

ALBERT F. FORD MIDDLE SCHOOL



STUDENT AND PARENT/GUARDIAN HANDBOOK

2019-2020

TEL 508-998-0265

Fax 508-998-7316

<https://www.acushnetschools.us/albert-f-ford-middle-school>

OUR MISSION

The mission of the Albert F. Ford Middle School is to provide a safe and supportive environment where students are encouraged to respect themselves and others, accept personal responsibility, and achieve academic success.

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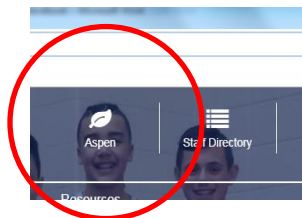
PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

This handbook was developed to help you better understand our school program and how our school functions. No handbook can completely explain all the policies and practices of a school. It merely takes notice of the fact that the school is obligated to treat every student as an individual and assess every situation in the light of how it affects the education and development of the individual student. The administration reserves the right to alter any of the recommended policies or procedures prescribed within this student handbook. When applying the policies and regulations of the school, students will always be accorded their due process. Massachusetts General Law supersedes the provisions of this handbook, to the extent that any provision of this handbook is in conflict with the law.

As a student of the Ford Middle School, you and your peers have the right to:

- Quality of Effort and Work- Hold high expectations for yourself, including perseverance and effort in your work.
- Engagement- Be motivated and engaged in the work that you do.
- Honor Diversity- Celebrate and respect differences in yourself and others, including, cultural, learning styles, needs and interests.
- Safe Learning Environment- A safe physical and intellectual learning environment where you can take academic risks and behaviors that interfere with learning are prevented.
- Collaborative Learning Environment-Develop interpersonal and group communication skills.
- Motivation- Identify your strengths, interests and needs; ask for support when appropriate; take academic risks; challenge yourself to learn.
- Respectful Environment- Support and response to conflicts or misunderstandings will be addressed.
- Clear Expectations- Clear communication and enforcement of standards for work, effort and behavior.
- High Expectations- Opportunities to master challenging material through effective effort, rather than having to depend on innate ability.
- Access Knowledge- Instruction, materials, and assessments will be challenging but accessible to all students.

We encourage all parents to use the Parent Portal piece of Aspen(X2). This parent portal will allow all parents access to grades, attendance and discipline. If you would need help with a username and password, please email our registrar Kathy Chabot at kathrynychabot@acushnetschools.us. Once you have a user name and password, you can log in from our homepage <https://www.acushnetschools.us/albert-f-ford-middle-school> and click on the APSEN link in the top right hand of the page



Have a great year!

Mrs. Silvia and *Ms. Ruggeri*

PBIS Behavior Matrix

	Classroom	Hallway	Restroom	Cafeteria	Physical Education	Bus	Field Trip	Assemblies	Emergency
R E S P E C T F U L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions • Use polite school language • Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself • Respect classroom & other's property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself • Stay to the right • Respect student work on walls • Use polite school language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself • Respect other's privacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions • Use polite school language • Listen attentively when person is on the microphone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions. • Use polite school language • Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself • Take care of equipment <p><u>Locker room</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect other's property • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions from driver & monitor • Use polite school language • Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions • Use polite school language • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions • Use polite school language • Pay full attention to the assembly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen & follow directions from adult • Walk quickly and quietly to assigned area • Keep hands, feet & objects to yourself
R E S P O N S I B L E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive to class on time • Be prepared for class • Fill in your agenda • Turn in completed homework • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk directly to your destination and back • Open locker at designated times only • Show your pass at all times • Keep outside doors closed • Notify adults of strangers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign in and out of class • Show your pass at all times • Flush toilet • Wash your hands with soap 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up after yourself • Follow bathroom/drink procedures • Keep all open food in cafeteria when leaving • Leave promptly when class is called • Clean up after yourself • Notify custodian of spills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change clothes & sneakers • Sit in attendance spot when entering gym • Remove all jewelry • Ask to use restroom and get water <p><u>Locker Room</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change quickly and line up • Use the restroom • Use moderate amount of deodorant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrive at bus stop on time • Stay in your seat • Keep aisles clear • Keep track of your belongings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Return permission slips and money on time • Remain with chaperones at all times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter and exit quietly • Stay seated • Ask appropriate questions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be quiet & listen • Stay in line • Stay with your class • Report emergencies to adults
C H A R A C T E R	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be helpful • Be considerate • Go above and beyond • Work cooperatively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help • Return lost items • Keep hallways clean and clear • Use polite school language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report issues to adults • Keep bathroom walls clean • Pick up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be helpful • Be friendly • Eat with manners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show good sportsmanship • Respect all skill levels • Encourage each other • Be positive & enthusiastic • Give your best effort 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be patient getting on and off bus • Be helpful to others • Return lost items 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooperate and work with others in your group • Be polite • Show school pride 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applaud appropriately • Be polite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help others • Be polite
	• Voice level 0,1,2	• Voice level 0,1	• Voice level 1	• Voice level 0,1,2	• Voice level 0,1,2,3	• Voice level 0,1,2	• Voice level 0,1,2	• Voice level 0	• Voice level 0

Albert F. Ford Middle School

Contact Phone Numbers 2019-2020

School Office Hours are from 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM, Monday-Friday.

Ford Middle School	Main Office	508-998-0265
Ford Middle School	Fax	508-998-7316
Ford Middle School	Health Office	508-998-0267

To contact individual classrooms, please use the Main Office number.

Acushnet Public School District	Office of Student Services	508-998-0258
Acushnet Public School District	Office of Student Services Fax	508-998-8321
Acushnet Public School District	Superintendent's Office	508-998-0260
Acushnet Public School District	Superintendent's Fax	508-998-0262
Acushnet Public School District	Business Office	508-998-0261
Acushnet Elementary School	Main Office	508-998-0255
Acushnet Elementary School	Fax	508-998-0259
Acushnet Elementary School	Health Office	508-998-0257
Amaral Bus Co., Acushnet Office	Transportation Office	508-995-5550

Acushnet Public Schools Names to Know:

Superintendent of Schools	Dr. Paula Bailey
Director of Student Services	Ms. Kim Bettencourt
School Resource Officer (SRO)	Officer Derek Cathcart
Principal, Acushnet Elementary School	Mrs. Susan Campinha Beck
Asst. Principal, Acushnet Elementary School	Mr. Scott Johnson
Principal, Ford Middle School	Mrs. Michelle Silvia
Asst. Principal, Ford Middle School	Ms. Angela Ruggeri
Business Director	Mrs. Krisitn Flynn
Technology Director	Mr. Chris Oliver
Transportation Director, Amaral Bus Co.	Mr. Andrew Amaral
Director, School Nutrition Department	Mrs. Jeanne Sheridan

EMAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:

To email a member of our staff, check the directory:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YJV00VQPrIKc5Z7e-zXLPJEvceP37CzO/view>

TELEPHONE CONTACT INFORMATION:

Please contact the main desk if you wish to contact a member of our staff by phone. The secretary will connect you to the voice mail of that staff member.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Families are responsible for reviewing the content of the handbook with their children. Extra copies are available at the main office and may be requested in writing. Student handbooks are also available for viewing on the school website at <https://www.acushnetschools.us/albert-f-ford-middle-school>

STATEMENT OF SCHOOL VISION/PHILOSOPHY

The philosophy of our school is centered on supporting positive growth and development of students as they pass from childhood to adolescence. Our school strives to educate the whole child by building character, increasing knowledge, and providing every child opportunities to excel and reach his or her goals.

Here at the Albert F. Ford Middle School we strive to promote a strong sense of community between students, staff, and parents. Our core philosophies are based on the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports Model (PBIS). This philosophy recognizes that all members of our community strive to demonstrate "FORD-itude" of RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, and CHARACTER. Please refer to our PBIS School Matrix (page 4) for expected student behaviors.

RESPECT: Polite and cooperative with others

RESPONSIBILITY: Dependable and makes good decisions

CHARACTER: Honest, trustworthy, and helpful at all times

SCHOOL-RELATED PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS: The following guidelines may be helpful for addressing concerns or problems.

1. Any concerns regarding a school-related matter should **first** be raised by the parent with the staff member **most directly involved**.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the building Assistant Principal. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the office (508-998-0265).
3. If the matter is still unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the Superintendent (508-998-0260).
4. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to bring to the attention of the School Committee by writing a letter to the Acushnet School Committee.

We urge parents to use the progressive steps outlined above as most problems can be addressed satisfactorily by the teacher or other staff member most directly involved. Starting "at the top" inevitably results in no decision and the matter will be directed to the staff member most directly involved. The following are examples (not an all-inclusive list) of issues that are most appropriately addressed at the levels indicated:

Teachers:

Student homework assignments, quizzes, tests

Course content, instructional materials, academic progress, extra help

Issues related to classroom discipline, relationships with students and staff

Guidance Counselor/School Adjustment Counselor:

Problems at home and/or at school; teacher & student, student and other students

Personal matters relating to student development, behaviors, interactions with others

Referrals for outside agencies

Course selection and student schedule /High school and vocational school decisions/applications

Student records

504's

Office of Student Services:

Request for special education testing
Questions about English Language Learner services or homeless student services
Individualized Education Plan (IEP) questions/concerns
Compliance under Civil Rights law (including Title IX and Section 504) and regulations

Principals/Assistant Principals:

Any issue arising when no other staff member can be identified
Student placement issues (instructional level, team placement, etc.)
Instructional and extra-curricular program issues
Issues related to the physical plant
Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel
School-wide discipline, bus conduct, school policies/procedures

District Curriculum Coordinator:

Curriculum planning/development
Professional development

Superintendent:

Questions regarding application of School Committee policies or administrative procedures
School Committee meetings and agenda items
Any school system records or documents
Budgetary matters, hiring and supervision of staff
Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel which were not addressed at the Principal's level
Concerns or questions about the curriculum
Transportation matters

School Committee:

Matters pertaining to School Committee policy and procedures
Concerns about specific courses to be added/deleted/changed
Complaints/concerns about the Superintendent
School Committee agenda items and minutes of meetings
Budgetary matters
Long-range planning (facilities, programs, etc.)

Frequently Asked Questions:

- 1) What time does school start? 8:00 A.M.
- 2) What time are students dismissed? Dismissal time: 2:45 P.M.
- 3) I have to dismiss my child early for a doctor's appointment. What is the latest time I can dismiss my child before the end of the day? If you need to dismiss your child for doctor/dentist appointments or for any other reason, it must be before 2:30 PM. Send in a note with your child in the morning so that the office knows what time you will be dismissing your child and please name the adult who be dismissing your child.

- 4) Where can I see a calendar of events for the school? The Ford Middle School website is updated with new information for parents & students including a calendar of events for the school.
- 5) My child is going home with a friend and taking the bus with them. Is that ok? No. Students that ride the bus must be dropped off at their designated location based on their home address. We do not allow bus transfers. If you have any questions, please email amaralbusco@gmail.com or call Kelsey Beauregard at Amaral's Bus 508-995-5550.
- 6) Do I need to notify the school if my child is out sick? Yes. Please contact the Ford Middle School nurse's office at 508-998-0267 to report that your child will be out due to an illness.
- 7) If I call my child out sick, will that be an excused attendance? No. All absences are considered unexcused with the exception of the following: medical appointment/ illness (with doctor's note), death in family, religious holiday, court appearance, suspension, school approved visit to a high school, and disability-related absences. All other absences are considered unexcused.
- 8) What if you are not in school (or were dismissed or arrived significantly late) on the day of an after school event? You may not attend the event if you have been absent from school that day, unless extenuating circumstances prevail that have been discussed with an administrator.
- 9) What if I forget my lunch or lunch money? If a student is without lunch, they will be allowed to charge a lunch to their lunch account but that amount must be paid back the next day.
- 10) What do I do if I miss my bus? If it is in the morning, have your parents/guardians drive you to school. If it is after school, please report to the main office to call your parent-even if you have your own cell phone and can call your parent.
- 11) What do I do if I want to speak with your guidance counselor? Ask your teacher for an orange guidance paper. Fill it out completely and return it to your teacher. Your teacher will get it to the guidance counselor. The counselor will find you during the day to discuss your concerns.
- 12) What do I do if I am out sick? You can email your teacher to find out what you missed. You will be permitted the number of days to make-up work equal to the number of days absent (except in the case of a family vacation). Parents-You may also call the school to request work. Please call before 8:30 and plan on picking up the work in the afternoon after dismissal.
- 13) What happens if I have lost something in the school (books, musical instruments, sneakers and/or lunch box)? First check all your classrooms, the locker room and the cafeteria. If you still don't find, please check the lost and found box in the main hallway. Parents-Please feel free to check the lost and found throughout the year.
- 14) Can I ride my bicycle to school? Yes- Students who are riding bicycles or roller blades are required to wear an approved helmet, when riding to and from school. Students who do not wear approved helmets will not be allowed to ride on the property and must walk the bike once on school grounds. Bicycles must be parked in the bicycle racks on the south side of the building, and should be locked when not in use. Skateboards: Please leave them at home.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ABSENCES: Research demonstrates that it is important for students to attend school on a daily basis to ensure learning and growth. Frequent absenteeism is directly linked to poor grades and lack of academic progress. The more absences a student accumulates, the less he or she can be expected to adequately participate in and understand classroom activities. In addition, Massachusetts State Law requires that every boy and girl attend school each day that school is in session unless unable to do so because of illness or some other legitimate reason (MGL, Chapter 76, §§1, 2). Absences (not necessarily

sequential days) over 7 full days and 14 half days in a period of six months may be considered 'habitually truant.' Family vacations do not qualify as excused absenteeism under Massachusetts law. The school principal or a designee may ask to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance.

