation and Specific Criteria of Civil Rights Laws and District Coordinator Information

Law	Coordinator
Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 <i>Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on race, color and national origin.</i>	Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 <i>Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex.</i>	Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229
Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 <i>Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment.</i>	Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229
Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 <i>Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming and activities.</i>	Ms. Carolan Sampson Special Education Director 137 Walnut Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 7321
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1993 <i>Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability.</i>	Ms. Elizabeth Hennessy Director of Guidance 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1251
Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 76, S. 5 <i>Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identification, national origin, religion and sexual orientation.</i>	Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229
Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 <i>Designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards.</i>	Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229
603 CMR 46.00 <i>Governs the use of physical restraint on students in publicly funded schools</i>	Ms. Carolan Sampson Special Education Director 137 Walnut Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 7321

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

In 2007, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts released a document entitled Direct from the Field: A Guide to Bullying Prevention to serve as a tool to meet the needs of teachers, students and parents in addressing issues related to bullying. The passage below is part of the introduction of this guide and serves to set the framework for understanding the complexity of the issues.

Equipping administrators and teachers to respond more effectively is part of the answer, but the problem is complex and defies simple solutions. The majority of bullying incidents happen outside of the eyes and ears of school personnel – on buses, on sidewalks, on the way home, at sporting events and in bathrooms and locker rooms. Complicity among young people not to share knowledge of incidents of bullying with adults is common, often due to fear of retaliation. Ironically, while targets are disempowered by this code of silence, bullies gain power and prestige from it.

Multiple national studies show it is critical to create an environment of caring and respect in the classroom and school – an environment where children and adults have zero tolerance for acts of disrespect. A culture of caring and respect is fundamental; and to create such a culture, character education and the teaching of pro-social values like tolerance, altruism, empathy and self-assertiveness are essential.

As leaders and educators in the Stoughton Public Schools, we are committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to student engagement and learning. Our roles and responsibilities as educators will continue to include: (1) providing curriculum and programming that allow students the opportunity to develop social and behavior skills appropriate to a school environment; and (2) when a student disrupts the educational environment for others, employing a wide range of interventions appropriate to the nature of the conduct and age of the student. There is no place for student – to – student harassment and bullying within the Stoughton Public Schools as these attacks on human dignity are antithetical to the healthy educational, social and emotional growth of our students.

Priority Statement

The Stoughton Public Schools (SPS) expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and demonstrate a respect for diversity. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (Plan) is a comprehensive approach to specifically addressing the issues related to bullying and cyber-bullying. The SPS is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, 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 himself or herself or of damage to his or 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 is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet postings.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are explicitly prohibited:

1. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school; and
2. at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, through the use of technology or an electronic device, which is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses; infringe on their rights at school; or materially, and substantially, disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Policies and Procedures

A. Reporting bullying or retaliation.

Oral or written reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents, guardians, or others. Oral reports made by, or to, a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents, guardians, or other individuals, who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community that may include, but will not be limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address and an email address.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in each student handbook for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website and in information about the Plan made available to parents or guardians.

1. Reporting by Staff

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

2. Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians and Others

The school or district expects students, parents, guardians and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents, guardians and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Student Safety

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

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to Parents or Guardians

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

b. Notice to Another School or District

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify, by telephone, the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations and 603 CMR 49.00.

c. Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

C. Investigation

The principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation, and in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents, guardians and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

D. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigating, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps, reasonably calculated, to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any; and 2) determine what responsive action(s) and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) which may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, school officials are generally prohibited from informing the complainant of specific disciplinary action taken against a student—unless it involves a “stay away” or other directive that the victim should be aware of so as to report violations.

E. Responses to Bullying

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the building administration will utilize a wide range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

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

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the school's code of conduct.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which will be rendered in compliance with state laws regarding student discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student will be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. If it has been determined that bullying has taken place on the school grounds, the principal or designee will take measures to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the

prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

Ongoing Program Assessment and Development

The Plan is the District's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, will periodically:

- assess the adequacy of current programs;
- review current policies and procedures;
- review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents;
- assess available resources including curricula, training programs and behavioral health services.

Periodic needs assessments will be conducted and include: 1) surveying of students, staff, parents and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; and 2) the collecting and analyzing building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots" in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). This information will be used to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern; and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula and in-school support services.

The assessment process will assist the schools and district in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, the schools and district will:

- revise or develop policies and procedures;
- establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement;
- set priorities.

Members of the SPS administrative and support team will have the responsibility of providing oversight on the Plan. Areas of responsibility have been identified for school and district leaders to ensure the successful implementation and ongoing improvements to the plan. The delineation of responsibilities is as follows:

A. Principals will be responsible for:

- receiving reports on bullying;
- choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use;
- implementing the curricula that the school will use;
- providing annual professional development to the faculty and staff;
- collecting and analyzing school data on bullying;
- creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors;
- planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors;
- amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct;
- reviewing the Plan annually and making suggestions on potential revisions;
- leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials;

B. The Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for:

- planning for the ongoing professional development, as necessary to implement the Plan;
- approving the curricula that the school or district will use;
- developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy and designating key staff to be in charge of the implementation of them;
- reviewing and updating the Plan each year, as necessary.

C. The Director of Technology will be responsible for:

- working with the principals to develop the necessary component within the data management system that will allow schools to record and track incident reports, quickly access information related to targets and aggressors, and collect and analyze school data on bullying.

Training and Professional Development

Principals, or their designee, will provide annual training to all school staff on the Plan. This training will include staff responsibilities under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula that is being offered at all grades throughout the school. Staff members hired after the start of the school year will be provided in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years. District will also provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it in the individual school's faculty handbooks.

