



# Bennett - Hemenway Elementary School Handbook 2021-2022

[\*\*Natick Public Schools Return Schools Handbook\*\*](#)

**Natick Public Schools does not discriminate in employment nor in its educational programs, services and activities** on the basis of race, creed, color, age, sex, gender identity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, physical and intellectual differences, immigration status, homeless status, or any other basis prohibited by law.

**Title IX Coordinator:** Marianne Davis [mdavis@natickps.org](mailto:mdavis@natickps.org) **504 Coordinator:** Tim Luff [tluff@natickps.org](mailto:tluff@natickps.org)

August 30, 2021

Dear Community Members,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year! This year promises to be full of fun, excitement, and learning for your child. Ben-Hem's Community Handbook is an important part of creating a school climate that fosters a positive experience for students and families.

The community handbook you are about to review contains a wealth of information about school programs and services. The content of this handbook is intended to provide community members and families with basic functional and programmatic information and to communicate the policies, procedures, and practices of the school. There is a great deal of information and, therefore, this handbook will most often serve as a reference for you as questions come up during the year.

While this handbook will ultimately serve as a reference, it is important that families develop familiarity with the policies and procedures of the school. In doing so, you ensure that the school operates efficiently. Deviations from policy and procedure take time away from our primary responsibilities, learning and teaching.

In addition to our handbook, we have a condensed [Bennett-Hemenway School Safety Handbook](#) that is a result of our modified 2020-2021 school year. This resource speaks directly to modified procedures and additional safety mitigations that are in place to support safety at school.

It is my hope that the content of this handbook is both informative and useful. Everything we do is aimed at improving the service to and education of our students. If you have questions or comments regarding the information contained in this handbook please contact me at [kghilani@natickps.org](mailto:kghilani@natickps.org). We are looking forward to a great year working together for the benefit of our students.

Best,

*Karen Ghilani*  
Karen Ghilani, M.Ed  
Principal

## **Vision, Mission, and Core Values**

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At Ben-Hem, our mission is to enhance the possibilities of all learners. Students, teachers, staff, and parents work together to bring our mission to life through a sustained, uncompromising focus on our core values.

### **Core Values**

**We C.A.R.E. about ourselves, each other and our world.**

C.A.R.E. is an acronym developed and used to support pro-social behaviors and to make our collective expectations for each other clear.

#### **Community**

- ‘Collaborative connections between teachers, students, and parents

#### **Academics**

- Extend and refine what we know and are able to do

#### **Responsibility and Respect**

- Care for ourselves, each other and the community

#### **Effort**

- Continuous, focused determination to further one’s own learning

### **Mission**

***It is our mission to ensure that...***

- all students, through effort and perseverance, excel as learners, individuals, and members of a diverse society
- all students develop confidence in themselves as individuals, with their peers as friends and mentors, and with their community as a resource
- all students thrive in a positive school climate that engages them in rigorous learning while providing an atmosphere that instills the joy and fun of seeking knowledge
- parents and teachers collaborate in a collective effort to support and care for students

## Philosophy

We believe that inspiring and developing a lifelong love of learning is the foundation for every child's future success. Children are innately curious and come to school eager to learn – to develop the skills and acquire the knowledge and understanding necessary for them to be capable and competent citizens. As a community, we must access students' desire to learn and engage them in that life-long pursuit of knowledge.

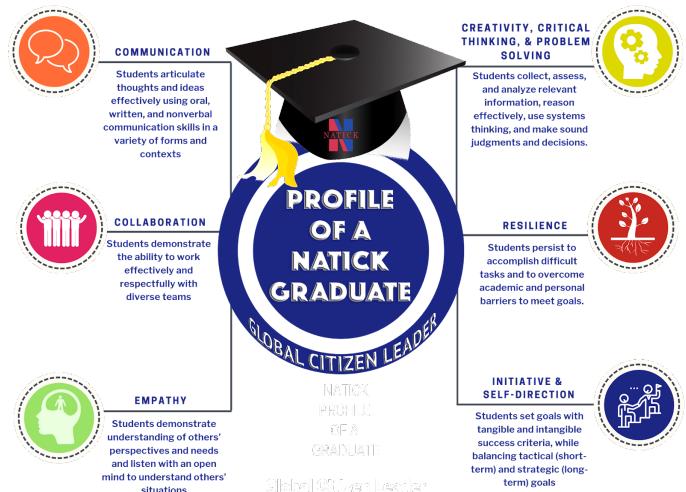
Learning does not begin or end with the school day, week, or year. Children gain insight and understanding through all of their experiences and interactions with their environment. Values, ideas, and concepts are communicated explicitly through direct teaching and implicitly through the words and actions of the influential adults in their lives. Over time, the child's cumulative interactions with people shape their perception of themselves, others, and the diverse world around them.

We believe that an unwavering commitment to developing a positive school culture is essential to achieving our mission. This culture is characterized by:

- a direct focus on shared core values.
- strong collaborative relationships
- a safe learning environment
- reflection on our practice and parenting
- an atmosphere that fosters academic rigor while instilling the joy and fun of learning

Students must be prepared to engage in an ever-changing landscape. The integration of *communication, collaboration, critical thinking and problem solving partnered with empathy, resilience and initiative and self-direction* will lay the foundation for our children to experience success as members of a productive community. This **Profile of Natick Graduate** threads through our K-12 school design in the service of students.

Children thrive when their hard work, effort, and success are celebrated. Establishing traditions and structures that promote recognition, celebration, and the joy of learning are central to bringing shared values to life and achieving the school's mission.