The school nurse will attempt to contact each parent/guardian who fails to contact the school to inform the school of their child's absence. Any student who is absent from school due to illness is not allowed on school grounds for extracurricular activities until they have returned from their illness. A student who is out for three or more consecutive days because of an illness or injury must bring in a doctor's note to verify the illness or injury. This doctor's note must specify the date(s) the doctor feels the student was too ill or injured to attend school.

Unexcused absences are unacceptable reasons for being absent from school. Parents/Guardians of students who are determined to have excessive absences from school will be identified and may be referred to the school attendance officer, who may refer the matter to the Department of Child and Family Services or the Bristol County Juvenile Court for violation of state law.

AFTER SCHOOL HOURS: In most cases, students remaining after school for teacher assistance, a school club, or for a detention will be dismissed at 3:45 PM, unless the activity he/she is staying after for is scheduled to end later, a student should be picked up at 3:45 PM. There is usually no supervision available after 3:45 PM, and your children should not remain without direct supervision from an activity supervisor or teacher.

ASBESTOS NOTIFICATION:

This notification is required by the Asbestos Emergency Response Act. A copy of our school's Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) Plan is available at the main office or the Superintendent's Office during regular school hours. Any inquiries regarding asbestos-containing materials in our schools should be directed to the Superintendent's Office.

BUSES: Our PBIS philosophy should be demonstrated by all students riding the bus. Riding the bus is a privilege. Students are expected to demonstrate respect, responsibility, and good character while riding the bus and waiting at bus stops. If a student does not follow the rules and regulations, disciplinary actions will occur. Depending on the severity and persistence of bus infractions, consequences may include, but are not limited to, warnings, seat assignments, bus probation, and suspension of bus privileges altogether. Each incident report will be mailed home to the child's parent/guardian. Please refer to our PBIS matrix for expected school bus behaviors.

General Guidelines:

- On the first offense, the driver/ monitor will speak to the student and give a verbal warning.
- All serious offenses are reported to the administration by the driver or monitor no later than the day following the incident.
- After a report of misconduct, action will be taken at the discretion of the administration.
- Any offense can result in loss of bus privilege from one to three days by action of the Principal.
- The Principal reserves the right to suspend students from the bus for longer than the normal three day period or to permanently expel students from the bus.

Behavior aboard the Bus:

- 1) When entering or leaving the bus, students must follow the instructions and directions of the bus driver.
- 2) Riders must remain in seats or in place when the bus is in motion.
- 3) Parents/Guardians will be responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus by their child.
- 4) The following behaviors are prohibited:
 - a. Pushing or wrestling
 - b. Annoying or harassing other passengers, either through verbal or physical conduct, or otherwise disturbing their possessions
 - c. Talking to the driver while he/she is driving
 - d. Throwing objects within the bus or out of the bus
 - e. Climbing over the seats
 - f. Opening or closing windows
 - g. Leaning out of the windows
 - h. Littering the bus
 - i. Whistling and shouting
 - j. Smoking, eating, or drinking
 - k. Any other violations of rules as set forth in this handbook

Behavior at the Bus Stop: Bus stops are viewed as an extension of the school. Orderly behavior and respect for private property are required. Bus riders must be on time at the bus stop. Bus drivers will not wait. Students are to wait for the bus at assigned stops in an orderly manner until the bus comes to a complete stop. They are to board the bus in an orderly fashion as directed by the driver. There may be consequences for students who do not behave properly at bus stops including, but not limited to, warnings, seat assignments, bus probation, and suspension of bus privileges altogether.

Bus Stops: Students must get on and off of the bus at his/her regular bus stop for the entire school year. This bus stop will be determined within the first week of the year but may be changed as determined by the bus company and school administration. A student who brings in a note to gain permission to ride a different bus will be denied his/her request. The administration has made this decision in order to avoid overcrowding and to maximize safety on our buses. This policy applies to all Ford Middle School students. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please direct your phone calls to the bus dispatcher or school administration (see contact information or the school website).

CAFETERIA:

Cost:	Full price lunch \$3.00	Reduced cost \$0.40
	Full price breakfast \$1.50	Reduced cost \$0.30
	Milk \$0.30	

Students should refer to the PBIS matrix for appropriate behaviors in the cafeteria.

Students are expected to conduct themselves in an orderly manner to and from the cafeteria. Once in the cafeteria, good manners, courtesy, and proper eating habits are expected. Students may choose their own tables and companions. Once a seat is chosen at the beginning of lunch, students may not

switch seats. They can sit in a different seat the next day. However, students may be assigned an eating location in or outside of the cafeteria if rules are not followed. Food and/or drinks are not to be removed from or consumed outside of the cafeteria. Students are not allowed to bring "power drinks" or soda to school at any time

The Acushnet School Nutrition Program provides students with wholesome, nutritious and Delicious meals that meet the USDA dietary guidelines for all Americans. Breakfast, lunch and healthy snacks are offered in each café. Menus are posted online along with nutritional and other valuable information. Students are offered 5 components at lunch: grains, meat or a meat alternate (protein), fruits, vegetables and milk. As required by the USDA, students must take at least 3 components as part of their lunch and one of those components must be a fruit or vegetable. Students are encouraged to take all 5 components. (For breakfast, students must take 3 food items.)

All foods and beverages sold or provided in the public schools comply with the Massachusetts School Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages and the district's Wellness Policy. This policy can be found on the district's website.

School Nutrition and Fitness:

School Nutrition and Fitness is a web based application that shows parents the nutrient and allergy information for every menu item we produce. The link for desktop & mobile versions is available at <http://apswildcatcafe.com/> and on the School Nutrition link on the district web page. You may sign up for emailed menus at the above link.

Meal Payment:

Students may pay for meals by cash, check or by using our Online Prepayment for Meals. We use www.myschoolbucks.com Please take advantage of the options to prepay your student's meal accounts. Prepaid meal accounts help the lunch lines go faster and give students more time to eat, relax, and play.

Online Free and Reduced Meal Applications are available on the home page district website:

We encourage all parents/guardians to fill out this form so the district can assess whether you are eligible for this program. It is imperative that these forms be returned as soon as possible so your child/children can benefit from this service. **It is important to make you aware that the district receives funding from the state based on the number of students enrolled in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.** Please return the form to your school office.

This process is highly confidential and this information is not shared with others. The forms are sent to the school nutrition office to be processed confidentially.

Parents/Guardians must fill out a new form every year. We honor the prior year's eligibility for 30 calendar days after the first day of school.

Meal Charging Policy:

Middle School Students will pay for meals each day. Middle School students will be allowed to charge a maximum of seven meals after their balance reaches zero. Once a student has charged the maximum, he/she will not be allowed to charge a la carte items, however he/she may be offered a designated menu alternate.

DISMISSAL PROCEDURE: A student requesting an early dismissal from school should give their homeroom teacher a note from his/her parent/guardian. The note should include the person who will be picking the student up from school, the time he/she will be picking up the student from school, and should be addressed to the assistant principal. When it is time for the student to be dismissed, the authorized adult dismissing the student must come to the main office and sign the student out. No student will be dismissed to a waiting car. Appropriate ID (including picture) is required when a person dismissing a student is unknown.

DRESS: The Ford Middle School has always taken pride in the appearance of our students. Students should dress in a manner that shows pride in themselves and their school, and are expected to dress and groom themselves suitably for school activities. The objective of this dress code is to ensure that student dress does not interfere with the educational environment of the school while allowing students to dress comfortably within these limits. We expect students to maintain the type of appearance that is not distracting or offensive to students, teachers, or the educational process of the school. There is appropriate and inappropriate attire for all of life's activities. Keeping these ideas in mind, please help your student adhere to the following guidelines.

- Tops with low necklines, without backs, strapless or that expose the midriff will not be permitted.
- Underwear exposed in any form will not be permitted.
- Pajamas, slippers, and other sleepwear will not be permitted.
- Skirts and shorts should be no shorter than fingertip length when measured with arms straight down the side of the leg.
- Hats, caps, hoods, scarves, bandanas, sweatbands, and sunglasses will not be permitted except on designated spirit days.
- Any clothing or jewelry with obscene, profane language or pictures will not be permitted.
- Clothing which promotes acts or substances that are illegal for the student's age will not be permitted.
- Students are not permitted to bring or wear outdoor clothing to class, with the exception of physical education. Outdoor clothing should be removed and secured in lockers for the duration of the school day. Outdoor clothing includes but is not limited to: coats/jackets, knitted hats, gloves/mittens, and scarves.
- Non-jewelry chains, chain wallets, and studded wristbands will not be permitted.
- Any other articles that may disrupt the learning environment.

The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing consistent with these guidelines. A student whose dress is considered inappropriate for school will be required to make arrangements for other, more appropriate, dress and may be removed from school.

Private Transportation Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures

How to drop off students in the morning (school doors open at 7:50 am)

Please note the district is most equipped and organized to have students ride the bus to and from school. Those opting to use private transportation may experience wait time and this does not excuse students tardy to school.

Option 1: "PARK & WALK"

Entrance: You may enter into the main entrance of the Acushnet Elementary School and park in the middle parking lot; there are plenty of open spots. Please have your child walk on the concrete walking lane or grass to the entrance door.

Exit: You may exit the parking lot by driving back towards the Acushnet Elementary School entrance.

(Please see following map for reference)

Option 2: "THE CHUTE"

Entrance: You may enter into the main entrance of the Acushnet Elementary School and wait in car line ("the chute"). Driver stays in the car. This line is called "the chute" - **Please, no driver should leave their car no matter where they are in the line order - including being one of the first cars in line.** This car line is created to ensure an efficient and safe drop off for your student. Please make sure you move up near entrance to ensure several cars can allow children to exit their car. **Also, you are not allowed to pass a car** unless instructed by one of the personnel supervising the drop off. We understand that a lot of people are trying to get to work in the morning and with everyone's cooperation, this procedure will ensure an efficient and safe drop off for everyone.

Exit: Once your child exits your car you can follow the car in front of you around through the parking area and exit the same way you came in. **Remember there is NO PASSING cars unless instructed by personnel.**

How to pick up students in the afternoon (students released at 2:45 pm)

Option 1: "PARK & WALK"

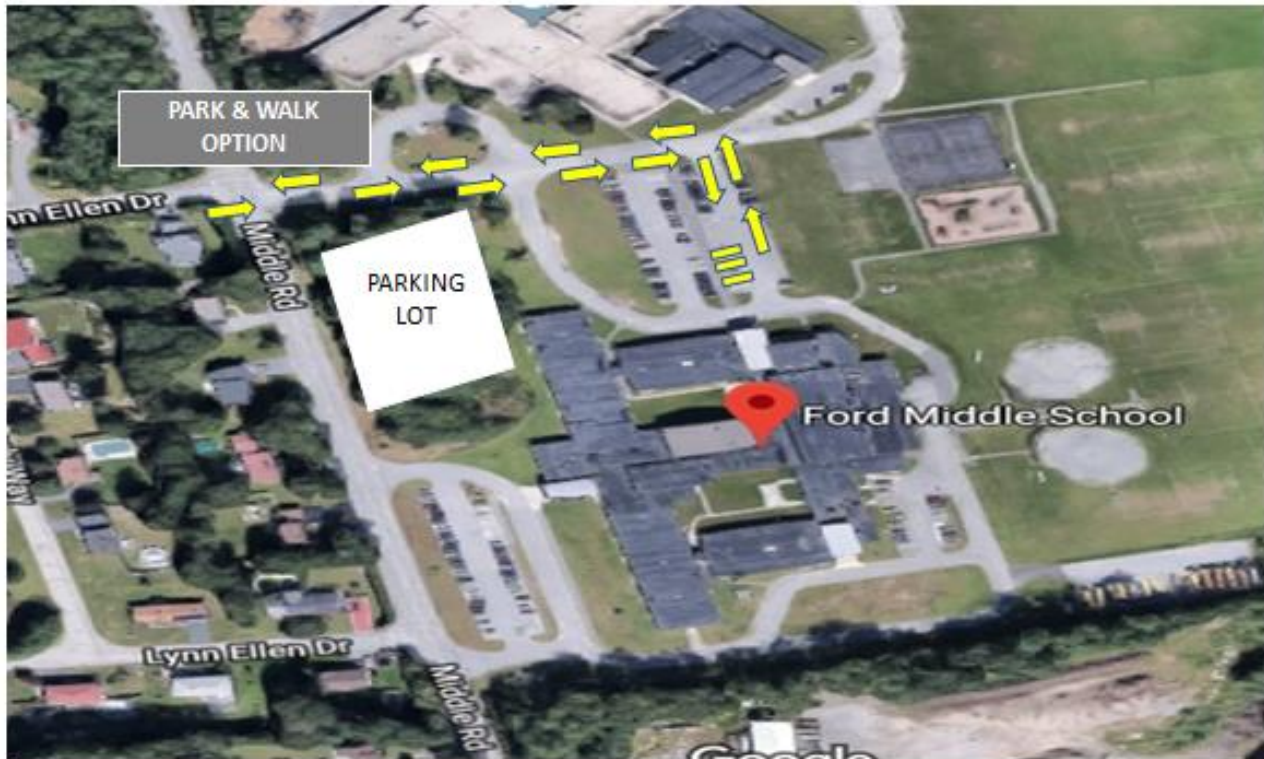
Entrance: You may enter into the main entrance of the Acushnet Elementary School and park in the middle parking lot, there are plenty of open spots and wait for your student to exit the building.

