

NORTH MIDDLESEX REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT



2021 - 2022 ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HANDBOOK

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

En caso de necesitar esta información traducida, por favor comuníquese con el director de la escuela de su hijo. 如果您需要翻譯此資訊,請與您孩子的校長聯繫

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

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

Masks:

In accordance with NMRSD School Committee Policy EBCFA to prevent transmission of COVID-19, all students must wear a mask/face covering when indoors on District premises and during school bus transportation. All mask/face coverings must cover a student's nose and mouth. Students that are unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition and/or a sincerely held religious belief are exempt from this requirement and must contact the Principal and provide the proper documentation.

Students who fail to wear a mask will be provided a mask; however, willful refusal to wear a mask will result in discipline consistent with School Committee Policy JIC including suspensions and/or emergency removals.

School District Policy:

Over the course of the school year, District policies may be revised or new policies created. When this occurs, the revised or new policy automatically goes into effect. District policies can be found at nmrsd.org.

Welcome Back Letter	8
NMRSD Vision Statement	9
Elementary School's Mission	9
NMRSD Elementary School Handbook	
Absent Line Procedures	10
Absences	10
Academic Environment	11
Behavior Code	11
Bicycles and Scooters	12
Cafeteria/Breakfast/Lunches	12
Care of Building and Property	13
Chain of Command	13
Civil Rights and Statement of Non-Discrimination	13
Comments on Dress	14
Corporal Punishment	14
Delayed School Opening	14
Dismissal at the End of the Day	14
Early Morning Arrivals	15
Early Release or In-Service Days	15
Electronic Devices	15
Email	15
Emergency Cards	15
Entrance Into the School	16
Field Trips	16
Food Allergies	16
Health Services-School Nurse's Role	16
Health Services-Children Who Become Ill at School	17
Health Services-Medication Policy	17
Health Services-Medication Permission Form	18
Homework	18
Instructional Students Support Team	19
Kindergarten/First Grade Entrance Requirements	20
Lost and Found	20

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act	20
NMRSD Extended Day	21
NMRSD SPED PAC NMRSD Special Education Parent Advisory Committee	21
Notices	22
Outreach Programs	22
Parent Committees	22
Parent -Teacher Conferences	22
Parent-Teacher Organizations	22
Party Invitations	22
Recess	23
Registering New Students	23
Report Cards K-4	23
Safety Drills	23
School Calendar	23
School Delays/Cancellation for Inclement Weather or Other Emergencies	24
School Counselor's Role	24
School Council	25
School District Policy	25
Services for Students with Disabilities	25
Sources of Assistance to Parents and Guardians for Social and Emotional Assistance	26
Student Conduct-Consequences for Violations to the Behavior Code	26
Suspension (Long-Term or Expulsion) From School	27
Tardy	27
Toy Brought From Home	27
Transportation	28
Transportation School Bus Regulations	28
Transportation School Bus Procedures	28
Use of School Equipment	29
Volunteering at the School	29
When Your Child Must Leave Early	29
Withdrawal of Student(s)	29
North Middlesex Regional School District Policies & Information Section	
District Policy Book	31
Access to Student Records	31
Log of Access	31
Access of Eligible Students/ Parents	31
Access of Authorized School Personnel	32
Access of Third Parties	32
NMRSD School Committee Order of Business	34

Parental Notification of Rights	35
Summary of Massachusetts Laws and Regulations Pertaining to Student Records	36
Inspection of Student Record	37
Rights of Non-Custodial Parents	37
Confidentiality of Student Records	37
Amendment of the Student Record	37
Destruction of Student Records	37
Directory Information	37

Appendix

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

School Committee 2021-2022

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

District Office Administration - 978-597-8713

Mr. Brad Morgan, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Nancy Milligan, Assistant Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Brad Brooks, Director of Special Education

504 Coordinators

Special Education Director (978) 597-8713 X1501

Coordinators for the Homeless

Special Education Director (978) 597-8713 X1501

Title VI

Assistant Superintendent (978) 597-8713 X1301

Title IX

DISTRICT COMMITTEES

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

WELCOME LETTER

To All Our Students and Families,

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

The towns of Ashby, Townsend and Pepperell have elementary schools that provide a quality education for students in grades kindergarten through grade four. These three schools work together to ensure a consistent, unified elementary experience and preparation for our middle school(s) and eventually for the North Middlesex Regional High School.