In addition to annual trainings, ongoing Professional Development will be provided to build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The content of school wide and district-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying;
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities which must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

Access to Resources and Services

- A. Identifying Resources. Any student who is at risk for being bullied, or for bullying will be referred to their appropriate counselor. The counselor will assess the issue(s) and if appropriate will provide the student with ongoing emotional support and coping strategies. The counselor, in conjunction with the building administration, may refer the student and/or family to outside agencies for more intensive services. When necessary, the counselor will connect the student with a principal or assistant principal who will assume responsibility for dealing with any administrative needs associated with the issue.
- B. Counseling and Other Services. In addition to individual counseling, there are a number of services offered at each school. Both elementary and middle schools follow Second Step, a research based violence prevention program. At the high school level there are a series of eight-week psycho-educational groups, developed in response to the specific needs of the system. Many of these groups have been geared directly towards support for targets and aggressors. System wide, the counseling staff would work with the ELL teachers if assistance were needed to identify culturally and linguistically appropriate resources within the school and district.
- C. Students with disabilities. As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

- D. Referral to Outside Services. The Stoughton Public Schools updates and review annually a district wide Counseling Referral list comprised of local and state agencies, as well as private therapists. Referrals to outside service providers are made when deemed necessary by the District.

Academic and Non – Academic Activities

The Stoughton Public Schools will provide a bullying prevention curricula, which will be informed by current research which, among other things, may emphasize the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

Teachers will be asked to implement practices that have been shown to support bullying prevention efforts. The following approaches have been identified as integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely.

Collaboration with Families

A. Parent education and resources.

The school or district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

B. Notification requirements.

Each school will include in its student handbook information on the student-related sections of the Plan, the dynamics of bullying, cyber-bullying and the District's Internet safety policy. The handbook will also provide the parents or guardians of enrolled students with information on the anti-bullying curricula that is being used at the school. All notices and information will be made available to parents or guardians in both hard copy and electronic formats; and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians, upon request. The school and / or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

Definitions

Aggressor is a student 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 who engages in bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

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

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, 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 himself or herself or of damage to his or 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 is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.

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

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff or paraprofessionals.

Relationship to other Laws

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on the basis of age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, physical disability, pregnancy or pregnancy related conditions, or handicap. The Plan also provides protection for all students regardless of their legal status. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Incident Report Form

Person Submitting the Report: _____

Location of Incident: _____ Date of Incident: _____

Description of Incident

[illegible]

Signature: _____ Date: _____

COVID-RELATED ISSUES

School Committee Policy EBC-S

The School Committee takes note of the COVID-19 emergency; resulting disruption of the traditional school day and year; growing concerns of students, families and the community; and the growing number of issues that will affect public education.

Therefore, the school committee establishes an emergency, interim policy to:

- promote public safety and safety of students and faculty,
- maintain to the extent possible the high and efficient level of educational services,
- ensure support for students in general and in particular for those at highest risk educationally as well as those at social and economic risk, and
- comply with the emergency orders of the governor and adhere to the extent possible, to the guidance of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and other agencies of state and federal government and expedite the safest strategy for returning students to school.

The school committee will approve the final plan submitted to DESE which will outline its strategy for returning students to school and will, in collaboration with the superintendent, make such modifications to the "back to school plan," and district policy, and will authorize the superintendent in consultation with the School Committee to suspend, revise or create protocols to facilitate the safe return to school.

The superintendent will designate the appropriate staff members to oversee the safe administration of COVID-related policies during the period of the pandemic emergency and shall make such recommendations to the school committee as needed.

The school committee will authorize the superintendent to act expeditiously in executing the "back to school" plan in accordance with current law and regulation and will, where noted, authorize the superintendent to suspend, revise, or recommend policies, rules and protocols as needed to serve the best interests and safety of students, their families, and the community.

The "back to school" plan shall constitute the policy of the school district during the pandemic emergency, and the superintendent shall exercise the authority provided in law to carry out the plan as needed.

General district goals affected by the pandemic.

- The superintendent, in consultation and with the consent of the school committee, may suspend or modify individual district policies to address the COVID-19 emergency as declared by the governor. Such suspension of policy shall expire upon the end of the emergency as declared by the governor.
- The goal of emergency pandemic policies shall be to:
- ensure the safety and health of students, faculty, staff, and all persons who may come in contact with them;
- provide the most effective educational services as possible to students under the circumstances;
- authorize changes to operating protocols as needed to open and operate schools effectively from various venues or platforms;
- conduct the district business and operational functions of the district as efficiently as possible;
- allow the superintendent and staff to act quickly to carry out a "back to school" plan and, facilitate the re-establishment of a safe and productive school day and year.

Student Assignment to Schools (SPS SC Policy - JCA)

Subject to the guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the superintendent may suspend or revise the assignment of students to schools, including the assignment of new students for such a period as the emergency declaration is in force.

Attendance (SPS SC Policy - JE)

Subject to operative law and regulations, suspend, modify or adapt policies related to student attendance including the link between and absences when appropriate, (including the link between attendance and grades), chronic absence policies, and accommodations for students requiring special placements

Local Graduation Requirements (SPS SC Policy - IKF)

In accordance with guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and modifications to current regulation or law, the superintendent may propose, subject to the approval of the school committee, modifications to the policy of the district regarding graduation requirements.

Students at Risk (SPS SC Policy - JIE, JL, JLC, JLCC)

During the COVID pandemic, the principal of a school may revise or suspend provisions of policy to facilitate the education of students at risk or with special physical needs or their family caregivers, including, but not limited to caring for or educating students with disabilities, illness, pregnancy, childrearing responsibilities, or special education needs consistent with law and regulation.

Privacy of Students. (SPS SC Policy - JRA)

During the pandemic, the rights to privacy held by students and their families shall not be abridged by the public schools. Such rights extend to the confidentiality of student academic records, health data, economic status, and other such information as may be considered confidential by law.

Massachusetts law prohibits the recording of individuals without their permission. Similarly, students may not be recorded in classrooms by audio, visual, or remote means without the permission of parents or, if of age, by individual students. During periods of remote learning, the privacy of students participating in on-line classes shall not be violated by recording them without appropriate permissions.