Exit: You may exit the parking lot by driving back towards the Acushnet Elementary School Entrance.

Option 2: "THE CHUTE"

Entrance: You may enter into the main entrance of the Acushnet Elementary School and wait in car line ("the chute"). Driver stays in the car. This line is called "the chute" - **Please, no driver should leave their car no matter where they are in the line order - including being one of the first cars in line.** This car line is created to ensure an efficient and safe pick up of your student. Please make sure you move up near entrance to ensure several cars can allow children to enter their car. **Also, you are not allowed to pass a car** unless instructed by one of the personnel supervising the drop off. **We understand that students exit the building at different times so IF your student is taking some time to exit and you are in the front of the chute line - be courteous to others and move around to the back of the Chute OR choose the Park and Walk option at that time. We understand that students/parents/guardians all have places to be after school and to make pick up as efficient and safe as possible please be mindful of others.**

Exit: Once your child enters your car you can follow the car in front of you around through the parking area and exit the same way you came in. **Remember there is NO PASSING a car unless instructed by personnel.**



EMERGENCY INFORMATION FORMS: Parents/Guardians of each student are asked to complete an Emergency information form so that we may locate parents/guardians or an approved adult in the case of an emergency or for school business. Only adults authorized on the form will be allowed to dismiss the listed student. It is essential that correct and up-to-date contact information be provided on these forms, as this information will be used to contact you in case of an emergency with your student. If a special situation requires a change in dismissal for your student, please contact the school so special arrangements can be made for your child. In order to keep our records up to date, please inform the office, if you change your address, phone number or work number.

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES:

The Ford Middle School teams, clubs, and activities are an extension of the school.

Students/players/club members are expected to exemplify the PBIS qualities upon which the school is based (refer to the PBIS matrix). Extracurricular activity guidelines have been implemented regarding the selection process of club/activity members and the participation in all inter/intramural sports at Ford Middle School. These guidelines are nondiscriminatory with regards to race, sex, color, religion, national origin, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness.

Academic achievement and behavior are considered when determining eligibility for extracurricular activities. Any student whose average is below a C- (70) may be prohibited from trying out for a team or from participating in a club or activity. In addition, any student whose average in a given subject drops below passing (65 or below) may be removed from the team until the student's grade is improved to a C- (70) or better. Academic eligibility will be determined by reviewing report cards, progress reports, and teacher recommendations and/or weekly reports.

EXTRA HELP/MAKE-UP WORK: Students are encouraged to stay with staff for extra help, as needed. Arrangements can be made directly with teachers for students to receive extra help after school. It is the student's responsibility to make up any work that he/she misses due to absence or discipline. Failure to do so may result in failing grades. Please refer to the make-up work citation located in the general information portion of the handbook.

FAMILY VACATIONS: Parents/Guardians are encouraged to schedule family vacations during school vacation periods or at other times when school is not in session. In the event a family vacation is scheduled during school time, parents/guardians are required to notify the school administration in writing prior to the start of the family vacation. Please note that MGL, Chapter 76, Section 2, requires students to attend school while it is in session unless a valid reason exists, so these absences are considered unexcused absences (see ABSENCES, above).

Pre-assigned work may be given prior to the absence period at the discretion of the teacher, provided that work does not require direct instruction. The student bears the responsibility of the actual completion of all work missed due to absences because of a family vacation. Students will be permitted to make-up all of the work missed within a period of time equal to half the number of days of the family vacation (not to exceed seven school days). Any work not made up after the allotted time will receive a zero.

FIELD TRIPS: Field trips may be arranged to complement our school programs. Students are to conduct themselves following the PBIS philosophy (refer to the PBIS matrix). All students are required to have permission slips and a signed release form on file prior to the activity or they will not be allowed to attend. For health and safety issues, a parent/guardian may be asked to accompany the child on a school field trip.

FIRE AND EVACUATION DRILLS: Each area of the building has assigned emergency exits. Emergency exits are posted in each room of the building. During evacuation drills, students are to follow the PBIS Matrix for emergency procedures. If an evacuation occurs while a student is separated from his/her class, they are to exit the building through the closest exit and report to the nearest teacher.

GRADE 8 GRADUATION POLICY: Only eighth grade students who are academically promoted to the ninth grade may participate in the grade eight promotion ceremonies.

GRADE 8 GRADUATION DANCE POLICY: The purchase or rental of tuxedos or prom gowns for students is not appropriate for the grade eight graduation dance and parents/guardians are encouraged not to incur such unnecessary expense for this school event. Attending the graduation dance is a privilege. Students must exhibit positive PBIS school behaviors (refer to the PBIS matrix). Those not academically promoted to the ninth grade or those demonstrating chronic disciplinary issues will not be able to attend this activity at administrations' discretion. Attendance at school is required on the day of the graduation dance for students to be eligible to attend. The graduation dance is for Ford Middle School eighth grade students only.

HEALTH DEPARTMENT POLICIES: The Ford Middle School has a nurse available during the school day to address the health needs of students. The health department follows the regulations and guidelines established by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, the attending school physician, and the school committee. The school nurse uses nursing assessments to determine whether a child should be sent home ill or retained in school. The nurse is responsible for maintaining confidential health records, immunization records, providing first aid, illness assessment, administration of medications and is available to discuss questions or concerns related to your child. If a health issue is of a concern, we may request that your primary care physician or emergency department of your choice evaluate your child.

Allergy Medication: All parents/guardians of students with a known anaphylactic food or insect allergy should provide the school with notification of this condition and an epi-pen. If an epi-pen is not provided, please provide a physician's note stating that there is not a need for an epi-pen at school.

Field Trip/Medication: Certain staff members are trained by the nurse in the administration of epi-pen medications during field trips. This delegation is authorized through 105 CMR §210.100. A Medication Administration Plan will be developed for every student who receives prescription medication at school as a provision for prescription medication administration in the case of field trips and other short-term special school events. Every effort shall be made to obtain a nurse or school staff member trained in prescription medication administration to accompany students at special school events. When this is not possible, the school nurse may delegate prescription medication administration to another responsible adult. Written consent from the parent or guardian for the named responsible adult to administer the

prescription medication shall be obtained. The school nurse shall instruct the responsible adult on how to administer the prescription medication to the child.

First Aid: Treatment will be administered for minor injuries during the school day. When a student becomes seriously injured, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. If a student's parents/guardians cannot be reached in an emergency, a person designated on the child's emergency information form will be notified and the student will be transported to St. Luke's Hospital. All open areas of the skin must be covered with a Band-Aid, dressing or clothing. Minor injuries such as swelling or sprains will be treated with ice and splints or ace wraps.

Illnesses: Children who are sick **should not** be sent to school. They should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. The school nurse will send home any child who she feels is ill or who is not able to perform effectively during the school day. Each morning that your child is sick, a call to the school explaining his/her absence is required. The nurse will then call each parent/guardian of those who have unexplained absences. If your child is ill for 3 consecutive days, a note from the doctor is required.

The school nurse will send home an ill child, as determined by the following guidelines:

- *Temperature of 100 or above
- *Vomiting/Diarrhea
- *Continuing malaise after rest and quiet
- *Suspected Positive Strep Culture
- *Any other medical or emergency conditions unable to be resolved within the framework of allowable treatments.

Similarly, certain communicable diseases require exclusion from school for a particular period of time, as noted by the following:

Influenza: A child with flu-like symptoms should stay home for at least 24 hours after being fever-free without using fever-reducing medicines like acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen (Motrin or Advil).

Chicken Pox: A child must be excluded for 5 days after the last eruption or receipt by school nurse of permission to return to school from the child's doctor. We report these cases to the Board of Health.

Strep Throat: A child is excluded and may return after 24 hours of medication or earlier with permission from the child's doctor.

Conjunctivitis: A child must be excluded and may return with a doctor's permission 24 hours after treatment is begun. If the child has a noted history of allergic conjunctivitis, he/she is not considered contagious.

Parents are required to notify the school if your child contracts any contagious diseases like the diseases listed above or other contagious diseases, such as: Whooping Cough, Fifth's Disease, Conjunctivitis, Scabies, Impetigo, Ringworm, Salmonella, etc. If a child has been absent due to a communicable disease, a physician's release may be required before returning to school.

Immunizations: Immunization requirements are set by the Department of Public Health and may change from time to time. Currently, the following immunizations are required for **all** students entering the 7th grade; 1 booster of Td (Tetanus/Diphtheria) or Tdap (unless it has been more than 5 years since the last dose of DTaP, DTP or DT was given). Students who are not in compliance will not be allowed to enter the 7th grade until documentation is received. All other immunizations should also be up to date.

Immunizations and physicals are available with the child's primary care physician or the New Bedford Well Child Clinic in New Bedford.

Exclusion from School for Lack of Current Vaccinations: If the school health record precedes a transfer student and immunizations are needed, the student must not be admitted unless required immunizations are scheduled to be administered within 15 calendar days. If children are already in school, including transfer students, they must be excluded unless parents provide proof of immunizations and/or required immunizations are scheduled to be administered within 15 calendar days. (School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, Section 15 of the General Laws of Massachusetts)

Exemptions for Immunization Requirements: Exemptions for religious beliefs and health reasons are allowed by law. The parent/ guardian must submit a written statement that immunization conflicts with their sincere religious beliefs. A physician's certificate is the only acceptable evidence for exempting a child from immunization for health reasons. This certificate must be submitted at the beginning of each school year to the physician in charge of the School Health Program. Any differences of opinion should be referred to the Department of Public Health whose decision shall be final. M.G.L. c.76 S

Physical Examinations: The Department of Public Health requires that the public schools have on file a **physical examination upon entrance or transfer into the school system and every 3 or 4 years thereafter**. A physical examination is required before entry into the 7th grade. Please provide your doctor with a Massachusetts Physical Form, which is available upon request from the Health Office. If your child receives yearly physicals, please provide a copy to the health office so that your child's records are kept up to date. Physicals are also available with the New Bedford Well Child Clinic in New Bedford.

Screenings: The school provides every student with a yearly vision, hearing, weight, height and postural screening. In addition, in 7th grade, we are required to calculate Body Mass Index (BMI). You may opt out of the BMI screening by sending a letter to the school nurse indicating your desire to NOT have your child screened for this. If your child does not meet the standards on these screenings, the school nurse will send a letter home to inform you. You will be requested to have a follow up evaluation done by your physician. Please provide the health department with the documentation of the follow up.

Administration of Medicine: It is the responsibility of the school nurse to supervise the taking of prescription or over the counter medication by students. The following conditions apply:

1. The school nurse must have a **dated written or verbal order from a licensed prescriber to administer any medication either prescribed or over the counter**.
2. Any verbal order must be followed by a written order within three school days.
3. A **Medication Order** form is available upon request from the Health Office. This form should be used whenever receiving an order for medication from a physician.
4. Medication Orders must be renewed as necessary and at the beginning of each school year.
5. A written parent/guardian permission slip is also required. This form, labeled **Authorization for Dispensing Medication**, is also available at the Health Office, and should be used when allowing permission for a medication to be dispensed by the school nurse or by school personnel designated by the school nurse.
6. Prescription medication must be in a container labeled by the physician or pharmacist.
7. The medication must be **brought to the school by the parent/guardian (or an adult designated by this person: 18 years old or older)**. Students are **not** allowed to carry medications on their persons at any time.

8. Any remaining medication, by the last day of school or following a change in medication, must be picked up from school by the parent/guardian or designated adult. The school nurse will appropriately discard any medication that is not picked up by the last day of school.
9. All medication is stored in a locked cabinet.
10. One other option is for the parent/guardian or designated adult to bring the medication to the school and administer the medication to the student either at the designated time or on an as needed basis.
11. The school nurse must agree to dispense the medication.
12. Notes from parents are acceptable for the use of cough drops and bottled water. The school nurse will review all notes, cough drops and water for acceptability.

Concussions: The school committee's concussion policy is located on the school district's website. The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities including, but not limited to interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. The Acushnet School Committee has determined that this policy shall also be applied to fifth graders as well.

A concussion is defined as a transient alteration in brain function without structural damage, but with other potentially serious long-term ramifications. In the event of a concussion, the brain sustains damage at a microscopic level in which cells and cell membranes are torn and stretched. The damage to these cells also disrupts the brain at a chemical level, as well as causing restricted blood flow to the damaged areas of the brain, thereby disrupting brain function. Because concussions are difficult to detect, student athletes must obtain medical approval before returning to athletics following a concussion. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body. Any force that causes the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull can cause a concussion. A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body can be caused by either indirect or direct trauma.