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

As part of our goal for frequent communication from our schools to your home we encourage you to utilize our online tools. Two valuable sources for information are the NMRSD website (<http://www.nmrtd.org/>) and the websites for our schools: Ashby Elementary School (<http://aes.nmrtd.org/>), Spaulding Memorial School (<http://sms.nmrtd.org/>) and Varnum Brook Elementary School (<http://vbes.nmrtd.org/>). During the school year, notices and newsletters will be either sent home or made available electronically on a regular basis to support our on-going commitment to communication.

We look forward to your involvement in our school!

Sincerely,

Anne Cromwell-Gapp, Ashby Elementary School Principal
Kate Guziejka, Spaulding Memorial School Principal
Tara Hanley, Varnum Brook Elementary School Principal

NMRSD VISION STATEMENT

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

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS' MISSION

-Our students will be nurtured to become life-long learners with respect for themselves and their fellow learners, teachers and community.

-Our students will learn in a safe, secure environment that promotes a climate that is comfortable and respectful of the individual differences of all those in our school community.

-Our students will receive a foundation of social development through a DESE approved curriculum, along with learning and applying skills that allows them to recognize, report and stop bullying-type behavior.

-Our students will receive instruction consistent with the Common Core Standards in which they will be taught the explicit skills of reading, mathematics, writing and communication so that they can, in turn, read to learn, be logical thinkers and problem solvers, communicate their thoughts, defend their ideas, critique the reasoning of others and explore worlds unseen.

-Our students will take an active role in their education by engaging in discussions, exploring existing and new-found interests through reading, questioning, researching, and writing.

-Our students will be assessed and celebrated for achievements of skills, as well as demonstrations of their individual growth.

-Our students will have the opportunity to build a foundation and love for music, arts, technology, literacy and physical education, and realize how these disciplines enhance the curriculum.

-Our students will know that they are important to all those involved in their education and that their thoughts, feelings and actions matter in each area of their school day.

ABSENCE LINE PROCEDURE

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

Each day the absentee list is compared with the recorded messages left by parents. If you do not call when your child is absent or tardy, you will be called at the telephone numbers you provide.

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

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

ABSENCES

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

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

Excused Absence: The following types of absences are considered to be excused as long as proper documentation is submitted:

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

ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

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

BEHAVIOR CODE

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

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

The following is a list of our behavior code:

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

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

BICYCLES AND SCOOTERS

Because of the large volume of traffic at each school's location and for safety reasons, children are not permitted to ride bicycles or scooters to school.

CAFETERIA/BREAKFAST/LUNCHES

This year, school breakfast and lunches are being provided by Fresh Pick's Cafe and they will be free for the 2021-2022SY. Breakfast is available every day except on delayed openings. Lunch is available every full school day and on delayed opening days. Menus are posted on the school website and on the Fresh Pick's Cafe website each month. Lunches conform to all state and federal lunch program guidelines.

CARE OF BUILDING AND PROPERTY

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

CHAIN OF COMMAND

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

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

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

CIVIL RIGHTS AND STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

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

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

COMMENTS ON DRESS

Students are expected to be neat, clean, and orderly in their appearance. When a particular form or deficiency in grooming, appearance, or dress is deemed to be a safety or health problem or disruptive to the school day, parents will be contacted.

We also advise parents to please be aware of the activities their children participate in during the school day. Parents and guardians should be aware of the following:

Play clothes and sneakers are needed for gym class;

During the winter, recess is regularly held outside, therefore, appropriate dress such as mittens or gloves, hats, jackets, long pants, snow pants and boots are recommended for outdoor recess. Students may be held in from recess if they do not have appropriate attire.