## **General Information**

1. School Contact Information
2. Daily School Schedule
3. Arrival/Guidelines for Morning Drop Off Volunteers
4. Dismissal
5. Dress Code
6. Attendance
7. Health and Wellness
8. Cell Phones and Electronic Devices
9. Security and Safety Guidelines

## **School Contact Information**

<b>Main Office</b> <b>508.647.6580</b> Karen Ghilani, Principal Ben Gatto, Assistant Principal Donna Kelley, Administrative Asst Danielle Raneri, Administrative Asst	<b>ASAP</b> <b>508.647.6400 x 1214</b> Megan Cap-Renzi, District Director
<b>Special Education</b> <b>508.647.6580</b> Hannah Cross, Special Education Coor.	<b>ASAP</b> <b>508.647.6400 x 6584</b> Pat Walsh, Site Director
<b>School Psychologist and Guidance</b> <b>508.647.6580</b> Kristy Morrison - School Psychologist Tara Kiritsy - School Psychologist Taylor Scannell - Guidance Counselor Maeve Gardner - Guidance Long Term Substitute	<b>Transportation</b> <b>508.647.6497</b> Patricia Paine
<b>Nurses Office</b> <b>508.647.6580 x 2</b> Denise Twiss Kelly Keane	<b>Food Service</b> <b>508.647.6611</b> Kristen Gentili, Director

## **Ben-Hem Daily School Schedule**

8:05	Student Drop Off Begins	
8:15	Instruction begins	
11:00	Grade Two Lunch	
11:30	Grade One Lunch	
12:00	Kindergarten Lunch	
12:30	Grade Three Lunch	
1:00	Grade Four Lunch	
2:41	Dismissal	<b>12:05 pm Early Release Day Dismissal</b>

## Arrival

Students arriving by bus will be dropped off in the bus loop between 8:05 and 8:15 am. Students will move to their appropriate grade level doors and enter the building with staff supervision. Students will move directly to their classrooms. All teachers will be in their rooms ready to greet and supervise students at 8:05 am.

Students will enter the building as follows:



### Kindergarten, First & Second Grade will enter through the main entrance.

- Kindergarten: Right side of hallway and proceed to K wing
- Grade One: Left side of hallway and proceed to 1st Gr wing
- Grade Two: Main hallway to the main stairwell and enter 2nd Gr wing

### Third & Fourth Grade:

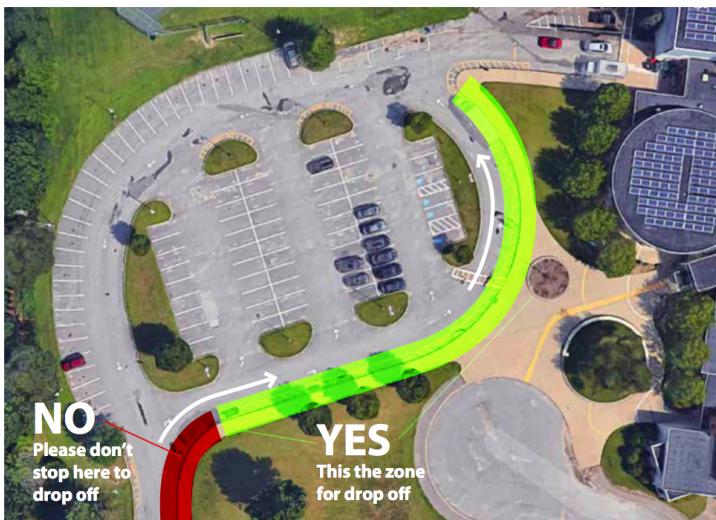
- Grade Three: Clinic Door (Door #13) Students will use 3rd grade stairwell to get to classrooms
- Grade Four: Clinic Door (Door #13) Students will use 3rd grade stairwell to get to the classrooms



All doors will be monitored by school staff. Students will be reminded to put on their masks while approaching the door. Teachers will greet students at the doors to the classroom. Students will sanitize their hands upon entry into the classroom.

**Students will not be admitted into the building prior to 8:05 am.** Parents can drop off students along the fire lane in the front of the building once live drop off has begun. **Students should be prepared to exit the car on the passenger side.** Volunteers will help to open and close doors as students transition safely from the vehicles. Students will be directed to walk to the appropriate door to enter the school. Doors will be marked and monitored by staff. East Evergreen Road is a one way road during this time of day. All Parents will **exit right** out of the school parking lot. Parents will wait until cars in front of them are unloaded and will not pull out into traffic before cars ahead of them.

## Morning drop off – PARENTS



### Morning Drop Off Procedures

The morning drop off is a busy time in the parking lot. Ben-Hem runs a "live drop off". Parents drive into the drop off loop and students exit the vehicles onto the sidewalk. Maintaining the safety and efficiency of the live process requires a collaborative effort between school staff and families.

#### *The school will...*

- Assign staff members to supervise student arrival into the building and monitor students' until they are dismissed to their classes.
- Monitor students transitioning from buses to the school building.

## Morning drop off – VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are essential for morning drop off. We keep traffic flowing so that as many cars as possible can enter the drop-off lane, allowing kids to get to their classroom on time. We also provide a warm welcome to students so they can start the day on a happy note. Here are some tips to help when you volunteer:

- The drop off line works best with 5 parents working in zones (shown above)
- We prevent accidents in the parking lot by:
  - encouraging drivers to notice pedestrians
  - moving kids away from the curb as they exit cars
  - closing car doors so that drivers won't jump out into traffic when kids forget
  - reminding students to slow down during icy conditions
- If a child is having difficulty leaving the car or can't find their belongings, encourage parents to pull around and park in the lot to assist their child.