When an athlete loses consciousness for any reason, the athletic trainer will start the EAP (Emergency Action Plan) by activating EMS; check ABC's (airway, breathing, circulation); stabilize the cervical spine; and transport the injured athlete to the appropriate hospital via ambulance. If an athletic trainer is not available, the coach should immediately call EMS, check ABC's and not move the athlete until help arrives. Any student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day. The student shall not return to practice or competition unless and until the student provides medical clearance and authorization as specified in 105 CMR 201.011.

105 CMR 201.011 states that each student who is removed from practice or competition for a head injury or suspected concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, shall obtain and present to the Building Principal and school nurse a Department Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance and Authorization Form prior to resuming the extracurricular athletic activity. This form must be completed by a physician or one of the individuals as authorized by

105 CMR 201.011(A). The ultimate return to play decision is a medical decision that may involve a multidisciplinary approach, including consultation with parents, the school nurse and teachers as appropriate. Only the following individuals may authorize a student to return to play:

- (1) A duly licensed physician;
- (2) A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician;
- (3) A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician; or
- (4) A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.

If a student sustains a head injury or concussion during the season, but not while participating in an extracurricular athletic activity, the parent shall complete the Department Report of Head Injury During Sports Season Form and submit it to the coach or school nurse. If submitted to the coach, then he/she must bring this form to the nurse within the same business day of receipt.

The full concussion policy is available on the district website.

HOMEWORK: Homework is an important part of school to reinforce skills and enhance your child's learning. All homework should be completed and turned in on time. Lack of homework completion can have an adverse effect on a student's grades. Each student is provided with a homework planner, which they are responsible for. (Replacement planners may be available in the main office at a cost to the student.) Students should keep track of their daily assignments in this planner. Each student should be prepared to spend, on average, one hour to one hour and a half per night on his/her studies. Students who do not complete homework assignments may be assigned a teacher detention.

HONOR ROLL:

High Honors: A's (90 or better) in all academic and specialty subjects.

Honors: B's (80 or better) and A's in all academic and specialty subjects.

Conduct/Effort: A student receiving a 2 (fair) or a 1 (poor) in conduct and effort is ineligible for honor roll in that term.

INTER-INTRAMURAL SPORTS/FITNESS CLUB: In regards to inter/intramural sports, the selection of eligibility is based on skill, ability, and coachability, as determined by the advisor or coach of the team. Participants must have a current physical on file with the school nurse and complete and return a medical form/permission slip. These physicals are valid 12 months from the date of issue. After the expiration date, they must be redone in order for the student to continue participating in the activity.

Selected participants must continue to meet the above-mentioned criteria throughout the season or risk dismissal from the team. In addition:

- 1) Three unexcused misses from practices and/or games may result in dismissal from the team.
- 2) A participant who receives a Saturday detention during the season may receive a one game suspension on the first offense.
- 3) A second Saturday detention or a suspension may result in dismissal from the team, depending on the severity of the offense.

The final determination of whether or not a student is allowed to participate in an activity rests with the school administration.

LOCKERS/LOCKS: Lockers and/or locks assigned to students belong to the Acushnet Public Schools. As such, students have no expectation of privacy in the contents of the lockers or desks and school officials may search lockers and desks at any time. Students may not use their own locks. If a student uses his/her own personal lock, then it will be cut off of the locker. Locks and lockers are provided to all students at no cost. These locks are the student's responsibility and must be paid for if lost or stolen. For this reason, students must not give their lock combination to anyone. Lockers are to be kept neat and clean and locked at all times. Students are responsible for safeguarding their belongings. Valuables should not be brought to school. The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged belongings

LOST OR DAMAGED SCHOOL MATERIALS: Students are responsible for the care and protection of all schoolbooks, Chromebooks and materials issued. Examples include: library books, locks, textbooks, and any other book or material issued by the school. All textbooks must be covered throughout the year.

MARKING SYSTEM: Report cards are issued at the end of each marking term and progress reports are issued at the halfway point of each term. Academic subjects and some specialty subjects are graded:

A+	98-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	65-69
A	93-97	B	84-86	C	73-76	F	Below 65
A-	90-92	B-	80-83	C-	70-72		

Other specialty subjects are rated:

- P - Pass
- F - Fail

Conduct is also graded using a system ranging from excellent to poor:

4-Excellent; 3-Good; 2-Fair; 1-Poor (please refer to the rubric on the next page)

2019-2020 GRADING CALENDAR

(This may be revised and updated during the school year.)

1st Term

September 26	Grades Close for Progress Reports
October 2	Progress Reports Sent Home
October 31	End of Term 1
November 6	Term 1 Report Cards Sent Home

2nd Term

December 5	Grades Close for Progress Reports
December 11	Progress Reports Sent Home
January 17	End of Term 2
January 24	Term 2 Report Cards Sent Home

3rd Term

February 26	Grades Close for Progress Reports
March 4	Progress Reports Sent Home
March 31	End of Term 3
April 3	Term 3 Report Cards Sent Home

4th Term

May 8	Grades Close for Progress Reports
May 14	Progress Reports Sent Home
June 12	End of Term 4
Report Cards Sent Home	(Tentative Last Day of School)

National Junior Honor Society: Ford Middle School is a participating member of the National Junior Honor Society. Students are selected based on the five criteria of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character. Interested students may inquire with the NJHS advisor, but students may not apply directly for membership in the National Junior Honor Society. Acceptance is not solely based upon GPA. Grade 7 students should keep a log of extracurricular activities which include: service activities, leadership positions, work experience, recognition and awards. These activities are part of the application and determine acceptance. Membership is granted only to those students selected by the Faculty Council who meet the minimum criteria as stated in the bylaws.

CONDUCT

4 Excellent (Exceeds Expectations)	3 Good (Meets Expectations)	2 Fair (Approaching Expectations)	1 Poor (Does Not Meet Expectations)
Student Consistently:	Student Usually:	Student SOMETIMES:	Student Rarely:
Participates in class Raises hand before speaking Follows directions Listens carefully Is respectful to teacher Is respectful to others Respects personal space	Participates in class Raises hand before speaking Follows directions Listens carefully Is respectful to teacher Is respectful to others Respects personal space	Participates in class Raises hand before speaking Follows directions Listens carefully Is respectful to teacher Is respectful to others Respects personal space	Participates in class Raises hand before speaking Follows directions Listens carefully Is respectful to teacher Is respectful to others Respects personal space

EFFORT

4 Excellent (Exceeds Expectations)	3 Good (Meets Expectations)	2 Fair (Approaching Expectations)	1 Poor (Does Not Meet Expectations)
Student Consistently:	Student Usually:	Student SOMETIMES:	Student Rarely:
Completes assignments on time Comes to class prepared Organizes materials Follows directions the first time they are given Participates in class Uses class time wisely	Completes assignments on time Comes to class prepared Organizes materials Follows directions the first time they are given Participates in class Uses class time wisely	Completes assignments on time Comes to class prepared Organizes materials Follows directions the first time they are given Participates in class Uses class time wisely	Completes assignments on time Comes to class prepared Organizes materials Follows directions the first time they are given Participates in class Uses class time wisely

NON-DISCRIMINATION: 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 race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability. M.G.L. c.76 §5. Please see the back of this handbook for the District's Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure.

OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS: Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71B §3, upon request by a parent, the school will provide timely access to parents and parent-designated independent evaluators and educational consultants for observations of a child's current or proposed special education program, including both academic and non-academic components of any such program.

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION: In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Acushnet School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curricula change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Parents/Guardians may exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment. Parents/Guardians may inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION: The Acushnet Public School System requires students to take an active part in physical education and to participate to the best of their ability. (Please refer to the PBIS Matrix for expected behaviors while in your P.E. classes.) Students are required to come prepared for physical education with a complete change of clothing. Shorts, sweatpants, tee shirts and sweatshirts are

considered appropriate clothing. Sneakers that fasten or tie securely are appropriate footwear. Inappropriate or unsafe clothing includes any articles containing drug or alcohol advertisements and/or obscene language or pictures, half-shirts, frayed shorts, high-soled sneakers, tank tops, body jewelry, and earrings.

Any student who fails to comply with the above stated requirements will be given a written assignment relative to the scheduled activity. Consequences will be provided to all students who consistently come unprepared for class. Students may be excused from physical education classes at the recommendation (in writing) of a physician. Written documentation from a physician should be submitted to the school nurse. The school nurse may also excuse a student from physical education class if she provides the physical education teacher with a note for an occasion of illness/injury.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT: Pursuant to Massachusetts Regulations 603 CMR 46, all public school districts must have a physical restraint policy on file. The Acushnet Public Schools Physical Restraint Policy is available for review either on the district's website (www.acushnetschools.us) or in the principal's office of either school building in the district.

PROMOTION POLICY: A student must pass three out of four academic subjects for the year to move on to the next grade. If a student fails two subjects in a school year, he/she must take and pass at least one course in summer school in order to be promoted to the next grade. If a student fails three academic subjects for the year, then he/she must take and pass at least two summer school courses in order to be promoted to the next grade. Every summer school course taken must be one of the courses the student failed for the year to count towards promotion. The academic team, principal, parents/guardians, and other appropriate staff members will discuss the promotion of students failing to pass the necessary academic subjects. However, the final decision regarding promotion of a student rests with the principal.

RESIDENCY: In accordance with MGL C. 76, S. 5 & 6, students must attend the public school in the town where they actually reside. A student may not claim residence in a town for the sole purpose of attending school there. If an investigation by school personnel verifies out-of-district residency, a parent/guardian may be held legally and fiscally responsible. If you have a question regarding this matter, then please contact the Registrar's Office at extension 3103.

SCHOOL RULES: The success of our school is to ensure a common school wide philosophy. Here at the Albert F. Ford Middle school, we focus on the tenants of being respectful, responsible, and showing good character. This development of "FORD-itude" will help create the foundation for all of our interactions with each other as a school community. Positive student behavior is an important part of the learning environment for all members of our school. In order to ensure a common language and system, a PBIS Behavioral Matrix has been developed. Please refer directly to this matrix on page 4 of the handbook for specific school-wide expectations. Students who by their behavior and actions interfere with the responsibility of teachers to teach and prevent others from the opportunity to learn may be subject to disciplinary action.

After a behavior complaint is made, a complete investigation will take place. This investigation, in accordance with MGL c. 76, s. 5, will be nondiscriminatory, and will take into account explanations from

all involved parties and witnesses. Student discipline shall be addressed on an individual basis with each student, and may range from a conference with the student to an expulsion, depending on the infraction. Although this handbook describes possible consequences for violations of school rules, at the discretion of the school administration, all penalties for violating the school rules listed may be increased or decreased depending on the severity of the violation and other circumstances.

Individual student discipline will only be discussed with the family/guardians of the child directly involved. No information regarding students or their discipline will be given to anyone who is not a parent or guardian of that child. Each student receiving a detention will be given 24 hours notice in order to arrange for private transportation from school on the day of his/her detention. It is still possible for a student to serve his/her detention on the same day that the student committed the infraction provided that a student's parent/guardian is given verbal notification of the detention, and is able to arrange transportation for the student.

If the disciplinary procedures herein have been implemented and have been unsuccessful in changing the unacceptable behavior of a student, the parents/guardians will be contacted by the administration and may be asked to come into school to meet with their child's team of teachers and/or the administration. Excessive and repetitive violations of school rules may result in the school filing a Child Requiring Assistance ("The Act") Petition with the Bristol County Juvenile Courts.

TEACHER DETENTION: A teacher detention may be issued as a consequence for a minor infraction of school rules, and is not recorded at the office. Teachers issue and administer teacher detentions. Failure to attend a scheduled teacher detention, despite being given proper notification, may result in an administrative detention. Any student who does not behave appropriately during a teacher detention may be required to repeat the teacher detention or may be referred to the office. Teacher detentions will be served on weekdays after school, from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM. If a student is unable to stay for a teacher detention on a given day, he/she must bring a note from a parent explaining the reasons for failing to remain after school. Failure to report to a teacher after school will result in the issuance of an administrative detention. If violations continue, a conference will be requested or other disciplinary action may be taken.

ADMINISTRATIVE DETENTION: An administrative detention may be issued as a consequence for infractions of school rules. Administrators assign administrative detentions. Parents/Guardians will receive written notification of an administrative detention that will consist of the mailing home of a student behavioral referral form that provides information as to the nature of the infraction, and the consequence given. Administrative detentions will be served after school on weekdays from 2:45 PM to 3:45 PM. During this period of time, each student will be monitored and required to create a student behavior plan. Any student who does not adequately complete the student behavior plan, or does not behave appropriately during the administrative detention, may be required to repeat the administrative detention. Failure to attend a scheduled administrative detention, despite being given proper notification, will result in a Saturday detention.

SATURDAY DETENTION: A Saturday detention may be issued by an administrator for a serious or continued infraction of school rules. Parents/Guardians will receive written notification of a Saturday detention. This notification will consist of the mailing home of a student behavioral referral form that

provides information of the nature of the infraction, and the type and scope of the consequence given. Saturday detentions are recorded at the office and will be served on Saturdays. Saturday detentions are held from 8:00 AM to 11:00 AM at the middle school. A student who receives a Saturday detention must arrive at school by 8:00 AM. Failure to attend a scheduled Saturday detention may result in the assignment of two Saturday detentions or an in-school suspension. In addition, any student who does not behave appropriately during the Saturday detention will be required to repeat the Saturday detention.