When boots are worn to school, children should not wear them in the classroom. It is suggested that some other shoes be kept at school to wear inside the school building. Slippers and flip flops are not encouraged for safety reasons.

It is important that each child have a school bag for carrying papers and projects each day. This bag should be easy for your child to open and close; and

All articles of clothing (jackets, hats, boots, etc.), lunch boxes, and school bags **should be labeled inside with your child's name.**

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

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

DELAYED SCHOOL OPENING

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

DISMISSAL AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL DAY BY A PARENT/ GUARDIAN

A **note** to the classroom teacher is **required** of anyone picking up a child in kindergarten through grade 4 at the end of the school day. Changes **will not** be accepted over the telephone.

*Please note: An email will not be accepted as dismissal instructions, as we may not be able to view it during the busy school day, nor always be able to confirm from whom it is being sent.

Please refer to the separate arrival/dismissal procedure in the first day packet.

EARLY MORNING ARRIVALS

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

EARLY RELEASE OR IN-SERVICE DAYS

Please check with your elementary school on specific dismissal time. Please make sure your child's teacher knows whether to send your child home or to the baby-sitter or daycare provider. **Written notes are required.**

We want to emphasize the importance of consistent and regular student attendance at school. We ask our parents to make every effort to have their children at school on time each day that they are in good health. Your child will be marked tardy based on your school's entrance time. While we realize that there may be times during the school year when a child, for some reason, must be somewhere other than at school during the school day, we ask your cooperation in scheduling appointments outside of school hours whenever possible. Please be aware if your child is not in school for a total of 3 hours and 15 minutes they will be recorded absent.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

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

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

EMAIL

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

EMERGENCY CARDS

Two emergency cards are **required** for every student. These cards will be sent home soon after school opens. Parents are requested to complete them, sign and return them promptly. The cards should list neighbors, relatives, or childcare providers who can be notified in case a child becomes ill at school and needs transportation from school if a parent is not available. Those listed must live within a reasonable driving distance of the school.

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

ENTRANCE INTO THE SCHOOL

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

FIELD TRIPS

Once or twice a year, children may take an educational trip to enhance their grade level curriculum. Parents are given information, via school notice, prior to the trip. The fees charged for field trips are based on admission costs and costs of transportation. Students are expected to exhibit appropriate behavior reflecting school-wide rules and procedures while on a field trip. NMRSD nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities are provided in such a manner as necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation.

Classroom teachers will obtain chaperones for each field trip. Parents who are not serving as chaperones are not to meet their children at the field trip site as additional adults create a safety issue. Chaperones must have a CORI check on file with the school district in order to be chosen as a chaperone. The CORI form used by North Middlesex Regional School District requires you to verify your identity by showing a photo I.D. in person when completing the form.

FOOD ALLERGIES

The prevalence of food allergies has increased in the school-aged population. In an effort to provide a safe environment for all students, we respectfully request the cooperation of all families in the implementation of the following policies: Any parent of a student who has a

Physician-documented food allergy is asked to meet with the nurse at the start of the school year to formulate an appropriate allergy action plan. The parents of children who have physician-documented allergies are asked to send in a supply of non-perishable "safe treats and beverages" that their child may consume when snacks or refreshments are sent in by other families to be shared. These "safe treats and beverages" will be kept in the classroom in a snack box or chest, and given to the child

when celebrations occur. Non-food items are preferred for celebrations (e.g., pencils, stickers, etc).

HEALTH SERVICES and SCHOOL NURSE'S ROLE

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

CHILDREN WHO BECOME ILL AT SCHOOL

When a child becomes ill at school, he/she is sent to the health room to see the school nurse. If the nurse feels the child should go home, she/he contacts the parents. If a parent is not available, a relative or neighbor designated on the Student Emergency Card will be notified in order to take the child from school. Have several people listed for this purpose. Forms will be sent home. It is the responsibility of the school nurse to determine if a child may not stay in school due to illness. When contacted by the school nurse, a parent/guardian must make arrangements to pick-up their child in a timely manner.