## Dismissal

### Dismissal

We will continue to run live car pickup this school year. All students that do not ride the bus or walk, will participate in a live car pick up dismissal. Parents will no longer park, walk to the pick up location and wait for students to arrive.

### Live Car Pickup:

We will run a staggered dismissal process. Families are invited to enter the parking lot starting at 2:00 pm to pick up students through the live car pick up process. Drivers will wait in cue along the fire lane in the front of the building. Drivers should not extend beyond the fire lane - blocking the loading dock or entering the hard top area near the gym doors until directed to do so.

### **NEW THIS YEAR: All live car pick up students - Kindergarten through Grade Four - will be together.**

We are no longer separating Kindergarten and First Grade. Please read through so you understand all changes.



- Drivers must display the last name of students in the window in a clear and legible manner. We recommend clipping it to the passenger visor and just dropping the visor down during pick up. Another helpful hint is to write your name clearly and legibly on paper and attach it to a hanger that you keep in your car. Hang the hanger on your rear view mirror during pick up (Thanks Ayanna Hall for this tip). THIS SHOULD BE ON DISPLAY UNTIL YOU LEAVE CAMPUS.

- Live Car Pick Up Reports are run each day via Pick Up Patrol to all staff facilitating live car pick up.
- Names will be called from the playground so that students can be cued for pick up in order.
- Drivers should refrain from using cell phones during live car pick up and maintain a safe and controlled speed.
- Each car must come to a complete stop prior to loading.
- Drivers should not exit the car for any reason during live car pick up.
- Live car pick up will begin once all **Walkers** are dismissed from the building.
- **Students' Last Names** should be on display the entire time cars are in the Live Car Pick Up line.

Please note: We will assist in opening car doors but we are not able to assist in buckling students into the vehicles.

#### **Walkers:**

Students who are walkers will be called to exit classrooms and move to the East Evergreen fire lane. Walkers will begin dismissal at 2:36 pm. There are three staff assigned to facilitate Kindergarten and First grade Walker dismissal. Kindergarten and First Grade walkers will be picked up from their classrooms and led to Walker Pick up. Three staff are assigned to facilitate Grade 2-4 Walker dismissal. All walkers will dismiss to the East Evergreen fire lane for pick up near the fenced in area (former PreK playground). Walkers are encouraged to clear the fire lane as quickly as possible knowing that Live Car Pickup will begin shortly thereafter.

#### **Bus Riders:**

Bus students will remain in their classrooms until their bus is called. Students will be monitored by teachers in the classroom. Bus staff will escort students outside to the bus loop using the main hallway. Grades 2, 3, and 4 should exit the second floor via the main stairwell.

#### **Bicycles**

Fourth Grade students are invited to ride their bikes to school with parent permission. Parents need to communicate with the classroom teacher and note the dismissal plan in Pick Up Patrol. Students should wear a helmet. Helmets are safely stored in their lockers during the school day.

#### **After School Programs**

Children who attend after school programs (ASAP, Longfellow, Tobin, etc.) are dismissed to specific areas of the building where program staff meet them and take attendance.

#### **Ben Hem ASAP Playground Information:**

To ensure the safety of children attending the NPS ASAP program, elementary playgrounds are closed to the public while in use by ASAP during the following times on regular school days. Hours will differ on early release days. The public is welcome to use the playground anytime it is not currently in use by the ASAP program.

- **Ben-Hem: 3:15 - 5:30**

#### **Changes in Regular Dismissal for Students**

Natick Public Schools use **PickUp Patrol** for managing all dismissal plans and dismissal plan changes. Please login to PickUp Patrol each day that you will be dismissing your student before the regular school dismissal time or if your student's normal after school routine will change that day. You also have the option to enter dismissal changes for future dates. For safety reasons, the school cannot dismiss a child to anyone other than a parent or a specifically authorized adult unless written permission is received from the parent. There is a place for this authorization on the annual Health Emergency Information form. (**Changes in dismissal plans can not be accepted after 1:00 p.m. to ensure the safety of all students.**) We appreciate your cooperation

with this practice.



## Enrollment Instructions

PickUp Patrol is:

- **Convenient:** Make changes, days, weeks or months in advance.
- **Automated:** Reduces classroom interruptions and accurately tracks who's going where.
- **Safe and Secure:** All student information is secure and the program is entirely administered by our own school staff.

Each August you will be asked to set up your child's default dismissal plan via email from PickUp Patrol. Your child's default plan is "typically" the way your child will be sent home each day. **Please note that default plans can only be set up on a laptop or desktop.**

Once this plan is set up you will have the opportunity to download the app on your mobile phone, making it quick and easy to access the program for those last minute changes.

**ALL plan changes should be submitted through PickUp Patrol.**

The PickUp Patrol app is not found in the app store or google play store. You need to add the app to your homescreen from the browser.

To download the PickUp Patrol app:

From the browser on your phone go to <http://app.pickuppatriot.net/parents>

### **On an Android device:**

Click on the three dots next to the app name.

Choose Add to the Homepage.

### **On an iPhone:**

Click on the box with an arrow at the bottom of your screen.