Minor Infractions: (these include but are not limited to): Frequently unprepared for class/Late to class/Inappropriate lavatory use/Inappropriate behavior/Public display of affection/Any item(s) which lends itself to classroom disruption

The Ford Middle School follows a graduated discipline policy, where the consequences increase as the frequency of minor infractions increase. The consequences for violation of minor infraction standards are:

1. Documentation/Verbal Warning
2. Parent/Guardian contact: If the student continues to commit the documented infraction, the teacher will contact the student's parent/guardian.
3. Teacher/Team retention after school: If the student continues the unacceptable behavior, the teacher should schedule a detention and make an appointment with the student's parents/guardians and/or notify the administration.

Forgery: This may include but is not limited to any school paper that requires a parent or teacher signature, a note for an excused absence, a letter of suspension, a permission slip to attend a school function, or any other document issued by the school or school authority requiring a parent/guardian signature. First Offense: Admin Detention or Sat. detention/Second Offense: Sat. detention or Suspension

Cheating: This may include any student caught copying another student's work or allowing another student to copy their work. In addition to the following consequences, students caught cheating will receive a zero for the test or assignment on which they cheated. First Offense: Admin Detention or Sat. detention/Second Offense: Sat. detention or Suspension

Plagiarism: This may include any student caught copying print or electronic sources without the appropriate documentation. PLEASE NOTE: This will automatically result in a zero for the work. First Offense: Sat, detention or In-School Suspension /Second Offense: In-School Suspension or Out-of-School Suspension

Inappropriate Use or Possession of Wireless Communications or Electronic Devices: See the wireless communications and electronic devices citation located in the general information section of this handbook for more information regarding these devices. First Offense: Confiscation of the device and parent/guardian notification Second Offense: Confiscation of the device and Saturday Detention or Suspension

Roughhousing: Roughhousing includes: pushing, shoving, kicking, and general horseplay, even if the two involved students claim that their actions were not intended to be malicious. Roughhousing

compromises the safety and orderliness of a school and will not be tolerated at Ford Middle School. First Offense: Admin Detention or Sat. detention/Second Offense: Saturday detention or suspension

Bullying: All students at Ford Middle School are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from bullying or intimidation of any form. Please note that cyberbullying, when it interferes with the normal orderliness of the school may be dealt with as if it occurred on school grounds. All incidents of bullying must be reported to the school administration for proper determination of intent and appropriate penalty. Please see the Acushnet Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan in the appendix for more detailed information regarding this infraction. First Offense: Saturday detention or suspension/Second Offense: Suspension or expulsion

Discrimination and Harassment: The Acushnet Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination such as harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, religion, disability, gender identity, or age, are not tolerated. Discrimination, including harassment, is contrary to the mission of the Acushnet Public Schools and its commitment to equal opportunity in education. The Acushnet Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination or harassment. All students found to have violated the district's Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy may be subject to discipline up to and including suspension and (in some rare cases) expulsion. For more information regarding the district Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure, please see the district policy at the end of this handbook.

Extortion: Extortion is receiving money and/or some item or favor from a person by threatening or intimidating him/her with real or perceived danger. This could be a physical threat or mental intimidation. First Offense: Meeting of student, parent, and principal then immediate suspension. Additional Offense: Parental conference required, and a suspension of up to ten days. In all cases a report to the police may be filed.

Fighting/Assaulting another Student: We pride ourselves in establishing a safe and secure learning environment. Fighting or assaulting another student in school, on school grounds, or on school buses is dangerous and will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to avoid conflicts that might escalate into fighting. Students should seek advice from staff if a problem occurs which could escalate into a fight. First Offense: Saturday detention or suspension/Second Offense: Suspension

Smoking/Use/Possession of Tobacco/Nicotine Products: Smoking and/or the possession or use of tobacco/nicotine products and lighters within the school building, the school facilities, or on the school grounds or school bus is prohibited. First Offense: Saturday detention or suspension/Second Offense: Suspension

Stealing: Theft will not be tolerated at Ford Middle School. Any student caught stealing will immediately return the item taken and offer an apology to the victim. This will take place in the presence of a guidance counselor or an administrator. The student's parents/guardians will be

notified, and the offending student will serve the suitable disciplinary consequence. First Offense: Saturday detention or suspension /Second Offense: Suspension

Selling Items in School: Students are not allowed to sell goods in school without the permission of the Acushnet School Committee. First Offense: Confiscation of the goods sold/Second Offense: Saturday detention

Disrespect to Staff: Students are expected to be responsible in showing respect to all staff members. Students are expected to use appropriate language and to conduct themselves in a courteous and polite manner. First Offense: May range from a teacher detention to suspension depending upon the severity of the disrespect as determined by the administrator. Second Offense: May range from an administrative detention to suspension depending upon the severity of the disrespect as determined by the judgment of the administration.

Profanity/Vulgarity: Swearing, vulgar language, or derogatory remarks regarding race, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation, intellectual abilities, exceptionalities, and gender, whether intended or not to demean or ridicule another, will not be tolerated. This includes all forms of expression. Such expressions foster prejudices and stereotyping which research has shown is often at the root of violence. We strive for our school to be a safe and comfortable atmosphere for everyone. Diversity should be celebrated, not ridiculed. First Offense: May range from an administrative detention to suspension depending upon the severity and/or frequency of the offense as determined by the administration. Second Offense: May range from a Saturday detention to suspension depending upon the severity and/or frequency of the offense as determined by the administration.

Vandalism-Destruction of Property: Tampering with property belonging to another student, staff member or school is an invasion of personal rights, disrespectful, costly, and will not be tolerated. Any student vandalizing or destroying another's property will be required to make restitution. Police notification may result. First Offense: May range from an administrative detention to suspension depending upon the severity of the offense as determined by the administration. Second Offense: May range from a Saturday detention to suspension depending upon the severity of the offense as determined by the administration.

Disrupting the Learning Environment: All students have the right to an education free of disruptions. Continuous and intentional classroom disruptions of any manner, which interfere with the teacher's ability to teach, will not be tolerated. First Offense: May range from a teacher detention to suspension depending upon the severity of the offense. Second Offense: May range from an administrative detention to suspension depending upon the severity of the offense as determined by the administration.

Violation of Acceptable Use Policy: The Director of Technology, in cooperation with the building principal, will review all alleged violations of the Acushnet Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy. Violations of this policy may result in termination of the user's access to the Acushnet Public Schools Local Area Network and technology, disciplinary action, and/or legal action. Appropriate

law enforcement personnel will be notified if it is believed the network user has broken any local, state, or federal laws.

SCHOOL HOURS: The building is open for students at 7:50 with the school day beginning at 8:00. The first class of the day begins at 8:05 AM. The last class ends at 2:45 PM.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS:

Please do not call the school. The Acushnet Public Schools utilizes a call alert system in order to provide parents/guardians with information regarding important events (such as report card dissemination and graduation dates) and unanticipated events (such as unplanned school closings). School cancellations may be heard on WBSM 1420 AM radio, WNBH 1340 AM radio, WCTK 98.1 FM radio, and WFHN 107.1 FM radio. Cancellations will also be posted on the following television stations and websites: Channel 4, Channel 5, Channel 6, Channel 7, Channel 10, Channel 12, Channel 25, and the Acushnet Public Schools website at: www.acushnetschools.us.

SCHOOL COUNCIL:

The school council is based on M.G.L. c. 71 §59C, which describes a school council as a group consisting of the school principal, parents of students attending the school (selected by the parents of students attending such school via elections held by the parent teacher organization); teachers; and other persons. M.G.L. c. 71 §59C states, "...The school council, including the school principal, shall meet regularly and shall assist in the identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school, make recommendations to the principal for the development, implementation and assessment of the curriculum accommodation plan required pursuant to section 38Q $\frac{1}{2}$, shall assist in the review of the annual school budget and in the formulation of a school improvement plan..."

SCHOOL DANCES/PARTIES/FUNCTIONS: Students who display respect, responsibility, and good character may attend school dances, parties, and functions. (Please refer to the Assembly Matrix for expectations) Any student not abiding by our PBIS philosophy may be excluded from participation. Admission to the dances, parties, and functions may require the purchase of a ticket. Any students attending these activities must remain at the activity; students may not be dropped off and stay outside, nor may they pass back and forth from inside to outside. Beverages and backpacks will not be allowed inside the function.

SECTION 504: Section 504 is a federal statute that prohibits a qualified individual with a disability from being excluded in the participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance because of his/her disability. The Ford Middle School 504 Coordinator is the building principal and/or his/her designee, (508) 998-0265. If you believe in good faith that you have been subject to discrimination based on disability, you may file a grievance with the District. Please see the District's Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure at the end of this handbook or on the District website (www.acushnetschools.us) for more detailed information regarding the grievance process. If you have any questions regarding Section 504, please direct your inquiries to your child's principal (see contact information or the school website).

SPECIAL EDUCATION: Special education is provided to eligible students in Massachusetts in accordance with the state and federal law including M.G.L. c.71B, 603 CMR §28.00, 20 USC §1400 and

34 CFR §300.000 et seq. These laws compel schools to provide a free and appropriate education in the least restrictive environment to students who, because of a disability, are unable to progress effectively and who require specially designed instruction in order to access the curriculum.

If a parent/guardian, teacher, other educational personnel, or any student eighteen years of age or older, suspect that the student has a disability that may require special education and/or related services to allow him/her to make effective progress in the school, that individual may refer the student for an evaluation pursuant to 603 CMR Section 28.04. Parents/Guardians will be provided with the opportunity to consult with the Director of Special Education or his/her designee to discuss the reasons for referral.

STUDENT RECORDS: The student record contains all information concerning a student that is kept by the school district and which personally identifies the student; it consists of the temporary record and the transcript. For purposes of these procedures, custodial parent refers to a divorced or separated parent who has physical custody of the child, and the non-custodial parent is the parent who does not have physical custody of the child. Non-custodial parents may not be eligible to access their child's student record, or may have to follow certain procedures in order to access the student record. See below.

Access by the Eligible Student or Parent: (Except Non-Custodial Parents): The eligible student (any student who is 14 years of age or older or who has entered 9th grade) or the parent (except non-custodial parents) may request access to the student record and shall have access within ten days after the initial request. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be provided to the eligible student or the parent. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. If an eligible student or parent would like access to the student's record, please contact the main office at (508) 998-0265.

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. 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.

A student over the age of 18 may limit the rights and provisions of the Massachusetts Student Records regulations that extend to his/her parent by making such request in writing to the school principal or superintendent. However, the student may not limit the parent's right to inspect the student record.

Access by Third Parties: An eligible student or 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 by Non-Custodial Parents: It is necessary for divorced parents to submit a copy of the custody agreement or order, and any subsequent changes made thereto, to the school so that school personnel may identify which of the parents has physical custody of the child. The non-custodial parent may access his/her child's 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 or to the custodial parent 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.

In the case of a non-custodial parent who is eligible to access the student record, i.e., does not fit any of the four (4) categories under 1-4 above, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal. Upon receipt of the request, the principal and/or his/her designee shall 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 under 1-4 above.

When the student record is released to the non-custodial parent, the school will delete all electronic and postal addresses 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 will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

If you have any questions regarding the student records policy or desire more detailed information concerning the state regulations, please contact the guidance office. Upon request, a copy of the state regulations can be provided to you

STATE TESTING: The state of Massachusetts requires the administration of certain testing, including the Massachusetts Comprehensive Academic Standards (MCAS). We administer these tests as directed by the state Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

STUDENT SEARCHES: A student may be searched by the Principal or Assistant Principal whenever there is reasonable suspicion that the student is, or has been, in possession of contraband or materials indicating a violation of the discipline code or the law or where the student has violated or is violating either the discipline code or the law. The search itself will be conducted in a reasonable manner, given the age and sex of the student as well as the nature of the infraction. A witness will always be present for any search.

STUDENT TEACHER ASSISTANCE TEAM: The Student Teacher Assistance Team, (STAT), which is a function of general education; enables staff members to meet as a team to address the individual needs of students. Classroom teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators explore program options and instructional accommodations within regular programming to help address the student's need.

STUDENT SUCCESS PLANS: An individual student success plan will be developed for each student who has scored warning on the English Language Arts or Mathematics MCAS. The plans describe the

available activities and supports that will be used to help each student succeed in passing the English Language Arts or Mathematics MCAS tests.

SUPPLIES & MATERIALS: Students are expected to come to school with the tools necessary to do their work. Students should have a supply of pencils, pens, notebooks, book covers, and other general supplies that may be needed. If you need supplies, please speak to your guidance counselor.

TARDINESS: It is important for students to arrive to school on time. Students who arrive at the school after 8:10 AM are considered tardy and must sign in at the office. If a student is tardy for three days in a term, then he/she may receive an administrative detention. If a student is tardy for an additional three days (6 days) in a term, then he/she may receive an administrative detention. If a student is tardy for an additional three days (9 days) in a term, then he/she may receive a Saturday detention. For each subsequent tardy in a term after 9 days, a student may receive a Saturday detention; a meeting with the principal or assistant principal and the student's parent/guardian and notice may be provided to the attendance officer documenting this behavior. Extreme cases of consistently being tardy may result in a referral to the juvenile courts.