MEDICATION POLICY

In compliance with Massachusetts General Law and for the safety of our students, this medication policy has been written and will be strictly enforced.

- The policy for administration of medications, whether prescribed or over-the-counter, during school hours, is as follows:
- Medication must be accompanied by a MEDICAL PERMISSION FORM signed by both the physician and parent. A signed physician's order, stipulating specific diagnosis requiring treatment, accompanied by a MEDICATION PERMISSION FORM signed by parent will also be accepted.
- Medication must be supplied by the parent in the original pharmacy container. (Please ask your pharmacist to provide a second container and bring only the amount of medication needed to school.)
- Medication is kept locked in the nurse's office and is dispensed by the school nurse. For their own safety and the safety of other students, students are not allowed to carry medication around during school. Parents must bring prescription medications and over the counter medications into the school. They should not be sent to school with the student. When a physician deems it necessary for a student to have immediate access to medication (inhaler), the

parent will provide documentation from the physician stipulating such necessity and confirmation that the student has been advised of cautions and proper use of the inhaler in school.

- Psychotropic medication, such as Ritalin, may only be given by obtaining certification from the Department of Public Health. In order to accomplish this, the school must file the following forms:
 - a. Parent/Guardian Consent Form
 - b. Physician's Form
 - c. Application for Certification Form

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

MEDICATION PERMISSION FORM

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

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

Physician's Order

Physician:

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

Student's Name: _____ Name of
School: _____
Diagnosis: _____
Medication Prescribed: _____ Dosage
Prescribed: _____
Time during the school day to be given: _____

Duration of medication: _____
Additional comments: _____

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

I, the undersigned, give permission to the school nurse to administer the above named medication to my child. I understand that school personnel are not responsible for any problems arising from the taking of this medication, its side effects (if any), or for the

omission of medication. I further agree to indemnify and hold harmless the School Committee and its agents and servants against all claims as a result of any or all acts performed during this authority.

Date _____ Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Telephone No. _____

(Please return to the school nurse)

HOMEWORK

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

These primary purposes are sometimes overshadowed by equally compelling reasons educators offer as justification for the assignment of homework:

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

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

1. All projects assigned will reflect the primary purpose(s) of homework, will be given sufficient time for completion, and will not be due immediately upon return from vacation.
2. Daily homework at the elementary level will generally be assigned for 10 minutes of study per grade level. Thus, the grade 4 student can expect nightly assignments that can be completed in approximately 40 minutes.
3. All homework assignments will be assessed in some fashion by the teacher and the student. Collected homework will be returned to the student in a timely fashion.
4. Teachers will communicate in a timely manner with parents when homework assignments are not being completed. Parents will communicate with teachers if their children are experiencing difficulty with assignments.
5. Families are encouraged to utilize the resources available through the school to assist students with the successful completion of assignments.

INSTRUCTIONAL STUDENT SUPPORT TEAM

The Instructional Student Support Team called the (ISST) consists of a team of administrators and teachers. The Team meets with the classroom teacher to discuss any “at risk” student. After reviewing records, observations and modifications an action plan will be put in place. You will be notified if your child is being discussed by the classroom teacher. **Parents who feel that their child is at risk should talk with the classroom teacher about their concerns.**

KINDERGARTEN/FIRST GRADE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS

Children entering the kindergarten program must be five (5) years of age prior to September 1 of the year they enter school. Children entering 1st grade must be six (6) years of age prior to September 1 of the year they enter school. A copy of the child's birth certificate must be presented to the school prior to the entrance date.

A physical examination within a six month period of entrance is a school health requirement. (Forms are available in the school office.)