Choose Add to the Homepage

## Dress Code

A student dress code should accomplish several goals:

- Maintain a safe learning environment in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as PE (athletic attire/shoes).
- Allow students to wear clothing of their choice that is comfortable.
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with offensive images or language, including profanity, hate speech, and pornography.
- Prevent students from wearing clothing with images or language depicting or advocating violence or the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, body type/size, religion, and personal style.

The primary responsibility for a student's attire resides with the student and parents or guardians.

Bennett-Hemenway is responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

### **1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students.**

- a. Clothes must be worn in a way that genitals, buttocks, and nipples are covered with opaque materials.

Students are scheduled for daily recess periods and need to be prepared for the fluctuation of the weather. During snowy, cold or windy weather, appropriate boots, hat, gloves/mittens, ski pants, and a warm jacket are required. Students should bring in an additional pair of sneakers with their boots so that winter footwear might be removed during the day.

Students should wear or bring sneakers on days they are scheduled to have physical education classes. Tie or Velcro™-closure sneakers stay on during PE class better than slip-on shoes. Children should also dress comfortably in order to fully participate.

**We urge parents to label ALL removable clothing.** If an item is deemed missing, parents and students are encouraged to check for items in the Lost & Found area in the main hallway. Many quality items are never claimed and are donated to charity periodically during each school year.

## **Attendance Policy**

The Natick School Committee believes strongly in the importance of regular attendance by all students. The Committee adheres to and is in full compliance with Chapter 76 of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which defines attendance regulations. Except in cases of illness or other unique circumstances, students are expected to be present when school is in session.

All students are expected to attend school, be on time, and remain for the duration of the school day. In the event that your child is absent from school, please notify the school as soon as possible on the day of the absence. A student is considered absent if he/she is not present for at least half of the school day. Even if a student is tardy or has an early dismissal, students who are present for less than half the day will be marked absent.

Students are expected to be in homerooms by 8:15 am in order to be marked present. If a student arrives after that time, they must be accompanied by a parent/guardian and signed in at the main office.

Natick Public Schools has implemented the following policy to verify student absences in grades K-4:

- Parent/guardians are expected to enter an absence into **Pick Up Patrol** the school as soon as it is determined that a child is to be absent (**preferred**).
- Or, a voicemail has been created in the nurse's office to receive your call at any time, day or night. Please call (508) 647-6581 and leave a message that includes:
  - your name,
  - your child's name and teacher,
  - and the reason for the absence.

Natick's automated attendance line will contact any parent who has not notified the school by 9:00 am on the day of the child's absence. Parents who do not return the automated call will be contacted on a cell phone or work number for confirmation. In the event that a parent can not confirm the absence, the school resource officer will be sent to the home to do a safety check.

### **Excused Absences**

An absence is considered excused when the parent has notified the school on the day of the absence before the end of that school day, AND the student's total number of absences has not exceeded 10 in the course of the school year.

Please provide doctor's notes if your student has had many absences, as this will help to document the reasons for the absences that are technically "unexcused."

**If a student is absent for 5 or more consecutive days**, a parent must obtain a doctor's note and submit it to the school.

Any absence that exceeds a total number of 10 can only be excused by a physician or evidence of religious observance. If a student is absent for religious observance it will be considered an excused absence

### **Notification of Attendance Concern**

If a student is absent for 8 days, a school administrator will contact *parents/guardians* to alert them that their child is approaching 10 absences.

Once a student is absent for ten days a letter documenting the attendance concerns will be mailed to the student's residence *along with communication from the District Attorney's office outlining Massachusetts General Law on school attendance.*

Any absences totaling over 13, unless deemed extraordinary, may result in a meeting with the School Resource Office and possibly the filing of a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) with the juvenile court.

If a student is expected to be out for 10 days for vacation or other non-medically excused reasons, families will be asked to unenroll their child and develop a home-school plan that will need to be approved by the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Learning. Guidelines for this process are outlined on the Natick Public Schools website ([www.natickps.org](http://www.natickps.org)).

### **Tardy**

A child will be considered tardy if he/she is not in their homeroom at the start of the school day. Parents need to notify the school, prior to the start of the school day, if a child is going to be tardy. Tardies must be reported in **Pick Up Patrol**.

Any tardies over 10 will be considered unexcused unless a doctor's note is provided or if there are religious reasons for the tardy.

Any tardies over 15 may result in a meeting with the building administrator and possibly the School Resource Officer. Any tardies over 20 may result in a CRA being filed with the juvenile court. Any tardy greater than 50% of the school day will be recorded as an absence.

### **Early Dismissal**

A child dismissed prior to the end of the school day will be considered dismissed early.

Any early dismissals over 10 will be considered unexcused unless a doctor's note is provided or if there are religious reasons for dismissing from school early.

Any early dismissal over 15 may result in a meeting with the school administrator and possibly the School Resource Officer. Any early dismissals over 20 may result in a CRA being filed with the juvenile court.

### **Considering a Vacation During School Time?**

Should a parent choose to keep a student out of school for reasons other than illness or unique circumstances, the school and individual teacher(s) will not assume responsibility for either preparing lessons in advance for the student or for providing individual tutoring or extensive individual help for the student when he/she returns.

## **Health and Wellness**

### **Health Services and Guidelines**

Please refer to the Health Department section on the Natick Public Schools website for up-to-date health information, policies, and health forms. Health Services are responsible for treating students having illness or injuries occurring during school hours. Each school maintains a Health Clinic and is staffed with a School Nurse.