TELEPHONE USE: If a student needs to use the phone, he/she is encouraged to use the phone during lunch. Students should not use their personal phone at any time during the school day. During classes, students need the permission of their teachers to use the phone in the classrooms. Students are encouraged to use the telephone only for brief, necessary, and informative phone calls to parents/guardians. Students should not call home for forgotten homework, band instruments, gym clothes, etc.

TIER 2-STUDENTS AT RISK: It is the policy of the Acushnet Public Schools and Ford Middle School to provide an optimum educational environment for all students and to identify a student's educational difficulties/problems as close to their inception as is possible. At various times during a school year, a student may require special assistance in order to achieve his/her fullest potential. To achieve this goal, the following procedure has been developed.

Any parent/guardian, teacher or other professional staff member may inquire about scheduling a parent/teacher-guardian conference. Parents or teachers should contact a guidance counselor or team leader to make such a referral and/or appointment. It is suggested that a referral and/or appointment of this type be made for:

- Any student who is in danger of failing a major subject.
- Any student who is experiencing a wide disparity between their ability and actual performance.
- Any student who is demonstrating chronic behavior problems
- Any student whose behavior is out of the ordinary, based on that student's personal history

A weekly progress report may be sent home when there is serious concern regarding a student's behavior and/or academic progress. This weekly report is arranged at a joint parent/teacher meeting, where the student's progress and the following stipulations will be explained:

- The weekly report is sent home on the same day each week and returned, signed by a parent/guardian the following school day.
- When a signed report is not returned two consecutive weeks, the weekly report will be discontinued.
- Weekly reports are not issued during the weeks of progress reports or report cards.
- Weekly reports are issued for a ten-week period, unless it is deemed necessary by the parent/guardian and school to continue.

USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES BY OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS: Arrangements for building use by local organizations during after school hours must be made through the Business Office.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE: The Acushnet Public Schools maintains the use of video cameras on school buses and on school grounds for the purpose of enhancing security and safety, maintaining order, and undertaking disciplinary investigations. Video cameras are installed in public areas only and no sound will be monitored or recorded in connection with these video cameras. Any video recordings on school buses, in school buildings or school grounds are the sole property of the Acushnet Public Schools. Consistent with applicable law, authorized school officials may access and use recorded information as necessary. Release of video recordings to non-school officials are generally prohibited and, in limited circumstances, will be released only as permissible pursuant to applicable law and with the advance permission of the Superintendent of his/her designee.

VISITING THE SCHOOL: For the safety of all, doors are locked and video surveillance is in use at all times. All visitors must gain admission through the main entrance. Visitors who are determined to have legitimate school business will be required to present a state issued photo ID. Any person without legitimate school business who attempts to gain access or who gains access to the building will be considered a trespasser. Police intervention may result.

VOLUNTEERING: For the protection of our students, all volunteers must agree to a criminal background check (CORI) and receive clearance annually before they are able to work as a volunteer at the middle school. If you are interested in becoming a school volunteer, please ask for a Parent/Guardian/ Community Member Volunteer Form and CORI Request Form from the main office. The building principal's approval is needed for all voluntary roles other than volunteering as a chaperone.

WITHDRAWAL OR TRANSFER FROM SCHOOL: When withdrawing or transferring from Ford Middle School, a parent/guardian must notify a guidance counselor. Please be prepared to provide the name and address of the new school from which your child will be attending and your new place of residence. The parent/guardian of the student transferring will be issued a transfer card, immunization records, academic grades up to the point of withdrawal, a current IEP if applicable, etc. If it is found that a student has moved from the district without notifying the Acushnet Public Schools, the student's records may be forwarded to their new school without written consent.

WIRELESS COMMUNICATIONS & ELECTRONIC DEVICES: A wireless communication device includes, but is not limited to, the following: laptop computers, cell phones/smartphones, smart watches and tablets.

Electronic devices include, but are not limited to, the following: digital media players, electronic games, cameras, and laser pointers. Students will not be permitted to use wireless communication devices or electronic devices during regular school hours unless it is for an approved reason. Before entering the building, students shall turn off their wireless communications and electronic devices. These devices should stay in lockers during the school day.

If a student has a cell phone or other electronic device that is out of his/her locker during the school day, it may be confiscated. A parent will need to come to the school to retrieve the device. If it has a camera function, the parent may be asked to review the phone for pictures or texts taken or sent during school hours. If inappropriate photos have been taken at school, these images must be deleted. Repeat offenders may be assigned disciplinary action.

MASSACHUSETTS CHAPTER 71, SECTION 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ PROCEDURES:

The purpose of 603 CMR 53.00 is:

- (a) for those discipline offenses subject to G.L. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, as set forth in 603 CMR 53.01(3)(a), to limit the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate;
- (b) to promote engagement of a student's parent in discussion of the student's misconduct, and options for responding to it;
- (c) to assure that every student who is expelled or suspended, regardless of the reason for suspension or expulsion, has the opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion; and,
- (d) to keep schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices.

In-school Suspension: means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 CMR 53.00.

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. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Long-term Suspension: means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in

extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, §37 H, or in section 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Expulsion: means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ for: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$.

Investigation of Disciplinary Incidents: Nothing in these regulations shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

Alternatives to Suspension under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$: In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Notice of Suspension and Hearing under Section §37H $\frac{3}{4}$:

(1) Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

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

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
- (b) the basis for the charge;
- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 - 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and

2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

(3) The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

(4) Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

Emergency Removal under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$:

(1) Nothing in these regulations shall prevent a principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal shall immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

(a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06(2);

(b) Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in 603 CMR 53.06(2);

(c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

(d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

(2) A 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.

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures in G.L. c. 71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$ or 603 CMR 53.00.

Principal's Hearing under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$:

(1) The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal shall afford the student, at a minimum, all the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3) in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school.

(2) Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension

(a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity

to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

(c) The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

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

(3) Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension

(a) The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.

(b) At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(d) Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by

the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a);
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

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

Superintendent's Hearing under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$:

- (1) A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
- (2) The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (c) 5.a). If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.
- (3) The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
- (4) The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- (5) The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(6) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).

(7) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c)1 through 5. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

(8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school, or virtual school, with regard to the suspension.

Disciplinary Offenses under Section 37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$:

(1) School districts shall adopt disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to a student who is accused of a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H- $\frac{1}{2}$. Such policies and procedures shall be consistent with the applicable statute and provide due process of law.

(2) The principal may remove a student who has committed a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H $\frac{1}{2}$ from school for more than ninety (90) days in a school year.

(3) Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under G.L. c. 71, §37H or §37H $\frac{1}{2}$ shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13.

Education Services and Academic Progress under Sections 37H, 37H $\frac{1}{2}$, and 37H $\frac{3}{4}$:

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

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

(3) The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

(a) The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

DRUGS, WEAPONS AND ASSAULT ON STAFF:

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §37H:

- a. Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b. Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- d. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/ 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 this section.
- e. When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

FELONY CHARGE OR CONVICTION:

In accordance with M.G.L. c.71 §37H $\frac{1}{2}$: Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The

student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student. In accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17 a school committee may permanently expel a student but not without first giving the student and his/her parent or guardian and opportunity to be heard.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS: The disciplining of students with disabilities is governed by federal and state special education law and the regulations promulgated thereunder. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400, *et seq.*; 34 CFR Section 300.000 *et seq.*, and Massachusetts General Laws, c. 71B.

Students on Individual Education Plans (IEPs) are expected to abide by the same rules as non-disabled students. Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten school days in a school year, this constitutes a "change in placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law. When decision is made for a change in placement, the student's IEP Team must reconvene for a "Manifestation Determination" to determine:

1. if the conduct in question was "caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability"; or
2. if the conduct in question was the "direct result of the local school's failure to implement the IEP."

If the IEP Team concludes that the student's misconduct was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the district may discipline the student in accordance with this student handbook. However, the district must continue to provide the student with educational services during the period of exclusion, if the exclusion goes beyond a total of ten days in any given school year. If it is determined that the student's behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability, the school will arrange for a functional behavioral assessment (if one has not been conducted on the student) and the development or modification of a behavior intervention plan and the student will return to his/her current placement, unless the district and the parent agree to a change in placement. If a parent disagrees with the Team's manifestation determination or with the Team's decision regarding the placement of a student, the parent may request a hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA).

School personnel may remove a special education student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days if a student without regard to whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability if the student: (1) carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises or at a school function; (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 functions; or (3) inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function.

Additionally, a Massachusetts Bureau of Special Education Appeals Hearing Officer, under certain circumstances, may order a change in the placement of a student eligible for Special Education to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) school days. *For more details on these procedures, please contact the special education department.*

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SECTION 504 PLANS: Students with Section 504 plans are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this handbook. A student on a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than fifteen (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a manifestation determination review shall be conducted. The student's 504 team shall convene, and answer two questions, after reviewing relevant documents and the misconduct of the student:

1. Is the misconduct the result of failure to implement the student's 504 plan?
2. Is the misconduct caused by, or does it have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?

A summary of the manifestation determination review will be written and a copy provided to the Parent(s)/guardian(s) as soon as possible after the review, but no later than five (5) school days after the review.

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT (INCLUDING SEXUAL HARASSMENT): The Acushnet Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination such as harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, or age, are not tolerated. Discrimination, including harassment, is contrary to the mission of the Acushnet Public Schools and its commitment to equal opportunity in education.

The Acushnet Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination or harassment. All students found to have violated the district's Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy may be subject to discipline up to and including suspension and (in some rare cases) expulsion. For more information regarding the district Non-Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Grievance Procedure, please see the district policy in the appendix of this handbook. 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 race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability.

If you believe in good faith that you have been subject to discrimination based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or disability, you may file a grievance with the District. *Please see the District's Non-Discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedure on the district website (www.acushnetschools.us) for more detailed information regarding the grievance process.*

HAZING: MGL, Chapter 269, Sections 17-19, makes it a crime to participate in organized hazing and provides for a punishment of a fine, imprisonment or both. In accordance with the laws of the State of Massachusetts (shown below), Albert F. Ford Middle School does not condone hazing in any activity associated with the school, including athletics, academics and co-curricular clubs and organizations. Students found to have violated this portion of the student handbook will be subject to penalties up to and including suspension or expulsion. In addition, civil authorities may be notified.

Chapter 269: Section 17. Crime of Hazing; Definition; Penalty

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

Chapter 269: Section 18. Duty to Report Hazing

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

Chapter 269: Section 19. Statutes to be Provided to Student Groups; Compliance Statement and Discipline Policy Required

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.

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT POLICY AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, Age Discrimination Act M.G.L. c. 76 §5, M.G.L. c.151C, 603 C.M.R. §26.08

I. Introduction

The Acushnet Public Schools has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination such as harassment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age, are not tolerated. Discrimination, including harassment, is contrary to the mission of the Acushnet Public Schools and its commitment to equal opportunity in education.

The Acushnet Public Schools does not discriminate against students, parents, employees or the general public. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to the Acushnet Public Schools, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of the Acushnet Public Schools on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation (M.G.L. c. 76 §5). Additionally, the Acushnet Public Schools does not tolerate harassment based upon race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation (603 CMR 26.08).

For purposes of this policy and procedure, "school" includes school-sponsored events, trips, sports events, similar events connected with school or employment. Any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination, including harassment, or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination, harassment or retaliation complaint, is also unlawful and will not be tolerated.

The Acushnet Public Schools takes allegations of discrimination, including harassment, seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that conduct that violates the law and this policy has occurred, the Acushnet Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

II. Definition of Discrimination and Harassment

"Discrimination" includes conduct that excludes a person from participation in, denies an individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjects an individual to different treatment on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Harassing conduct involving these bases can be a form of discrimination.

"Harassment" is defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on: race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, or age. Harassment is prohibited by the Acushnet Public Schools, and violates the law.

Examples of harassment include:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group

based upon the criteria listed above.

- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of an individual or group described above because of one of the criteria listed above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group (as described above) to participate in or benefit from a school program or activity of the Acushnet Public Schools; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment.

Many forms of harassment have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws (including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the ADA, Title VI, Title IX and state statutes like M.G.L. 151C) by federal courts, state courts, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

"Sexual harassment" is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment, academic standing, school-related opportunities, or as a basis for employment decisions.
- Such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic or work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work or educational environment.

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may be considered sexual harassment, the following are examples of conduct that violate the law and policy and which, if severe and pervasive, constitute sexual harassment. In each case, such a determination will depend upon the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Unwelcome sexual advances, whether they involve physical touching or not.
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments.
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or verbal references to sexual conduct, comments about an individual's body, comments about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess.
- Discussions of one's own sexual activities or inquiries into others' sexual experiences.
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons.

The definitions of discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment are broad. In addition to the above examples, other unwelcome conduct, whether intended or not, that has the effect of creating a school environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating may constitute discrimination, harassment and/or sexual harassment.