The following immunizations are required and immunization records, as listed:

Kindergarten Requirements*

1. DPT – 5 doses
2. Polio – 4 doses
3. MMR – 2 doses
4. Hepatitis B – 3 doses
5. Varicella (chicken pox) – 1 dose/or the date of the disease in writing from the doctor.
6. A lead test
7. A physical exam

***Your child will be denied entrance into school if the above requirements are not met. Exceptions will be made in accordance with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. Please call the school nurse if you have any questions.**

Screening for kindergarten is required by the Massachusetts State Department of Education. Appointments will be made at the time of registration. The purpose of this screening is to identify children who may be unable to progress effectively in a regular education program. This screening is not designed to determine whether or not the child is ready for kindergarten.

LOST AND FOUND

Each school has an area for lost and found clothes and other items. Families are invited to claim articles at any time. Lost books, glasses, and jewelry can be found at the school office. **Please do not send valuables to school with your child. At the end of the year, all unclaimed articles will be given to charity.**

MOTOR VEHICLES

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

MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS ASSISTANCE ACT

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

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

NMRSD Extended Day Program

NMRSD is running an Extended Day program at each elementary school for the 2021-2022 SY. The program will run every day when school is in session from 7:00-9:00 am and then in the afternoon from 3:00-4:30 pm or 3:00-6:00 pm. Please reach out to Mrs. C at agapp@nmrsd.org for more information or check out our website - [Extended Day Program / Before and After School Care \(nmrsd.org\)](https://www.nmrsd.org/Extended-Day-Program/Before-and-After-School-Care).

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

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

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

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

For SEPAC information, please contact the special education office.

NOTICES

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

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

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

PARENT COMMITTEES

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

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

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

PARENT-TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Each elementary school has a very active parent-teacher organization with many supportive members. Functions and events are held throughout the school year which encourage family involvement and provide opportunities for participation in school activities. Some of these events produce funds that allow for the purchase of educational materials and other supplies for each grade level. We encourage your attendance as we value your input and ideas in establishing our plans for the year's activities.

PARTY INVITATIONS

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

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

RECESS

All students have a recess after lunch. Recess is a time for relaxing, exercising, playing, socially communicating, and renewal for learning. The school rules and classroom rules are guidelines for appropriate behavior at recess. The school playgrounds are always supervised by school personnel. Children wishing to play on the equipment cannot be wearing flip flops. Children who disobey rules may lose recess privileges. Bullying, fighting, biting, threatening, swearing, or sexual harassment is strictly forbidden and may result in other disciplinary measures. Please dress your child appropriately for all weather conditions. Weather permitting, children will go outside. **PLEASE NOTE: Children who cannot participate in outdoor recess due to any type of medical or health issue MUST HAVE A DOCTOR'S NOTE EXCUSING THEM FROM OUTDOOR RECESS.** Children will not be excused from outdoor recess with only a parent's or guardian's request. **PLEASE NOTE:** Parents may not attend recess with their child.

REGISTERING NEW STUDENTS

Elementary school age children must be registered through our Online Registration through Aspen is now available for families registering new students. Directions can be seen at [Registration / Online Registration \(nmrsd.org\)](http://Registration / Online Registration (nmrsd.org)). A physical is required within 1 year of transfer into our school system.

REPORT CARDS GRADES K-4

The school year for grades 1-4 is divided into three marking periods with report cards sent home via the children. Kindergarten report cards will be issued twice a year and

will be sent home via the children. Please consult the website calendar for the dates on which report cards will be sent home.

For K-4 students, upon receiving each report card (except the one at the year's end), the parent or guardian must sign the report card envelope where indicated and return it to school.

SAFETY DRILLS

Fire, intruder and bus evacuation drills will be conducted throughout the school year.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

<https://www.nmrtd.org/Page/2#calendar1/20200915/month>

SCHOOL DELAY/CANCELLATION FOR INCLEMENT WEATHER OR OTHER EMERGENCIES

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

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

WBZ-TV (Channel 4)
WCVB-TV (Channel 5)
WHDH-TV (Channel 7)
FOX25-TV (Channel 25)

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

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

Excessive snowfall.
Dangerous ice/road conditions.