*Health Information/Emergency Form: These forms are completed online annually to ensure that up to date health and contact information is available in the event of an emergency.*

In order to understand and safeguard your child's health, we ask each parent to complete an emergency form at the beginning of the school year. This form is available online annually for completion. **We ask that you update this form during the school year as needed. It is incumbent upon parents/guardians to keep the School Nurse apprised of relevant health information.**

**Immunizations:**

Upon enrollment into kindergarten, parents/guardians are required to present a physician's certificate or a certificate from the Board of Health attesting to students' immunizations against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and Hemophilus influenza type B, and such other communicable diseases as specified by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Per state law, students will be excluded from school if immunizations are not up to date.

**Vision and Hearing Screenings:**

Students' vision and hearing are tested yearly. Parents/guardians will be notified if any concerns are detected. These are merely screening tests and should be accompanied by periodic exams by your doctor.

**Height and Weight/BMI Screening:**

Schools in Massachusetts are now mandated by Massachusetts General Laws to obtain heights and weights on students in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. After obtaining your child's height and weight, your child's BMI (Body Mass Index) will be calculated and you will be notified of the results in a confidential manner.

**Healthy Habits:**

Good health habits should be developed early in life. It takes a healthy child to be educated. You may assist your child in developing good health habits by teaching and encouraging him/her to:

1. Eat adequate and well-balanced meals, especially breakfast.
2. Brush teeth twice a day.
3. Cleanliness is important and expected.
4. Perform toilet habits independently.
5. Make sure your child has his/her eyeglasses at school at all times.
6. Cover nose and mouth with a tissue or inside elbow when coughing or sneezing.
7. Wash hands after using the toilet and before eating snacks and meals.
8. Go to bed regularly at an early hour to get adequate rest.

**Absences:**

Although regular school attendance is desirable, a sick child should never be sent to school. Students should not come to school if they are ill and should be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school.

**Reasons for Keeping a Child Home:**

1. Temperature over 99.6 degrees
2. Colds, coughs and runny nose
3. Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea
4. Undiagnosed rashes
5. Impetigo
6. Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
7. Pediculosis (head lice)

8. Scabies
9. Ringworm

Pupils returning to school after an absence of more than five (5) days should present evidence for absence (a physician's note).

**Medication Policy:**

Only a physician is legally authorized to prescribe medication, this includes over the counter medication. If at all possible medication should be given at home before or after school hours. A student who needs to take any medication during school hours must have a signed permission slip from parent/guardian and the physician. Medication (in a pharmacy labeled bottle) is kept locked in the clinic and taken under the supervision of the nurse. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) may be given at the discretion of the school nurse, if the parent/guardian has signed the permission form.

**CHILDREN ARE NOT ALLOWED TO TRANSPORT ANY MEDICATION, INCLUDING OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINES.** The only exception: students at NHS and the middle schools are allowed to carry their own epi-pen and/or inhaler (with written permission from their physician on file in the clinic.)

**Infectious Disease Regulations:**

Chicken Pox should be reported to the Board of Health either by the physician or parent. Pupil's release certificate, issued by the Board of Health or the physician, must be presented to the school nurse before the student is readmitted. The period of isolation for Chicken Pox is at least 7 days from the appearance of the most recent eruptions as long as all lesions are crusted and dry.

It is not necessary to report the following to the Board of Health, BUT the period of isolation must be followed:

**Disease/Period of Isolation:**

1. Streptococcal infections - 24 hours after treatment with appropriate antibiotic
2. Impetigo - 24 hours after initiation of treatment with appropriate antibiotic topical or oral medication
3. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) - 24 hours after initiation of treatment with appropriate ointment or drops
4. Ringworm - 24 hours after initiation of treatment with appropriate topical medication
5. Scabies - 24 hours after initiation of treatment with appropriate topical medication
6. Pediculosis (head lice) - Until seen by the school nurse.

**Lice:**

1. If a student is identified as having a case of Pediculosis (nits and/or live lice), he or she will be assessed and returned to class and/or dismissed at the nurse's discretion.
2. The nurse will assess siblings and close contacts who attend the Natick Public Schools.
3. Notification will be sent home to parents of all children in the classroom. Additional notification will be sent home at the nurse's discretion.
4. Parents will be given information regarding the treatment of lice.
5. The student has to be checked by the nurse prior to returning to school. A student will be accompanied by his/her parent until the exam is completed.
6. If nits are found after treatment, the student may attend class at the nurse's discretion.

## **Food Allergies:**

All children have different needs. Some are academic in nature while some are behavioral. Other children's needs are dietary. Many children at Ben-Hem have moderate to severe food sensitivities. Ben-Hem's mission is to ensure that all students thrive in a positive school climate that engages them in rigorous learning while providing an atmosphere that instills the joy and fun of seeking knowledge. Part of ensuring a positive school climate is attending to the needs of our students.

Students with food sensitivities and allergies need certain interventions, as do students with academic and behavioral needs. In order to best meet the needs of our food sensitive children, the following policies and practices are set forth:

1. Birthday celebrations in the classroom:
  - a. We avoid food for celebrations. There are many ways to celebrate a birthday that do not involve food. Please contact your classroom teacher for ideas or suggestions.
2. Allergy Classrooms and Peanut/Tree Nut Sensitive classrooms:
  - a. Classrooms at each grade level are designated as allergy, peanut or tree nut sensitive rooms. If your child is in one of these classrooms, the school nurse will provide you with more specific information. The allergy sensitive classroom ensures that the needs of children with food sensitivities are met throughout the day.
3. Allergy Lunch Tables:
  - a. Certain tables in the cafeteria are designated as "free" from required allergens. Staff members are aware of these tables and monitor them carefully to ensure that they indeed remain free from foods that may cause harm.