Pivoting Back to Remote Learning, or Back to In-School Instruction

The superintendent shall incorporate into the "back to school" plan protocols for modifying these plans including addressing the needs of students who may require reversion from in-school to remote learning modalities because of the pandemic emergency.

Home Schooling (SPS SC Policy - IHBG (temporary), SPS SC Policy - IHBF)

The "back to school" plan shall provide for students who are temporarily homebound due to illness, quarantine, or disability

Eligibility for Participation in Extra-Curricular Activities, including sports (SPS SC Policy - JJ)

Subject to law, regulation and standards established by the appropriate and legitimate regulatory body, the superintendent may propose changes to district protocols for participation in extracurricular activities including sports subject to the rules established by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association.

Attendance vs. Participation in Events (Student/Athletic Handbooks)

Subject to law, regulation or emergency declaration, the superintendent in consultation and with the consent of the school committee, may propose protocols or modifications or suspensions of district policies regarding attendance by students or the public in school events including, but not limited to assemblies, sports events, large gatherings, or other programs.

Illness and Contact Tracing (SPS SC Policy - JLCC)

Subject to the provisions of the "back to school" plan, the superintendent may establish protocols for tracking student contacts as a means of locating others from whom students may contract or expose other persons to the COVID-19. Such protocols will be consistent with law and regulation and be consistent with standards to protect the privacy of students, their families, and other persons.

Transportation and Busing (SPS SC Policy - EEA, EEAG)

Subject to current law and regulation, the superintendent in consultation and with the consent of the school committee, may suspend or modify procedures/policies related to the transportation of students by the school district. Legal requirements relating to IEP's that contain transportation for students shall not be altered without the appropriate family consent. These modifications shall be consistent with the district "back to school" plan.

Operations and Plant Maintenance (SPS SC Policy - EC)

Subject to the provisions of law, regulation and collective bargaining agreements, the superintendent may suspend or amend current maintenance plan to ensure the efficient operation of business functions and maintenance of school buildings and other such offices as the district maintains.

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

SC Policy: JB

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

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

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

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

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

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972

Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375

Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

M.G.L. [76:5](#); [76:16](#) (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [26:00](#)

BESE regulations 603 CMR [28.00](#)

CROSS REF.: [AC](#), Nondiscrimination

FACE MASKS

School Committee Policy EBCFA

The Stoughton Public Schools is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face mask that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed. This policy applies to students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 with those in Pre-K being encouraged to wear masks.

Individuals who may not wear a face mask as it poses a safety risk to the individual, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- is incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask without assistance.

In addition, masks will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask. A written order from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks will not be required when appropriate physical distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes as long as students are able to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of physical distancing from one another
- while outside.

Exemptions to this policy must abide by the above guidelines and require a medical exemption from the student's physician which is submitted to and approved by the school nurse. The building principal will provide the final approval of the exemption for the student to attend school in person without a face mask. The school nurse will discuss with the family and student's physician if a face shield may be medically appropriate for any student with a medical exemption for a face mask.

A student's mask is to be provided by the student's family. However, the district will supply disposable face mask for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one. Staff members are welcomed to wear their own cloth face mask or use the disposable face masks available in their schools

Teachers will not be required to allow a student that refuses to wear a mask (other than medical exemption) into their room. All students K-12 will be required (strongly encouraged Pre-K) to wear a face mask not a face covering (gaiter, bandanas, scarf, etc.).

If, during the school day, a student refuses to wear their face mask during a mandatory mask-wearing time, they will be given 3 verbal warnings to put the mask back on. If after 3 verbal warnings the student remains non-compliant with their teacher/administrator's directive to wear their mask, the student will be sent to the appropriate building administrator. Initially, the student will be placed in an area away from others and given 15-20 minutes to take a break and prepare to re-enter. If the student still does not comply, they will be sent home for the remainder of the same school day to protect the health and safety of the student's classmates and teachers. Continued refusal to wear the mask will result in the student moving to fully remote instruction.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF.:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31:

<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS.:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention; Considerations for Wearing Masks:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; Reopening Guidelines: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Mask Up MA!: <https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

Adopted: August 2020

GANG POLICY

The Stoughton School Committee does not support or condone gang membership or gang activity. The Superintendent/designee shall regularly consult with law enforcement officials to identify gang-related items, symbols and behaviors, and provide each principal with this information. No student shall commit any act that furthers gangs or gang-related activities. A gang is any ongoing organization, association, or group of three or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities the commission of criminal acts, or the purposeful violation of any policy, and having a common name or common identifying sign, colors or symbols. Conduct prohibited by this policy includes: Wearing, possessing, using, distributing, displaying or selling any clothing, jewelry, emblems, badges, symbols, signs, visible tattoos and body markings, or other items, or being in possession of literature that shows affiliation with a gang, or is evidence of membership or affiliation in any gang or that promotes gang affiliation; Communicating either verbally or non-verbally (gestures, handshakes, slogans, drawings, etc.), to convey membership affiliation in any gang or that promotes gang affiliation; Tagging, or otherwise defacing school or personal property with gang or gang-related symbols or slogans; Requiring payment of protection, money or insurance, or otherwise intimidating or threatening any person related to gang activity; Inciting other students to intimidate or to act with physical violence upon any other person related to gang activity; Soliciting others for gang membership; Conspiring to commit any violation of this policy or committing or conspiring to commit any other illegal act or other violation of school district policies that relates to gang activity.

GRAFFITI AND DEFACEMENT OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any student who defaces school property will be subject to disciplinary action. "Graffiti" means any inscription, word, figure, design, painting, writing, drawing or carving that is marked, etched, scratched, drawn, painted, or otherwise applied to school property. Offensive graffiti may constitute a violation of federal Civil Rights law. Examples of offensive graffiti include, but are not limited to, all derogatory words or symbols associated with any ethnic, racial, religious or socially recognized group.

All instances of graffiti will be reported to the building administration. The degree of discipline for defacement of school property/graffiti will be based upon the seriousness of the incident (refer to discipline section of the student handbook). In addition, any graffiti of an offensive nature will be reported to the Stoughton Police Department and possible police action may be taken against the individual(s) involved in the incident.