Flood conditions.
Hurricane and high wind conditions.
Problems at schools such as heat, power, or water failure.
District schools are being used as emergency shelters.

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

SCHOOL COUNSELOR'S ROLE

The school guidance counselor/ adjustment counselor is an integral part of your child(ren)'s school. His/her role is multifaceted and interconnects with a wide range of people. These include, for example, parents, teachers, students, administration, agencies and community organizations. Through these interactions communication is enhanced, understandings are developed, and a range of concerns are resolved.

It is through counseling students, individually or in groups, consulting with parents, teachers and others, coordinating the efforts of various people, and co-teaching in a classroom alongside the classroom teachers, that the counselor contributes greatly to the overall development of the students.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Educational Reform Act of 1993 called for the establishment of a school council at each school within the Commonwealth. School Council meetings are held regularly throughout the school year and are open to the public.

The School Council is made up of the following members: the building principal who serves as one of the two co-chairs, parents who are elected by each elementary school, teachers who are elected by the faculty and one community representative.

SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY

In accordance with government orders and DESE requirements to prevent transmission of COVID-19, all students must wear a mask/face covering when on District premises and during school bus transportation. All mask/face coverings must cover an individual's nose and mouth. Individuals that are unable to wear a mask due to a medical condition are exempt from this requirement and must contact the Principal.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Some students with disabilities may require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to enable them to make effective progress in school. Parents or teachers may refer students to the NMRSD Special Education Department for an evaluation. Upon receipt of the parent(s)' consent, an evaluation will be conducted and a Team meeting

will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If a student is found eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

Additionally, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Pursuant to Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

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

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

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

STUDENT CONDUCT

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

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS TO THE BEHAVIOR CODE

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

8. Out-of-School Suspension

- Students and parents/guardians will be given 24-hour's notice for teacher detentions and office detentions unless parents/guardians are notified and agree that the consequence will be served on the same day it was issued.
- Administrators reserve the right to meet with students at any time in order to gather information related to a violation of the student handbook.
- Any vaporization or electronic cigarette/cigar paraphernalia or material that is confiscated by the administration will be discarded as waste.
- Any controlled substance paraphernalia or material that is confiscated by the administration will be turned over to the local police department.
- ADMINISTRATORS RESERVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE ADDITIONS OR AMENDMENTS TO THE DISCIPLINE CODE IF THE NEED ARISES AND TO IMPOSE ADDITIONAL DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCES WHERE DETERMINED TO BE APPROPRIATE.

SUSPENSION (LONG-TERM OR EXPULSION) FROM SCHOOL

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

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

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

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

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

TARDY

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

TOYS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Students may bring a toy to school for use at recess; however, the school is not responsible for any personal toys brought in by a student that is lost, stolen or broken. A teacher may request that no toys are brought in if it is interfering with students’ learning and the teacher may confiscate the toys if the request is not followed.

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

TRANSPORTATION

SCHOOL BUS REGULATIONS and PROCEDURES

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

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

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

While on the Bus:

- Keep hands and head inside the bus. Keep your hands to yourself and don’t touch others inappropriately. Horseplay or fighting is not permitted on or around the school bus at any time.
- Assist in keeping the bus safe and sanitary. (DO NOT throw things on the bus, spit or litter the bus)