The safety of students is a community responsibility. The following responsibilities ensure that everyone understands their part in food safety at Ben-Hem.

## **Student Responsibilities:**

1. Take responsibility for avoiding allergens
2. Do not trade or share foods
3. Wash hands before and after eating
4. Learn to recognize the symptoms of an allergic reaction
5. Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure or symptoms appear
6. Consider wearing a medical alert bracelet
7. Report bullying, teasing, and/or threats
8. When appropriate, be responsible for carrying EpiPen

## **Family Responsibilities:**

1. Notify the school nurse of your child's allergies prior to the start of school
2. Provide the school nurse a list of foods and/or ingredients that would cause a life-threatening reaction
3. Provide the school nurse with medical documentation from your health care provider including medication orders for Epinephrine
4. Meet with the school nurse and teacher and participate in developing your child's individual health care plan
5. Provide the school nurse with up-to-date epinephrine auto-injectors. Supply of two Epipens per student with a life-threatening allergy is recommended. Deliver these medications in the proper containers no later than the first day of school
6. Provide current contact information to the school

7. Provide the school nurse with an annual update on the status of your child's allergies
8. If possible, attend field trips with your child
9. Provide the school with safe snacks for your child
10. Provide your child with medical alert information and encourage them to wear it
11. Ensure that before and after school staff have the appropriate information and training regarding your child's allergies.
12. Contact the Director of Food and Nutrition Services in regards to menu choices
13. Notify the bus company if your child will carry an EpiPen on the bus

**Teacher Responsibilities:**

1. Consult with school nurse, parents, and student regarding individual health care plan
2. Ensure the classroom has direct communication with the front office and nurse
3. Transport the EpiPen so that it is always with the student
4. Communicate to and remind all parents in the classroom of LTA (Life Threatening Allergies) in the classroom
5. Participate in education and training regarding LTA
6. Keep all necessary documents regarding LTA accessible
7. Ensure that all student teachers, teaching assistants, support staff, and volunteers are aware of LTA and necessary safeguards
8. Educate classmates to avoid endangering, isolating, stigmatizing, or teasing students with LTA
9. Respond to every symptom or sign as a possible allergic reaction
10. Avoid using food based projects/curriculum
11. Prohibit students from sharing or trading snacks
12. Encourage parents to send in a box of safe snacks
13. Avoid cross contamination by wiping surfaces with soap and water before and after eating
14. Reinforce hand washing before and after eating
15. Field Trips
  - a. Ensure all life saving medications and instructions are taken on field trips
  - b. Assign students with LTA to his/her parent or guardian if possible. If not, assign to the classroom teacher
  - c. Ensure a functioning communication device is taken on the trip
  - d. Review field trip plans; avoid high risk places and know where the closest medical facilities are located

# **Cell Phones and Electronic Devices Acceptable Use Policy for Students**

## **Natick Public Schools Student Responsible Use Policy**

The purpose of the Natick Public Schools (NPS) Student Responsible Use Policy (RUP) is to prevent unauthorized access and other unlawful activities by users online, prevent unauthorized disclosure of or access to sensitive information, and to comply with legislation including, but not limited to, the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Furthermore, the RUP clarifies the educational purpose of district technology.

NPS uses technology protection measures to block or filter access, as much as reasonably possible, to visual and written depictions that are obscene, pornographic, or harmful to minors over the network. The District can and will monitor students' online activities and access, review, copy, and store or delete any communications or files and share them with adults as necessary. Students should have no expectation of privacy regarding their use of NPS equipment, network, and/or Internet access or files, including email.

Email accounts are provided to all students in our 1:1 program, grades 7-12, to encourage student and teacher collaboration. Email accounts issued to students are archived to ensure student safety.

NPS will take all necessary measures to secure the network against potential cyber security threats. This may include blocking access to websites, applications, including, but not limited to, email, data management and reporting tools, and other web applications.

## **Summary**

Natick Public Schools believes in a Digital Citizenship model for supporting safe and responsible use of all Online and Digital Technologies (ODT) in teaching and learning. An important part of this is that we are able to show others what that responsible use looks like.

Because we know this is important for us all, we ask everyone, the staff, students and volunteers working at our schools to agree to use the internet and other ODT technologies in a safe and responsible way. NPS utilizes resources from Common Sense Education for our Digital Citizenship curriculum.

All students are responsible for practicing positive Digital Citizenship. Positive Digital Citizenship includes appropriate behavior and contributions on websites, social media, discussion boards, media sharing sites and all other electronic communications, including new technology. It is important, to be honest in all digital communications without disclosing sensitive personal information. Students should also reference the student handbook for additional policies and guidelines.

## **Jurisdiction**

This policy is in effect:

- When NPS-provided equipment (laptops, tablets, etc.) is used on or off school property;
- When non-NPS devices access the district network or district resources; or, at home, or other locations, if the improper use creates a hostile environment at school for any student and/or causes disruption or disorder within the school.