INFORMATION FOR HOMELESS FAMILIES AND STUDENTS

The Stoughton Public Schools, under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, provide safeguards for all homeless children. Children and youths who "lack a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence" are considered homeless for educational purposes. This includes those who: are "doubled up"- sharing the housing of friends or relatives due to the loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; are awaiting foster care placement; have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings; are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; are migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above; are unaccompanied youths- adolescents who are not in the physical custody of their parents.

To the extent feasible, homeless students are encouraged to remain at their school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent, guardian or student. A student who becomes homeless has the right to attend:

- a) their school of origin – either the school the student was attending prior to the loss of permanent housing or the last school the student attended.
- OR –
- b) their local school – any public school that students living in the same attendance area have the right to attend.

Homeless students will be enrolled immediately, even if regularly required documentation is missing. Homeless students will not be kept out of school even if they are missing:

- immunization records proof of residency
- proof of guardianship
- previous academic records
- medical records
- social security card

The Stoughton Public Schools will assume responsibility for providing a homeless student(s) with transportation to his / her school of origin, if it is feasible for the student to stay in the school of origin and the parent or guardian request it. This provision applies as follows:

- a) If the student continues to live in the district where the school of origin is located, the district will provide or arrange for transportation.
- b) If the student moves outside of the district but wishes to continue attending the school of origin, the Stoughton Public Schools and the district where the student resides will work out a means of apportioning cost and the responsibility for transportation.
- c) Students who transfer to a school located in the attendance area of their temporary residence will receive comparable transportation services to any other student residing in the district.

Students are allowed to remain in their school of origin for the duration of their homelessness, or if they secure permanent housing, for the remainder of the school year.

Immediate assistance is available at each school from the Principal and the Guidance Department.

Additional assistance is available from the Stoughton Public School's Assistant Superintendent, who acts as the District's Homeless Liaison, at (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229.

LATEX POLICY

Our goal is to make our school system latex free. That means that students and faculty members cannot use any latex balloons for projects, decorations or celebrations.

MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS CHAPTER 269 CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC PEACE

Section 17. 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.

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

Section 19. 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 which fails to make such report.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

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

- (1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- (2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- (3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

- (4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

PARENT NOTIFICATION RE: HUMAN SEXUALITY EDUCATION

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that parents/guardians are notified whenever curriculum involving human sexual education or human sexuality is implemented or maintained. Parents may exempt their children from any portion of said curriculum through written notification to the school principal. There shall be no penalty toward any child because of the exemption\

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that program instructional materials for said curriculum are reasonably accessible to parents, guardians, educators, school administrators, and others, for inspection and review.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied 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 dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each principal by September 1 of each year.

Courses that involve any Mention of Human Sexual Education or Human Sexuality:

Grade 6 Health
AIDS Awareness Education
Grade 7 Health
Grade 8 Health
Science (Unit on the Human body)

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

SC 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 of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

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

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR [46.02](#).

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

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

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37G](#); 603 CMR [46.00](#)

Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Procedures

Physical restraint is defined as direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. Physical restraint shall only be used when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the Stoughton school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Furthermore, any such physical restraint shall be administered so as to prevent or minimize any harm to the student.

Physical restraint shall not be used as a means of discipline or punishment; if the student cannot be safely restrained due to medical contraindications which have been documented by a licensed physician and provided to the District; as a response to property destruction, disruption, refusal to comply with rules or staff directives, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. Physical restraint shall not be used as a standard response for any individual student. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

Restraint will not be used as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program (IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort.

This policy shall be reviewed annually and provided to Stoughton Public Schools staff and made available to the Parents of enrolled students. Nothing in this policy precludes any teacher, employee, or agent of the Stoughton Public Schools from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons, or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

I. Methods for Preventing Student Violence and Self-Injurious Behavior

Prevention/De-Escalation Techniques include using positive steps taken before a behavioral crisis occurs. Examples of these techniques are as follows:

1. Interrupting – is the first thing to do when trying to break a chain of behaviors, distracting the individual to another topic or something in the environment.
2. Ignoring – is used during the early stages of negative behavior in which the behavior is not visibly responded to, in order to avoid inadvertently reinforcing it. It does not mean that early danger signs are truly ignored and does not mean that dangerous behaviors are ever ignored.
3. Redirecting – is used to manage a potentially dangerous behavior by deflecting or redirecting the behavior, and then reinforcing a more appropriate behavior by rewarding the individual for displaying the more appropriate behavior.

Prevention also involves assuring staff has training; appropriate staffing; policies/procedures in place including behavioral support plans; appropriate programming; ability to recognize individual's strengths, weaknesses and triggers.

II. Alternatives to Physical Restraint and Methods of Physical Restraint

1. Alternatives to Physical Restraint

Physical restraint shall not be used unless the following, less intrusive behavior interventions and supports have been unsuccessful or deemed inappropriate by school staff:

- a. Positive behavioral interventions
- b. Verbal redirection
- c. Verbal directive to cease behavior
- d. Opportunity for a break
- e. De-escalation techniques
- f. Loss of earned tokens/rewards/privileges
- g. Opportunity for Time Out – a behavioral support strategy [developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1)] in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed. Any time outs over thirty (30) minutes must obtain principal approval.
- h. Physical Prompts and Assists – used when the upset person is moving forward but with little resistance. Staff has hands on the individual, but individual is not displaying assaultive behavior or significantly resisting. Intention of this assist is to move the individual from one place to another and to release him/her upon arrival at desired location. Physical assists must be brief in nature.
- i. Physical Escort – a temporary touch or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated or upset to walk to a safe location. Physical Escorts must be brief in nature.

2. Methods of Physical Restraint

Physical restraint shall only be administered by trained personnel, using only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or other member(s) of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. The staff member(s) administering physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation. Staff shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student during restraint, and the student shall be immediately released from the physical restraint if the student expresses or demonstrates significant physical distress.