III. Grievance Procedure: Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

a. Introduction

If any Acushnet Public Schools student, parent or employee believes, in good faith, that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment or any other form of harassment or discrimination described above, the individual has a right to file a complaint with the Acushnet Public Schools. This may be done informally or formally, as described below. Teachers or staff members who observe or receive reports of incidents of harassment or discrimination involving students shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Principal. Teachers or staff members aware of harassment or discrimination involving any employee shall report such incidents to the Principal or District Civil Rights Coordinator listed below. Please note that while these procedures relate to the Acushnet Public Schools' policy of promoting an educational setting free from discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, as detailed further in this policy, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit the Acushnet Public Schools' authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which the Acushnet Public Schools deems unacceptable.

b. Grievance Procedures

Contacts

District Civil Rights Coordinator for Title VI (race, color, national origin); Title IX (sex); Section 504 (disability); Title II of the ADA (disability); Religion, Sexual Orientation and Age is the Director of Student Services 708 Middle Road Acushnet, MA (508) 998-0258./Acushnet Elementary School Principal- 800 Middle Road Acushnet, MA (508) 998-0255./Albert F. Ford Middle School Principal- 708 Middle Road Acushnet, MA (508) 998-0265.

Students, parents or employees who wish to initiate the formal complaint process may put their complaint in writing to the building Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. Any Principal receiving such a complaint shall immediately forward the complaint to the Civil Rights Coordinator listed above, who will then begin the formal procedure described below.

Any teacher or other employee who receives a formal complaint of discrimination or harassment shall immediately forward the complaint to the building Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator.

The Civil Rights Coordinator shall handle the investigation of a formal complaint, unless the Superintendent chooses to investigate the complaint or designates another person to investigate it on his/her behalf. Any complaint about an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. Any complaint about the Superintendent should be submitted to the chairperson of the school board, who should consult with legal counsel concerning the handling and investigation of the complaint.

ii. Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that harassment or discrimination has occurred by a student or employee, then disciplinary action may be taken appropriate to the circumstances regardless if it is handled through the informal or formal resolution process. Such action may include consequences up to and including termination of employment for staff and up to and including suspension or expulsion for students.

iii. **Internal Grievance Procedure**

1. Informal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Complaints

Before initiating the formal procedure, the student/parent/employee may wish, if possible, to resolve the complaint on an informal basis through discussion.

A student or parent can discuss the issue with the building Principal. An employee can discuss the issue with his/her immediate supervisor or the building Principal.

The person receiving the complaint shall attempt, within his/her authority, to work with the individual to resolve the issue fairly and expeditiously within ten (10) working days of receiving the complaint. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution from the informal process, or if he/she does not choose informal resolution, then he/she can begin the formal complaint procedure described below.

Any resolution or disciplinary action taken by a Principal as a result of an investigation or discussion during the informal resolution process should be put to writing and forwarded to the District Civil Rights Coordinator.

2. Formal Resolution of Discrimination and Harassment Concerns:

A student, parent or employee who is not satisfied with the informal resolution process or who chooses not to participate in the informal resolution process may initiate the formal complaint procedure at any time by putting the complaint in writing to the Principal or District Civil Rights Coordinator. An employee, at the request of the student, may put the complaint in writing for the student. Principals who receive written formal complaints should immediately forward the complaint to the District Civil Rights Coordinator.

a. What the complaint should include?

The student/parent/employee's written complaint should include: the name of the individual making the complaint, the name of the individual aggrieved, the name of the individual(s) accused of committing the harassing or discriminatory practice, the location of the school/department where the alleged discriminatory practice occurred, the basis for the complaint, witnesses (if any) and the corrective action the student is seeking. If the written complaint does not contain this information, the Principal or District Civil Rights Coordinator will ask the complainant for this information.

b. When to file a complaint?

Efforts should be made to file such complaint within twenty (20) calendar days after the alleged discriminatory practice occurred in order for an expeditious investigation to be conducted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. However, the Acushnet Public Schools will investigate any complaint no matter when it is filed.

c. What will happen after the complaint is filed?

Promptly after receiving the complaint, the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee, as permitted pursuant to Section III(B)(i) of this section will conduct the necessary investigation, including making good faith efforts to gather all relevant evidence for consideration. In the

course of his/her investigation, the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant; and the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the appropriate authority involved; interviewing witnesses; and considering relevant documentation. During this process, complainants will have the opportunity to present witnesses and other relevant evidence to the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee conducting the investigation.

The District Coordinator or designee should use appropriate interim measures during the investigation of a complaint to ensure that the student is free from discrimination and/or harassment during the pending investigation.

Barring extenuating circumstances, the District Coordinator or designee, will complete the investigation as soon as practicable as and normally not later than thirty (30) working days. When more than thirty (30) working days is required for the investigation, the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee shall inform the complainant that the investigation is still ongoing.

After completing the formal investigation of the complaint, the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee shall make a decision on the complaint and shall inform the complainant and the person(s) against whom the complaint was made, of the results of the investigation in writing. In the case of a student who is found to have violated this policy, the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee will take appropriate action. In the case of an employee who is found to have violated this policy, the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee will refer the matter to the Principal or Superintendent for appropriate action.

d. What you can do if you are not satisfied with the outcome of the formal complaint procedure?

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision, he/she can appeal this finding to the Superintendent within five working days. The Superintendent will review the information considered by the District Civil Rights Coordinator or designee, collect any additional information he/she believes is necessary to make an informed decision and shall issue a written decision to the complainant and the person against whom the complaint was made. Again, strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. However, the Superintendent will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within ten (10) working days. If the complainant is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, or if he/she does not choose either of the internal resolution processes, he/she may follow the external grievance procedure described below. Contact information for the Superintendent is: Superintendent of Schools- 708 Middle Road, Acushnet, MA 02743 (508) 998-0260

iii. External Grievance Procedure

Any student, parent or employee who chooses not to use the district's internal grievance procedures or who is not satisfied with the district's internal grievance procedures may file a complaint of discrimination or harassment with an appropriate state or federal agency.

1. For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of students:

The Office for Civil Rights US Department of Education 8th Floor
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900 Boston, MA 02109-3921 Telephone: 617-289-0111 FAX: 617-289-0150
TDD: 877-521-2172

OR

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place
Sixth Floor, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-994-6000
TTY: 617-994-6196

2. For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of parents:

The Office for Civil Rights US Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111
FAX: 617-289-0150
TDD: 877-521-2172

3. For complaints related to discrimination/harassment of employees:

The Office for Civil Rights
US Department of Education 8th Floor
5 Post Office Square, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: 617-289-0111
FAX: 617-289-0150
TDD: 877-521-2172

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
One Ashburton Place
Sixth Floor, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617-994-6000
TTY: 617-994-6196

The Equal Employment Opportunities Commission
John F. Kennedy Federal Building
475 Government Center
Boston, MA 02203
Phone: 1-800-669-4000

IV. General Policies

1. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any person for processing, in good faith, a complaint, either on an informal basis or formal basis, or for participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
2. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any person who, in good faith, has testified, assisted or participated in any manner in any investigations, proceeding, or hearing of a complaint or for otherwise participating in any way in these complaint procedures.
3. Whenever possible, a conference should be scheduled during a time that does not conflict with regularly scheduled work and/or school programs.
4. The Acushnet Public Schools will work with an individual who files a complaint of discrimination or harassment; including conducting an investigation and holding conferences, in order to fairly and expeditiously resolve the complaint.

LEGAL REFS: Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA, Age Discrimination Act, M.G.L. c. 76 §5, M.G.L. c.151C, 603 C.M.R. §26.08 CROSS REFS: GBAA EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY; JB EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES; JICFB BULLYING; JFCF HAZING

Adopted: 8/17/10

Revised: 12/4/12

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION: The Acushnet Public Schools expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences. The Acushnet Public Schools is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. Anti-bullying lessons are taught in every grade level using various programs: Second Step violence prevention program (K-8); Steps to Respect anti-bullying program (3-5); and Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders: Thinking and Acting to Prevent Violence anti-bullying program (6-8).

All incidents of bullying and cyberbullying must be reported to the school administration for investigation and proper determination of intent and appropriate penalty; this may be done by any individual at any time, either orally or in written form, to any member of the school staff. Once reported, all incidents are promptly investigated. Prompt action will be taken to end bullying behavior and to restore the target's sense of safety. In addition, retaliation of any kind will be dealt with strongly. Discipline will be consistent with the school code of conduct

Definitions:

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any 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.

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.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

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.

Acushnet Public Schools (APS)
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") was created in response to the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O. This Model Plan has been updated to reflect M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O as amended by Sections 72 - 74 of the Chapter of the Acts of 2013, which changed the definition of "perpetrator" to include "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." The amendment also made the plan applicable to school staff, including but not limited to, the individuals listed in the amended perpetrator definition.

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I. LEADERSHIP

School leaders have a primary role in teaching students to be civil to one another and promoting understanding of and respect for diversity and difference. School District Leadership is responsible for setting priorities and for staying up-to-date with current research on ways to prevent and effectively respond to bullying.

- A. Public involvement in developing the Plan. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, this Plan was developed in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation included a notice and a public comment period before the

Plan was adopted by the school committee.

This Plan was sent to building administrators for their review. Additionally, each building principal shared the Plan with their staff, school council, and the PTO to gain input. At a school committee meeting prior to the public hearing, the viewing public was notified of the draft Plan and encouraged to give their input. The Plan was posted on the district website and hardcopies were made available at each school office. Parents/guardians were also notified of the Plan via the monthly district newsletter. The Plan was also forwarded to the Chief of Police for his input.

- B. Assessing needs and resources. This 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. 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; and assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services. Based on these findings, schools and district will revise or develop policies and procedures; establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement; and set or revise priorities.

Each school shall have a safety and discipline committee. The building principal and assistant principal must serve on this committee. The safety and discipline committee will develop, refine, and disseminate needs assessments to the students, staff, and parents/guardians on school climate and safety issues. These assessments will be disseminated by the safety and discipline committee biennially. The safety and discipline committee will also collect and analyze 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) on an annual basis. This information will help 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.

- C. Planning and oversight. The building principal shall be responsible for: 1) receiving reports on bullying; 2) collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes; 3) creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors; 4) planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law; 5) planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors; 6) choosing and implementing the curricula that the school will use; 7) developing new or suggesting the revision of current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them; 8) amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct to, among other things, make clear that bullying of students by school staff or other students will not be tolerated; 9) leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials; and 10) reviewing the Plan each year, or more frequently.
- D. Priority statements. Priority statements communicate the school department's vision in creating and implementing its bullying prevention and intervention strategies. The following are the

priority statements of the Acushnet Public Schools.

The Acushnet Public Schools expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The Acushnet Public Schools is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school or district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

We will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school-related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or the assistant principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and taking such other steps as necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, shall designate someone to investigate the report, and take such other steps as necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Plan reflects the requirements under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O to provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals. The Plan states the content and frequency of staff training and ongoing professional development as determined by the school's and district's needs, and lists other

topics included in these staff programs. The training should be based on needs and concerns identified by school and district staff.

The law requires six topics that must be included in professional development. These topics are:

- A. Annual staff training on the Plan. Annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties 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 to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. This training is conducted during the annual staff training which is mandatory and occurs during the staff orientation day. Each staff member hired after the start of the school year will be required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.
- B. Ongoing professional development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of schoolwide and districtwide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:
 - (i) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
 - (ii) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
 - (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
 - (iv) 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;
 - (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
 - (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that 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.

Additional areas identified by the school or district for professional development include:

- promoting and modeling the use of respectful language;
- fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference;
- building relationships and communicating with families;
- constructively managing classroom behaviors;
- using positive behavioral intervention strategies;
- applying constructive disciplinary practices;
- teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others;
- engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making; and

- maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students; and
- engaging staff and those responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors designed to correct misconduct, instill accountability in the school setting, etc., and bullying behaviors.

C. Written notice to staff. The school or district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff, in the mandatory annual staff training packet.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, student aggressors, families, and others are addressed. This Plan describes the strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the school's and district's capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services will reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets and student aggressors. Each school's guidance and administrative staff will provide counseling or referral to appropriate services for student aggressors, targets, bystanders and family members of those students.

A. Identifying resources. School counselors, together with building administrators will work to identify the school's capacity to provide counseling, case management and other services for targets, student aggressors, and their families. They will conduct an annual review of staffing and programs that support and sustain positive school environments by focusing on early intervention and intensive services. This mapping of resources helps to develop recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. The resources and programs provided for students and their families include but are not limited to: guidance counselors; administrators; nurses; referrals to outside agencies; Second Step violence prevention program (K-8); Steps to Respect anti-bullying program (3-5); and Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders: Thinking and Acting to Prevent Violence anti-bullying program (6-8).

B. Counseling and other services. Each school will maintain a list of outside agencies and services available for students. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the guidance department of each school. The guidance counselors are able to identify staff and service providers who assist schools in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, provide social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offer education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors. The Acushnet Public Schools uses behavioral intervention plans, social skills groups, guidance, individually focused curricula, etc. to address issues related to bullying.