## **Student Responsible Use Guidelines**

When using NPS Online and Digital technologies (ODT); I will always be a good digital citizen. By signing this policy, I acknowledge that I understand the following:

- I am responsible for practicing positive digital citizenship.
- I will practice positive digital citizenship, including appropriate behavior and contributions on websites, social media, discussion boards, media sharing sites, and all other electronic communications, including new technology.
- I will be honest in all digital communication.
- I understand that what I do and post online must not disrupt school activities or compromise school safety and security.
- I am responsible for keeping personal information private.
- I will not share personal information about myself or others including, but not limited to, names, home addresses, telephone numbers, birth dates, or visuals such as pictures, videos, and drawings.
- I will not meet anyone in person that I have met only on the Internet.
- I will be aware of privacy settings on websites that I visit.
- I will abide by all laws, this Responsible Use Policy and all District security policies.
- I am responsible for my passwords and my actions when using District accounts.
- I will not share any school or district usernames and passwords with anyone.
- I will not access the account information of others.
- I will log out of unattended equipment and accounts in order to maintain privacy and security.
- I am responsible for my verbal, written, and artistic expression.
- I will use school appropriate language in all electronic communications, including email, social media posts, audio recordings, video conferencing, and artistic works.
- I am responsible for treating others with respect and dignity.
- I will not send and/or distribute hateful, discriminatory, or harassing digital communications, or engage in sexting.
- I understand that bullying in any form, including cyberbullying, is unacceptable.
- I am responsible for accessing only educational content when using NPS technology. q I will not seek out, display, or circulate material that is hate speech, sexually explicit or violent. I understand that any exceptions must be approved by a teacher or administrator as part of a school assignment.
- I understand that the use of the District network for illegal, political, or commercial purposes is strictly forbidden.
- I am responsible for respecting and maintaining the security of NPS digital resources and networks.
- I will not try to get around security settings and filters, including through the use of proxy servers to access websites blocked by the district.
- I will not install or use illegal software or files, including copyright-protected materials, unauthorized software, or apps on any NPS computers, tablets, smartphones, or other internet devices.
- I know that I am not to use the Internet using a personal data plan at school, including personal mobile hotspots that enable access to NPS equipment.
- I will not use the NPS network or equipment to obtain unauthorized information, attempt to access information protected by privacy laws, or impersonate other users.
- I am responsible for taking all reasonable care when handling NPS equipment.
- I understand that vandalism in any form is prohibited.
- I will report any known or suspected acts of vandalism to the appropriate authority.
- I will respect my and others' use and access to NPS equipment.
- I am responsible for respecting the works of others.
- I will follow all copyright guidelines.
- I will not copy the work of another person and represent it as my own and I will properly cite all sources.
- I will not download illegally obtained music, software, apps, and other works.
- I understand all NPS trademarks, logos and symbols are for school district use only.
- I am responsible for the data I create and for protecting it.

- I understand the school district provides me with a Google account to save and store all my data and files.
- I understand it is my responsibility to backup and protect any data or files that I create.
- I understand I should not save or store personal data or files on any device.
- I understand that the school district may re-image any computer at any time to maintain the equipment in good working order.

#### Consequences for Irresponsible Use

Misuse of NPS online and digital technologies (ODT) may result in restricted access. Failure to uphold the responsibilities listed above is misuse. Such misuse may also lead to disciplinary and/or legal action against students, including suspension, expulsion, or criminal prosecution by government authorities. The District will tailor any disciplinary action to the specific issues related to each violation.

Disciplinary action may also be taken when a student intentionally directs at the school online speech that is understood by school officials to threaten, harass and intimate a staff member or fellow student, even when such online action originated, and was disseminated, off-campus without the use of school resources.

Students are welcome to take and post pictures online in their uniforms and/or with the school logo, recognizing that those images should display appropriate decorum and not conduct unbecoming of the team/school. Disciplinary action may also be taken if students post pictures online in their uniforms and/or with the school logo, that display conduct unbecoming of the team/school and/or that disrupts the operation of the school.

#### Disclaimer

NPS makes no guarantees about the quality of the services provided and is not liable for any claims, losses, damages, costs, or other obligations arising from use of the network or district accounts.

NPS also denies any liability for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through user access. Any statement accessible online is understood to be the author's individual point of view and not that of the district, its affiliates, or employees. Students under the age of 18 should only access NPS network accounts outside of school if a parent or legal guardian supervises their usage at all times. The student's parent or guardian is responsible for monitoring the minor's use outside of school.

#### **NPS District Guidelines for Consequences for Irresponsible Use:**

Misuse of NPS online and digital technologies (ODT) may result in restricted access. Failure to uphold the responsibilities listed above is misuse. Such misuse may also lead to disciplinary and/or legal action against students, including suspension, expulsion, or criminal prosecution by government authorities. The District will tailor any disciplinary action to the specific issues related to each violation.

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**Note: Natick Public Schools will not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items under any circumstances.**

# **Security and Safety Guidelines**

## **Visitors at Ben-Hem: (During COVID)**

Volunteers are not allowed on campus at this time. As we await the opportunity for our youngest students to be vaccinated against COVID 19. Parents may be offered opportunities to volunteer in non-student facing ways. This would be teacher directed and would involve tasks that could be completed at home - off campus.

## **Previous Volunteer/Visitor Guidelines:**

Throughout the school-day many parents, volunteers, and service providers visit Ben-Hem. To ensure the safety of our students and staff as well as the integrity of our learning environment, a comprehensive visitors protocol is in place. Please review this protocol and the procedures we employ to ensure they are successfully implemented.

### **Expectation:**

Any adult(s) who are not directly employed by the school or district must check-in and out through the front office and wear appropriate identification throughout their stay in the building.