- Keep voice tone at a moderate level. Do not swear or use vulgar or derogatory language.
- Bullying, discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment or assault, will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action.
- Damage to bus equipment/property will be paid for by the offender.
- DO NOT leave books, lunches, or other articles on the bus.
- Keep books, packages, coats and other objects out of aisles.
- Help look after the safety and comfort of small children.
- DO NOT throw objects inside the bus or out the bus window.
- DO NOT leave or change your seat while the bus is in motion.
- Be courteous to fellow pupils and the bus driver.
- Remain quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
- Remain on the bus unless requested to leave by the bus driver in an emergency situation.
- Sit where you are told.
- A written permission slip from the parent/guardian is necessary in order for a student to get on or off the bus at a place other than his/her regular bus stop. Students must get on or off the bus at their assigned stop.
- Continued refusal to promptly obey the directions of the driver or refusal to obey bus regulations may cause a student to be referred to the principal for disciplinary action.
- Possessing a weapon, lighting matches, smoking, alcohol and drug use on the bus are prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

After Leaving Bus:

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

Extra-Curricular and Field Trips:

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

Bus Contractor:

Dee Bus Company-(978) 597-2860

See District policy for Bus Disciplinary Action

USE OF SCHOOL EQUIPMENT

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

VOLUNTEERING AT THE SCHOOL

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

WHEN YOUR CHILD MUST LEAVE EARLY

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

WITHDRAWAL OF STUDENT(S)

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

POLICIES, PROCEDURES and INFORMATION

PLEASE NOTE

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

DISTRICT POLICY BOOK

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

<https://www.nmrtd.org/domain/38>

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECORDS

(1) **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.

(2) **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.

(3) 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.

(4) 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.

(5) 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.

(a) 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).

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

(c) 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).

(d) 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.

(e) 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.

Regulatory Authority:

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

NMRSD SCHOOL COMMITTEE ORDER OF BUSINESS

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

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

* At this point in the meeting, the Chair may recognize any member of the public who wishes to address the Committee. Committee members may ask to have a member of the public recognized. In the event a member of the public does wish to speak, they should receive a copy of the procedures they are expected to follow. In the event a printed copy is unavailable, the Chair shall clearly explain the rules for addressing the Committee.

- a. The Committee must be informed of the topic to be addressed. Whenever possible, advance notice of the topic to be addressed should be given to the Chair or a member of the Committee. It should be determined that an individual has followed the appropriate chain of authority. Any written statement should be presented to the Committee and summarized when speaking.
- b. Persons addressing the Committee may address only issues over which the Committee has direct control. The topic should deal only with agenda items.
- c. A member of the public may have two minutes to address the Committee, unless the majority of the Committee wishes to grant more time to an individual.

- d. No motions or actions should be made or taken by the Committee during this portion of the meeting. The Chair may recognize the Superintendent, other administrators or members of the Committee if they wish to ask questions or address comments specific to the topic that has been raised. No one shall be recognized until the speaker has finished addressing the Committee or has used the allotted time.
- e. The Committee must insure that the rights of district employees and students are protected.
- f. Persons should avail themselves of NMRSD policy books available in all public libraries in the district and in each school in the district.
- g. This policy will be included in each school handbook.

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

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

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

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

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

- 1. *Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of*

Education (DOE): political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent; mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; sex behavior or attitudes; illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

2. *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of the following:* any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under state law; and activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
3. *Inspect upon request and before administration or use:* protected information surveys of students created by a third party; instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

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

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

- the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution;
- the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by DOE; and

- any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

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

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

SUMMARY OF MASSACHUSETTS LAWS AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT RECORDS

I. Inspection of the Student Record

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

II. Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H and 603 CMR 23.07 specify detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please see 'ACCESS FOR NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' below.

III. Confidentiality of Student Records

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

IV. Amendment of the Student Record

Eligible students and/or parents have the right to add additional information, comments, data, and/or other relevant material to the student record. Eligible students and/or parents also have the right to request in writing that the student record be amended. Any such request should be directed to the principal. The building principal

will render a written decision on such a request within one week. A denial of a request to amend a student record may be appealed to the Superintendent.

V. Destruction of Student Records

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

VI. Directory Information

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

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

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

If you do not want directory information from your child's education records disclosed without your prior written consent, please notify the Principal in writing. The North Middlesex Regional School District has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Email address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level

- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

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