All physical restraints must terminate as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger, or if the student indicates that he/she cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress. If any physical restraint approaches twenty (20) minutes, staff will obtain the approval of the building Principal to continue the restraint based upon the student's continued agitation.

The District authorized the use of the following restraints:

- a. Passive Protective Holds – are used by one or two staff to facilitate a short term emergency physical intervention. The individual is potentially causing harm to self/others or is engaged in major property destruction that could potentially lead to harm to self or others.
- b. Transports – are used to move an upset individual from one area to another area. This is used when the individual is not cooperating and may be aggressive/assaultive. Individual must have their feet on the floor. Purpose of a transport is to move the individual from danger to safety, not from danger to destination.
- c. Immobilization Holds – prevent the individual from moving freely and involve immobilizing head, arms and legs.

All physical restraints shall be administered in compliance with 603 CMR 46.00.

III. Prohibited Forms of Restraint

Any form of physical restraint used in a manner inconsistent with State regulations [603 CMR 46.00] is prohibited in the Stoughton Public Schools. The following forms of restraint are expressly prohibited:

1. Mechanical Restraint – the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student's freedom of movement. This term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that have been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional, and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed.
2. Medication Restraint – the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.
3. Seclusion Restraint – the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out [as defined in 603 CMR 46.02].

Prone restraint, as defined in 603 CMR 46.02, shall only be permitted under the following, limited circumstances:

1. The student has a documented history of serious self-injury and/or injuries to other students or staff;
2. All other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or the safety of others.
3. There are no medical contraindications documented by a licensed physician;
4. There are no psychological or behavioral contraindications documented by a licensed mental health professional;
5. The student's Parent has provided voluntary, informed, written consent to the use of prone restraint; consent shall mean agreement by a parent who has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which agreement is sought, that the parent understands that the agreement is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. The agreement describes the activity and lists the records (if any) which will be released and to whom.
6. The building Principal, or designee, has provided written approval.

Stoughton Public Schools will not use prone restraint unless the above circumstances have been documented in advance.

IV. Staff Training, Physical Restraint Reporting, and Follow-Up Process

1. Staff Training

All staff/faculty will receive training regarding the District's physical restraint policy within the first month of each school year, and employees hired after the school year begins will receive training within one month of starting their employment. Required training for all staff will include review of the following:

- a. Stoughton Public Schools Physical Restraint and Behavior Support Policy;
- b. School building-level physical restraint procedures, including the use of time-out as a behavior support strategy;
- c. The role of the student, family, and staff in preventing physical restraint;
- d. Interventions which may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and alternatives to restraint;

- e. When in an emergency, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety consideration, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used;
- f. Identification of Stoughton Public Schools' staff who have received in-depth training.

At the beginning of the school year, each building Principal will identify those designated staff who will participate in in-depth training and who will then be authorized to serve school-wide resources to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. Designated staff members shall participate in in-depth training in the use of physical restraint, with at least one refresher training annually. In-depth training will include:

- a. Appropriate procedures for preventing the need for physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint;
- b. A description and identification of specific dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted;
- c. The simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance;
- d. Instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints;
- e. Demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint; and
- f. Instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, including but not limited to psychological, physiological, and social-emotional effects.

2. Physical Restraint Reporting

A Report to building Principal:

- 1. Staff shall verbally inform the Principal of any physical restraint as soon as possible and by written report within one (1) school day.
- 2. The Principal or designee shall maintain an ongoing record of all reported instances of physical restraint.

b. Report to Parent(s) of Physically Restrained Student:

- 1. The Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's Parent of the physical restraint within twenty-four (24) hours.
- 2. The Principal or designee shall provide the Parent a written report of the physical restraint within three (3) school days. This written report may be provided via email, if the Parent has provided the District with an email address.
- 3. The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.
- 4. The Parent and/or student may also pursue the Grievance Procedure

c. Report to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE):

- 1. Whenever a physical restraint results in injury to the student or any school community member, the District shall send a copy of the written report to DESE within three (3) school days.
- 2. A copy of the ongoing physical restraint log from the past thirty (30) days will also be provided to DESE.
- 3. Stoughton Public Schools shall also report physical restraint data annually to DESE, as directed by DESE.

d. Report to Law Enforcement and Other State Agencies:

- 1. Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from reporting a crime to the appropriate authorities;
- 2. Nothing in this policy prevents any individual from exercising their responsibilities as a mandated reporter [under M.G.L, c. 119, §51A].

e. Contents of Written Reports:

The written report of any physical restraint shall include:

- 1. Name of the student; name(s) and job title(s) of staff who administered the physical restraint, and observers, if any; the date, time restraint began, and the time that restraint ended; the name of the Principal or designee who was verbally informed following the restraint, and who approved continuation of the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, if applicable.

2. A description of the activity in which the restrained student and other students and staff in the vicinity were engaged immediately preceding the use of the physical restraint; the behavior that prompted the restraint; the efforts made to prevent escalation of behavior, including specific de-escalation strategies used; alternatives to restraint that were attempted; and the justification for initiating physical restraint.
3. A description of the administration of the restraint including the holds used and reasons such holds were necessary; the student's behavior and reactions during the restraint; how the restraint ended; and documentation of injury to the student and/or staff, if any, and any medical care provided.
4. Information regarding any further action(s) that the school has taken or may take, including any consequences that may be imposed on the student.
5. Information regarding opportunities for the student's Parent(s) to discuss the administration of the restraint and any consequences with school officials.

3. Follow-Up Procedures

After a student is released from a physical restraint, staff shall implement follow-up procedures, including:

- a. Reviewing the incident with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the physical restraint;
- b. Reviewing the incident with the staff member(s) who administered the physical restraint to ensure proper restraint procedures were followed; and
- c. Consideration of whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the physical restraint, if any.