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. There is an established referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services. This protocol will help students and families access appropriate and timely services. Referrals should be suggested to the guidance counselors and administration. In many cases, this will occur during teacher assistance team meetings. It will be the responsibility of the guidance counselors and/or administration to make these referrals. Referrals will be made when appropriate. All referrals must comply with relevant laws and policies. The current local referral protocol will periodically be evaluated to assess the relevance to the Plan, and will be revised as needed.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The law requires each school or district to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's or district's curricula. Curricula must be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development. Second Step will continue to be used in grades K-8 and specific anti-bullying curricula will be added to the district's curricula as follows: Steps to Respect in grades 3-5 and Aggressors, Victims, and Bystanders: Thinking and Acting to Prevent Violence in grades 6-8.

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches. Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

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

The student related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will be reviewed with all students at an assembly at each school. This assembly will take place annually at the beginning of the school year.

B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts. The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;

- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

To support efforts to respond promptly and effectively to bullying and retaliation, schools and the district have put in place policies and procedures for receiving and responding to reports of bullying or retaliation. These policies and procedures will ensure that members of the school community - students, parents, and school staff - know what will happen when incidents of bullying occur. Additionally, this Plan details procedures for staff reporting of incidents, processes for communicating to students and families how reports can be made (including anonymous reports), and procedures to be followed by the principal or designee, or the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, or the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor once a report is made.

- A. Reporting bullying or retaliation. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor to the school committee's designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.

At the beginning of each school year, the schools and district will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and 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, and the superintendent or designee when the principal or the assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks and on the school or district website.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or the assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or

retaliation. The requirement to report as provided 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 or Guardians, and Others

The Acushnet Public Schools expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor. 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 or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee, or superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation - Allegations of Bullying by a Student.

1. 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. 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. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; 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.

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 student aggressor of this, 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, after consultation with the superintendent and school resource officer, 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 student aggressor. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

3. Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly 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 or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation 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.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

4. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted 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 actions 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 student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

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, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

5. Responses to Bullying

This section of the Plan is written to enumerate the school's/district's chosen strategies for building students' skills, and other individualized interventions that the school or district may take in response to remediate or prevent further bullying and retaliation.

- a. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building. Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). 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.
- b. 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 Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in

cooperation 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 shall be subject to disciplinary action.

c. 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. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

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.

B. Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff

1. Investigator

This section deals with responding to a report of bullying by a school staff member. Throughout this section, the principal or designee is the school official who shall investigate the allegations of bullying or retaliation. However, if the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, then the superintendent or designee will conduct the investigation. If the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, then the school committee or designee will conduct the investigation.

2. 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. 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. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; 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.

3. 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 staff aggressor of this, 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, after consultation with the superintendent and school resource officer, 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. In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

4. Investigation

The principal or designee will investigate promptly 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 or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged staff aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

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.

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

5. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to

ensure that the target is not restricted 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 actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary. 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, the principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

6. Responses to Bullying

a. Taking Disciplinary Action. If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action of the staff member is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee and appropriate to the circumstances. Such action may include consequences up to and including termination of employment for staff. If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student shall be subject to disciplinary action.

b. 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.

c. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

This Plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the school or district to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The law requires the district or school Plan to include provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the school district or school including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyberbullying. Parents and guardians must also be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, in the language(s) most prevalent among the parents or guardians. School- or district-specific approaches to collaboration should take into account age, climate, socio-economic factors, linguistic, and cultural make-up of students and the parents.

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, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

B. Notification requirements. Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are absolutely prohibited by the Acushnet Public Schools. The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(b), and describes the law's requirements for the prohibition of bullying.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

- (i) 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
- (ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt 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.

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;

- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

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

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

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

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

IX. 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 account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation. 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 37H $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, M.G.L. c. 71, §§41 and 42, M.G.L. c 76 § 5, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

ACUSHNET PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report: _____

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. Check whether you are the: Target of the behavior ☐ Reporter (not the target) ☐

3. Check whether you are a: ☐ Student ☐ Staff member (specify role) _____
☐ Parent ☐ Administrator ☐ Other (specify) _____

Your contact information/telephone number: _____

4. If student, state your school: ☐ AES ☐ FMS Grade: _____

5. If staff member, state your school: ☐ AES ☐ FMS

6. Information about the Incident:

Name of Target (of behavior): _____

Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

7. Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other _____

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other _____

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other _____

8. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

9. Signature of Person Filing this Report: _____ Date: _____

(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously.)

10: Form Given to: _____ Position: _____ Date: _____

Signature: _____ **Date Received:** _____

1. Investigator(s): _____ Position(s): _____

☐ Interviewed aggressor Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Interviewed target Name: _____ Date: _____

☐ Interviewed witnesses Name: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

3. Any prior documented Incidents by the aggressor? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION ☐ Yes ☐ No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation: ☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ Bullying ☐ Incident documented as _____

☐ Retaliation ☐ Discipline referral only_____

☐ Target's parent/guardian Date: _____ ☐ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____

☐ District Equity Coordinator (DEC) Date: _____ ☐ Law Enforcement Date: _____

☐ Loss of Privileges ☐ Detention ☐ STEP referral ☐ Suspension

☐ Community Service ☐ Education ☐ Other _____

4. Describe Safety Planning: _____

Follow-up with Target: scheduled for _____ **Initial and date when completed:** _____

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for _____ **Initial and date when completed:** _____

Report forwarded to Principal: Date_____ Report forwarded to Superintendent: Date_____

(If principal was not the investigator)

Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION GUIDELINES

1) REPORTING

- Students, parents or guardians, or others make an oral or written report of a bullying incident (see Section V for more details)
- Staff must immediately report an incident of bullying to the principal or designee (staff must fill out an Incident Reporting Form)

2) SAFETY

- Before investigating the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or protect the alleged target from possible further incidents
- 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, after consultation with the superintendent and school resource officer, will notify the local law enforcement agency

3) INVESTIGATION

- Interview the target
- Interview students, staff, witness, parents or guardians, and others as necessary
- Interview the alleged aggressor

4) DETERMINATION

- The principal or designee makes the determination of bullying based upon all of the facts and circumstances
- Take steps to prevent recurrence
- Notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation (if there was bullying or retaliation found)
- Principal should not disclose specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken- except for in very rare cases (see Section V for more details)

5) DISCIPLINE/FOLLOW-UP

- Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct
- Document outcome of investigation on the Incident Reporting Form
- Notify appropriate staff
- Promote the continued safety of the target
- Provide counseling or refer aggressors, targets, and family members of those students to appropriate services as needed

Acushnet Public Schools
Student Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)
Computer, Internet, and Network

Introduction: The Acushnet Public Schools Local Area Network is a data communications network implemented and managed by the Acushnet Public Schools with the capacity to link workstations, local area networks, and/or other external networks as well as access a wide variety of data communications resources worldwide. The Acushnet Public Schools user has the responsibility to respect and protect the rights of every user in the community and on the network. Acushnet Public Schools Local Area Network users are expected to act in a responsible, ethical, and legal manner. Acushnet Public Schools network access is a privilege offered each academic year to educators and students. It is expected that educators and students will strive to act in all situations with honesty, integrity, and respect for the rights of others and to help others behave in similar fashion.

The Acushnet Public Schools is a public entity, therefore, all records (except those specifically excluded by law), whether in electronic or hardcopy form, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and open to public inspection. Copies of all information created, sent or retrieved may be stored on the network's back-up files. The network's storage areas (including back-up and user files) will be treated like school lockers and may be subject to inspection. Internet (e-mail) messages are public communication and are not private. All communications including text and images may be subject to applicable law enforcement or other third parties without prior consent of the sender or the receiver. The Director of Technology, in cooperation with the building Principal and/or the Superintendent, may review communications (e-mail, attachments, and files) to maintain integrity and ensure that users are using the system in a responsible manner. Users should not assume that use of the Acushnet Public Schools Local Network is private. All users are expected to use appropriate judgment and caution in communications concerning students and staff to ensure that personally identifiable information remains confidential. Use of any information obtained via e-mail, the Internet, or other sources is at the risk of the user. The Acushnet Public Schools specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through the Internet.

Primary Goals: The goal of the Local Area Network is to support and enhance instruction, research activities, and administrative records management among the staff and students of the Acushnet Public Schools. In addition to access of network shared resources, the District, through its Internet Service Provider "Merrimack Education Center," provides access to the Internet. This provides connections to regional, national, and international resources. The following guidelines establish minimum standards with regard to all uses of the Acushnet Public Schools Local Area Network.

User Responsibility: All staff, volunteers, and students must adhere to the network user policy. It is the responsibility of the network user to act in a manner that follows this policy. The Acushnet Public Schools reserves its right to seek restitution from any user for costs incurred by the school, including legal fees, due to such user's inappropriate use of the school's technology resources.

Unacceptable Uses: Some examples of inappropriate and/or illegal use are: (This is not an exhaustive list of all possible inappropriate uses)

- Accessing, transmitting, or receiving obscene or pornographic material.

- **Infringing copyrights.** Copyright infringement occurs when a person inappropriately reproduces or transmits material that is protected by copyright.
- **Attempting to access another person's files, or any network applications that the user does not have permission to be on.**
- **Engaging in sexual harassment.**
- **Participating in any communications that facilitate the illegal sale or use of drugs or alcohol; that facilitate criminal activity; that threaten, intimidate, or harass any other person; or that violate any other local, state, or federal laws.**
- **The use of proxy websites that allows a user to browse the Internet anonymously and intentionally bypasses our firewall and content filters.**
- **The installation of non-approved software on computer workstations. All new software must be approved by the Director of Technology before being installed on workstations.**
- **Any form of vandalism, including damage to computers or hardware, and disseminating malicious software programs such as viruses that disrupt the operation of the network.**
- **Disruption of network/computer performance by changing configurations or attaching devices, physically or wirelessly to the network.**
- **Cyberbullying, which is the repeated use by one or more students of an electronic expression (including the transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including but not limited to, the electronic mail, the internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications, creation of web pages or blogs in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, or the distribution of communications to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons), alone or in combination with any written or verbal expressions or physical acts or gestures, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school. See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37O.**
- **Revealing the personal address or telephone number of oneself or another person.**
- **Revealing one's password to anyone else, using anyone else's password, or pretending to be someone else when sending information over the computer network.**
- **Using the Acushnet Public Schools technology network for gambling.**

Violation of Policy: The Director of Technology in cooperation with the building principal and/or the superintendent will review all alleged violations of the Acushnet Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy. Violations of this policy may result in termination of the user's access to the Acushnet Public Schools Local Area Network, disciplinary action, and/or legal action. Appropriate law enforcement personnel will be notified if it is believed the network user has broken any local, state, or federal laws.

Reporting: Should a student user, while using the Acushnet Public Schools Technology Network, encounter any material that s/he feels may constitute a threat against the safety of fellow students, staff members or the property of the Acushnet Public Schools, that user is obligated to report his/her discovery of such material to his/her teacher or building principal.

Internet Safety & CIPA Compliance: The Acushnet Public Schools through its' ISP, provides content filtering that is CIPA compliant. CIPA is the acronym for Children's Internet Protection Act. Our content filtering software is updated on a regular basis and sites can be blocked per our request. The software is in place to help protect our students from obscene or questionable material that is not educationally relevant. The Acushnet Public Schools will make every reasonable effort to monitor our network, internet traffic, and content filters to ensure student safety. Disclaimer of Liability: While safeguards are in place to protect our students from offensive material, no filter is 100% effective. The Acushnet Public Schools disclaims all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and any other consequences of a student's network use. Under certain conditions, Massachusetts General Law (MGL) holds that email is public record and must be available for public inspection.

Adopted: 10/7/97

Revised: 9/24/02; 8/17/04; 8/4/09; 8/17/10

Forms to be returned are as follows:

- Handbook Sign-off Sheet (below the dotted line)
- Emergency Contact Update with either
 - Box in upper right right checked off indicating, "If all is correct, check here"
 - One line (preferably in different color ink or highlighted) through incorrect information and correct information printed neatly on form.
- Medical Emergency Form-all students
- Free & Reduced Lunch Application-one per household-please fill out online
- <https://www.myschoolapps.com/Application>
- Student Transportation Form-5th grade only
- Student Acceptable Use Policy-5th grade only
- Photograph/Video/Media Consent Form-5th grade only
- Volunteer Application (Complete this application if you are interested in becoming a volunteer)
- School Council Nomination Form

Please note the following forms are on file in our main office for all students. If you need to update or change information, please contact the main office.

- Student Transportation Form-6th-8th grades
- Student Acceptable Use Policy-6th-8th grades
- Photograph/Video/Media Consent Form-6th-8th grades

PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS PAGE TO YOUR CHILD'S HOMEROOM TEACHER

Please sign below to indicate that you and your child have read the rules, regulations, and policies that pertain to the Ford Middle School and that you and your child agree to abide by the regulations and policies set forth herein. Thank you.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Printed Student's Name

Grade

Homeroom

If you would like this handbook in an alternate language, please note this below:

Se você gostaria deste manual em uma língua alternativa, por favor observe isto em baixo:

Si le gustara esta guía en una lengua alterna, por favor note este abajo:

Eu gostaria deste manual em português. ☐

Me gustaría esta guía en español. ☐