The principal of the program shall conduct a weekly review of restraint data in order to identify students who have been restrained multiple times during the week. If such students are identified, the principal shall convene one or more review teams as the principal deems appropriate to assess each student's progress and needs. The assessment shall include at least the following:

- a. review and discussion of the written reports [developed in accordance with 603 CMR 46.06] and any comments provided by the student and parent about such reports and the use of the restraints;
- b. an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved;
- c. consideration of factors that may have contributed to escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions, as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future;
- d. an agreement on a written plan of action by the program.

If the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the superintendent shall lead the review team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review is maintained and made available for review by the Department or the parent, upon request.

V. Procedure for the Use of Time-Out

Principals shall develop a procedure for the use of time-outs that include the process by which staff will obtain the Principal's approval for any time-out lasting longer than thirty (30) minutes. Such approval shall be based on the student's continuing agitation.

VI. Methods for Engaging Parents

Stoughton Public Schools will conduct an annual workshop, open to the entire school community, concerning restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure. This workshop may be coordinated with the special education parent advisory council, the parent-teacher organization, and other relevant community groups.

Any parent with concerns about the use of physical restraint at any school within Stoughton Public Schools may request a meeting with the building Principal or the Superintendent to discuss such concerns. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may also make use of the Grievance Procedure.

VII. Grievance Procedures

This grievance procedure is established to ensure procedures are in place for receiving and investigating complaints regarding physical restraint practices. Any individual who believes that a physical restraint of a student may have been unwarranted or conducted inappropriately may file a complaint by utilizing this procedure:

1. The complaint must be submitted in writing or on audiotape to the Administrator of Special Education.

2. The Administrator of Special Education will meet with the complainant within ten (10) school days of receipt of the complaint.
3. A thorough investigation will be conducted which may include interviewing witnesses, staff involved and/or the student; reviewing all written documentation leading up to and pertaining to the incident and all reports filed with the Administrator of Special Education and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
4. A written report will be developed by the Administrator of Special Education and provided to the complainant.

RESIDENCY POLICY

It is the policy of the Stoughton School Committee that proof of residence must be established by the student and/or his/her parent/guardian in accordance with the following criteria:

New residents will be required to submit two or more of the following as proof of residence:

- A deed or lease agreement for property in Stoughton.
- A mortgage statement verifying the owner's name and address.
- A rent receipt that includes the name and address of the landlord.
- A residential utility and/or telephone statement.
- Other pertinent information as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools.

Students living with persons other than their parents/guardians will be required to have the persons they are living with submit the following as proof of residence:

- Court documentation of guardianship
- Documentation that the student is maintaining permanent residency with the person(s) indicated at the given address
- Students with unusual circumstances may appeal to the School Committee and all decisions are final
- Students whose residency changes within the community are also required to show proof of residence

The School Department reserves the right to confirm actual living arrangements by home visits. The purpose of such visits will be to determine whether or not the student/family resides at the indicated address. The parent/guardian will be asked to sign the Residency Statement detailed within this policy.

In addition, any person who falsely claims that a student lives with them, or the parents of that student, will be required to pay the full cost of the student's tuition to the Stoughton Public Schools for the period of their enrollment, as well as any necessary legal fees. In addition to incurring civil liabilities, any person who knowingly registers or attempts to register a student known by that person to be in violation of the residency requirement will (or may) be referred to the proper agency for criminal prosecution.

The School Committee has divided the elementary school attendance areas by geography. During the (2010-2011) school year, it is necessary for out-of-district students to attend the neighborhood school within their district.

An anonymous Residency Tip Line is available for families, staff and students to report possible residency violations (781-297-1050). People may also report residency violations to: the building Principal, Central Administration, Administrator of Special Education and Athletic Director.

Each of these individuals will be responsible for reporting the alleged violation, in writing, to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will inform the School Committee, in writing, of all violations. Adopted May 22, 2007.

SAFETY REGULATIONS FOR SCHOOL ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

SC Policy: JJIF

Participation in athletic head injury safety training program shall be required annually of coaches, trainers and parent volunteers for any extracurricular athletic activity; physicians and nurses who are employed by a school or school district

or who volunteer to assist with an extracurricular/legal guardian of a child who participates in an extracurricular athletic activity. The program shall include, but not be limited to:

1. current training in recognizing the symptoms of potentially catastrophic head injuries, concussions and injuries related to second impact syndrome; and
2. providing students that participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, including membership in a marching band, the following information annually:
 - a) a summary of department rules and regulations relative to safety regulations for students' participation in extracurricular athletic activities, including the medical protocol for post-concussion participation or participation in an extracurricular athletic activity;
 - b) written information related to the recognition of symptoms of head injuries the biology and the short-term and long-term consequences of a concussion.

The department shall develop forms on which students shall be instructed to provide information relative to any sports head injury history at the start of each sports season. These forms shall require the signature of both the student and the parent or legal guardian thereof. Once complete, the forms shall be forwarded to all coaches prior to allowing any student to participate in an extracurricular athletic activity so as to provide coaches with up-to-date information relative to an athlete's head injury history and to enable coaches to identify students who are at greater risk for repeated head injuries.

If a student participating in an extracurricular athletic activity becomes unconscious during a practice or competition, the student shall not return to the practice or competition during which the student became unconscious or participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until the student provides written authorization for such participation, from a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, certified athletic trainer or other appropriately trained or licensed health care professional as determined by the department of public health, to the school's athletic director. If a student suffers a concussion as diagnosed by a medical professional, or is suspected to have suffered a concussion while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the student shall not return to the practice or competition during which the student suffered, or is suspected to have suffered, a concussion and shall not participate in any extracurricular athletic activity until the student provides written authorization for such participation, from a licensed physician, licensed neuropsychologist, certified athletic trainer, or other appropriately trained or licensed health care professional as determined by the department of public health, to the school's athletic director.

A coach, trainer or volunteer for an extracurricular athletic activity shall not encourage or permit a student participating in the activity to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that unnecessarily endangers the health of a student, including using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

The Superintendent of the school district or the director of a school shall maintain complete and accurate records of the districts or school's compliance with the requirements of this section. A school that fails to comply with this section, as determined by the department, shall be subject to penalties as determined by the department.

A person who volunteers to assist with an extracurricular athletic activity shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of this section, unless such person is willfully or wantonly negligent in his act or omission.

SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973

Section 504 is an Act prohibiting discrimination against anyone with a handicap in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The Act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who:

- has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, including activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working;
- has a record of such an impairment; or
- is regarded as having such an impairment

In order to fulfill its obligation under Section 504, the Stoughton Public School System recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school system.

The Stoughton Public School System has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, afford access to educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the Stoughton Public Schools, she or he has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

If you have questions about Section 504, please feel free to contact the building principal or his/her designee, or the Section 504 Coordinator for the school system at (781) 344-4000, ext. 1251.

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

The term service animal shall apply to any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

§ 35.136 Service Animals

- a) General. Generally, a public entity shall modify its policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability.
- b) Exceptions. A public entity may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if:
 - (1) The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it; or
 - (2) The animal is not housebroken.
- c) If an animal is properly excluded. If a public entity properly excludes a service animal under § 35.136 (b), it shall give the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises.
- d) Animal under handler's control. A service animal shall be under the control of its handler. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).
- e) Care or supervision. A public entity is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal.
- f) Inquiries. A public entity shall not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability, but may make two inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal. A public entity may ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. A public entity shall not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Generally, a public entity may not make these inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).
- g) Access to areas of a public entity. Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in all areas of a public entity's facilities where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.

h) Surcharges. A public entity shall not ask or require an individual with a disability to pay a surcharge, even if people accompanied by pets are required to pay fees, or to comply with other requirements generally not applicable to people without pets. If a public entity normally charges individuals for the damage they cause, an individual with a disability may be charged for damage caused by his or her service animal.

i) Miniature horses.

(A) A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.

(B) Assessment factors. In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, a public entity shall consider:

(1) The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;

(2) Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;

(3) Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and

(4) Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.

(C) Other requirements. Paragraphs 35.136 (c) through (h) of this section, which apply to service animals, shall also apply to miniature horses.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

School Committee 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.

Personal Dress and appearance which is vulgar or plainly offensive or which disrupts or substantially interferes with the educational process or with another student's ability to receive an education is prohibited. To maintain a safe environment, items that get in the way of being able to immediately identify students may not be worn in the building during the school day including hats, sunglasses, or other head coverings (except for religious or medical purposes). This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

STUDENT RECORDS

SC Policy: JRA-R

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

Application of Rights

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

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

Definition of Terms

The various terms as used in 603 CMR [23.00](#) are defined below:

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

Authorized school personnel: shall consist of three groups:

- 1) School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the School Committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling and/or diagnostic capacity. Any such personnel who are not employed directly by the School Committee shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- 2) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche, who are either employed by the School Committee or are employed under a School Committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- 3) The evaluation team which evaluates a student.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Access of Third Parties. Except for the provisions of 603 CMR [23.07](#)(4)(a) through [23.07](#)(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for information described in 603 CMR [23.07](#)(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall only be released to a third party on the condition that

he/she will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent.

- a) A school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under 603 CMR [23.07](#) and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR [23.10](#).
- b) Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena the school shall comply, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance.
- c) A school may release information regarding a student upon receipt of a request from the Department of Social Services, a probation officer, a justice of any court, or the Department of Youth Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. [119](#), sections [51B](#), [57](#), [69](#) and [69A](#) respectively.
- d) Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents shall have access to student records as necessary in connection with the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws, or programs; provided that except when collection of personally identifiable data is specifically authorized by law, any data collected by such officials shall be protected so that parties other than such officials and their authorized agents cannot personally identify such students and their parents; and such personally identifiable data shall be destroyed when no longer needed for the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws.
- e) A school may disclose information regarding a student to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures to the local police department and the Department of Social Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. [71](#), section [37L](#) and M.G.L. c. [119](#), section [51A](#).
- f) Upon notification by law enforcement authorities that a student, or former student, has been reported missing, a mark shall be placed in the student record of such student. The school shall report any request concerning the records of the such child to the appropriate law enforcement authority pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. [22A](#), section [9](#).
- g) Authorized school personnel of the school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to such student's record without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school the student is leaving, or has left, gives notice that it forwards student records to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR [23.10](#).
- h) School health personnel and local and state health department personnel shall have access to student health records, including but not limited to immunization records, when such access is required in the performance of official duties, without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

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

- a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:
 - 1) the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 - 2) the parent has been denied visitation, or
 - 3) the parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
 - 4) there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR [23.07](#)(5)(a).
- c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.

- d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR [23.07](#) (5)(a).
- e) The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
- f) Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. [71, §34H](#), the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

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

- a) The standardized testing programs and research studies to be conducted during the year and other routine information to be collected or solicited from the student during the year.
- b) The general provisions of 603 CMR [23.00](#) regarding parent and student rights, and that copies of 603 CMR [23.00](#) are available to them from the school.

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

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,

P.L. 93-380, Amended

P.L. 103-382, 1994

M.G.L. [66:10](#); [71:34 A](#), [B](#), [D](#), [E](#), [H](#)

Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/75, as amended June 2002

603 CMR: Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education [23.00](#) through [23:12](#)

Mass Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Records; Questions, Answers and Guidelines, Sept. 1995

CROSS REF: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE RECORDING

The Stoughton Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and secure educational environment for its students, staff and visitors, as well as safeguarding and controlling access to district facilities and protecting its assets. The video surveillance system may be used for inquiries and review related to criminal activity and/or violations of district policies/procedures. As part of this commitment, the district has installed video surveillance and recording systems in all school buildings. To obtain a copy of the complete, approved Video Surveillance Policy, please contact the OMS main office.

WELLNESS POLICY

It is the policy of the Stoughton Public Schools to promote actions that create a healthy and safe environment for all students, faculty, staff and citizens. It is our goal to develop and protect our students' physical, emotional, and social well-being through a coordinated school health and wellness program based on the premise that improved health optimizes student performance potential. This includes providing a healthy environment, school nurse services, nutritious school meals, health and physical education, and opportunities for physical activity. It is the

intent of this policy to enable students and staff to become independent and self-directed learners by taking the initiative to meet their own health, physical, and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate.

All students in grades PreK-12 should have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis. Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutritional recommendations of the *U. S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and *MGL 105CMR225.000, Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools*.

Furthermore, it is our expectation that specific actions and decisions will take into account the health needs and well-being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the district's belief that education and open and informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children in assuming more individual responsibility for healthy decisions, and maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the School Committee that the guidelines reflect student development as children advance from the primary grades through secondary school.

NUTRITION AND WELLNESS

Our goal is to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students and staff by using the following strategies and guidelines:

- Offer healthy meals that promote good health and provide students with the appropriate daily nutrition that is consistent with the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*
- Provide information for students that teaches the skills they need to develop healthy eating habits
- Ensure that healthy snacks and all competitive foods under the control of the school department are consistent with the standards set by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These standards shall apply to competitive foods and beverages sold or provided on school grounds 30 minutes before the beginning of the school day until 30 minutes after the end of the school day. We would encourage individual school organizations to follow the guidelines and recommendations as set forth in this policy at all times.
- Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages provided in:
 - School cafeterias offered as a la carte items
 - School buildings, including classrooms and hallways
 - School stores
 - School snack bars
 - Vending machines
 - Concession stands
 - Booster sales
 - Fundraising activities
 - School-sponsored or school-related events
 - Any other location on school property
- The Stoughton Public Schools shall, in accordance with applicable guidelines:
 - Make readily available plain, potable water to all students during the day at no cost to the students
 - Offer for sale, fresh fruit and non-fried vegetables at any location where food is sold. This does not include non-refrigerated vending machines and vending machines dispensing only beverages
 - Prohibit the use of Fryolators in the preparation of food at any time in any school building
- The Food Service Director will serve on the Wellness Committee and outreach to community resources.

THE SCHOOL BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

- The school breakfast and lunch programs will continue to follow the USDA Requirements for Federal School Meal Programs
- Nutritional information will be made available to students for non-prepackaged competitive foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria
- Recess will be scheduled before lunch at the elementary level whenever possible.
- Students will have access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals.

- Adequate time to eat meals will be provided.

FOOD IN THE SCHOOLS AND CLASSROOMS

- The use of all food items as part of a student incentive or reward program is not allowed.
- Distribution of food items (that do not meet the nutritional guidelines) for consumption in the classrooms is not allowed
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to send healthy snacks for students' Pre-K through grade 5.
- Snack is not allowed at the Middle and High School unless medically necessary.
- There will be no sharing of food at any time of the school day.
- Classroom parties for holidays and other special occasions will not include food items.
- Birthdays may be acknowledged with non-food items (i.e pencils, stickers, erasers, classroom book)
- Students at the secondary level are not allowed to bring in food or drink other than water to the classroom for consumption.
- All food related, fundraising projects for sale and consumption by students are not allowed during the school day.
- Booster organizations, PTO's and school councils operating concessions at school functions after the instructional day must offer, for sale, at least 2 healthy food choices to include fresh fruit and non-fried vegetables.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND ACTIVITY

A. Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom

Stoughton Public Schools offers Physical Education at all levels. Recess and/or activity time is offered as well in grades K – 8. These offerings are in place to attempt to reach the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e. at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to embrace the culture in place in the district that emphasizes regular physical activity as a personal behavior.

Classroom teachers are encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes as appropriate.

B. Pre-K – 12 Physical Education Program

It is a goal of the Stoughton Public Schools that all students in grades K – 12 including students with disabilities, special health care needs and in alternative education settings will receive regularly scheduled physical education. A certified physical education teacher will teach physical education classes.

At all levels, systems are put into place that allow for maximum participation in physical education class. Students will spend well over fifty percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. At all levels, proper warm-up/stretching/cool down time is implemented to ensure healthy and safe exercise.

C. Daily Recess

All elementary students in our five elementary schools will have 15 – 20 minutes of supervised recess daily. Whenever possible, all of the students' recess time will be spent outside. Physical Education teachers will be encouraged to review recess activities with all students at least twice each year.

D. Physical Activity Opportunities

Stoughton Public Schools will offer a wide range of extracurricular physical activity programs.

E. Physical Activity and Punishment

Using physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups) or withholding opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment to our students is discouraged by the Stoughton Public Schools administration.

F. Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities availability is based on the Facility Use Policy.

STAFF EDUCATION AND WELLNESS

The Stoughton Public School District will encourage healthy eating, physical activity and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff.

COMMUNICATION

As a means of distributing wellness information to staff, students and families, a Health Services website is available on the Stoughton Public School Website (stoughtonschools.org) and will be reviewed and updated as needed.

STUDENT AND FAMILY RESOURCES

Stoughton Parent Engagement Center

131 Pine Street
781-344-7007 X7729
www.stoughtonschools.org

Stoughton Public Library

84 Park Street
781-344-2711
www.stoughton.org/library

Stoughton Youth Commission

110 Rockland Street
www.stoughtonyouthcommission.org

Stoughton Recreation Department

15 Pleasant Street
781-341-1300 X9244
www.stoughton.org/recreation-department

Stoughton English Learner Parent Advisory Council (SELPAC)

Info here
Info here

Stoughton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSEPAC)

Carolyn Campbell, President
781-233-6714

STOYAC

Stoughton Youth Athletic Club
Basketball/Softball/Football/Cheerleading
www.stoyac.org

Stoughton Youth Baseball

www.stoughtonyouthbaseball.org

Stoughton Youth Soccer

PO Box 234
781-344-1310
www.stoughtonsoccer.org

Stoughton Youth Lacrosse

www.stoughtonlax.org

Stoughton Extended Day

137 Walnut Street
781-344-5512
www.stoughtonextendedday.org

Old Colony YMCA-Stoughton

445 Central Street
781-344-2016
www.oldcolonyymca.org