### **Procedure:**

1. Each adult visiting the building must use the main entryway and proceed to the front office.
2. Once in the front office, each visitor must sign in with the front office staff. Office staff will issue a visitor's identification badge.
3. Each visitor must wear this identification badge for the entirety of his/her stay.
4. Each visitor must return directly to the front office when ready to depart, hand in his or her identification badge, and sign out.

## **Parking Lot Policies**

1. Parents and visitors may park in the lot or on the school side of East Evergreen Road. Please do not block driveways.
2. The speed limit in the parking lot is 5 miles per hour.
3. Cell phone use in the parking lot is strongly discouraged.
4. The bus loop is reserved for bus traffic at all times. **Please do not use this area for any reason.**
5. Parking is permitted in designated, marked parking spaces only.
6. Parking in the fire lane is strictly prohibited.

## **Parent Conferences**

Parent conferences happen during the fall and spring of the school year. Parents will coordinate conference times with their classroom teachers. On the early release days targeted for conferences, parents or guardians will be expected to meet with teachers virtually to discuss student progress and understand their progress towards learning goals.

## **Appendices:**

Natick Public School District has accepted the following policies as defined by our school committee to support the effective management and success of our school system. These policies align with Massachusetts General Law requirements.

### **Pertaining to Student Discipline:**

- [\*\*NPS Discipline Process & Procedures\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Chapter 37H\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Chapter 37H ½\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Chapter 37H ¾\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Chapter 370 Bullying Prevention and Intervention\*\*](#)

### **Pertaining to Student Information:**

- [\*\*Student Records\*\*](#)
- [\*\*FERPA/Directory Information Notice\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Student Rights and Responsibilities\*\*](#)

### **Pertaining to Enrollment**

- [\*\*Residency Policy\*\*](#)

### **Pertaining to District Policy**

- [\*\*Equal Opportunity Statement\*\*](#)
- [\*\*Title IX\*\*](#)

# **NPS Discipline Process and Procedures**

## ***Disciplinary Procedures***

Repeated failure of a student to demonstrate appropriate conduct will be directly communicated to parents. Logical consequences for infractions may involve any of several levels of disciplinary action including conferences with student, parents, staff and/or the principal; written accounts of incidents; phone calls to parents; loss of privileges such as but not limited to removal from recess, the lunchroom, or the bus; restitution or tasks designed to redress infractions; time-out, in-school suspension, at-home suspension, and expulsion from school in accordance with Chapter 76, Section 17 of the Massachusetts General Law.

Any of the following actions engaged in while on school property or while part of a school activity off school grounds may subject a student to disciplinary measures including the full range of actions outlined above as logical consequences for infractions:

Intentionally causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause physical injury to another person

Intentionally causing, attempting to cause, or threatening to cause damage to school property or private property located at school; stealing or attempting to steal school property or private property located at school or while part of a school activity off school grounds

Repeatedly and intentionally defying the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, or administrators

Determination of the appropriate disciplinary action will be made by the staff involved with the student and, when appropriate, by the principal. Actions will be geared to realizing three interrelated goals:

1. Elimination of the inappropriate student behavior
2. Development of positive, more productive student behavior
3. Provision of an appropriate learning environment for all students

## ***Suspension***

The following offenses are considered serious enough to warrant a suspension from school. Parents will be notified by phone or letter. The Superintendent of Schools will be notified in writing of the reason(s) for the suspension. The student is responsible for making up all missed work. After a suspension, the school may request a conference with parents/guardians before the student may return to his/her program.

1. Tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs
  - a. Use of tobacco on school property, school busses, and field trips
  - b. Possession, use or sale of alcohol or other drugs on school property, school busses, or field trips - Police will be notified
2. Any act of vandalism to school property – such as furniture, books, equipment, lavatories, which cannot be satisfactorily corrected by the student
3. Disrespectful or threatening behavior directed toward a staff member

4. Stealing
5. Throwing or misuse of food
6. Possession, use, or sale of any dangerous or illegal devices (e.g. fireworks, knives, firearms, etc.)
7. Leaving school property without permission
8. Disobedience to a teacher or administrator
9. Extorting money from others
10. Causing a fire, false alarm or bomb scare
11. Causing a fight, fighting, and/or willfully causing harm to another person
12. Making a racial or other discriminating slur towards another person on school grounds
13. Making a verbal threat towards another person on school grounds
14. Hazing

A suspension from school may be up to (10) days; most suspensions are for 1 to 3 days in length depending on the scope and severity of the infraction. Chronic offenses or situations that result in the violation of federal, state, or local laws or property damage or bodily injury, can be cause for suspension of up to ten days.

#### **Due Process**

Before a student is temporarily suspended from public school, the student has the constitutional right to receive:

1. Oral or written notice of the charges against him/her
2. An exploration of the evidence against him/her
3. The opportunity to present his/her side of the story to an impartial decision maker (who may be a school administrator)

A student has the right to appeal a suspension decision. The appeal must be made first to the building principal. If the student wishes to pursue his/her appeal, it is taken to the Superintendent of Schools and then if it is still unresolved, to the School Committee for resolution.

#### ***Suspension/Expulsion Under the Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993***

The Natick School Committee having conducted two public readings of the following policy voted to adopt it at its meeting of June 28, 2003. The Education Reform Act of 1993 (Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 71, Section 37H) required all school committees in the Commonwealth to promulgate such a policy among its personnel, student body, and other individuals:

- 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 94C, 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 assistant, or other educational staff member 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.

## **Harassment**

### *I. Policy*

- A. It is the policy of the Natick Public Schools to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees and visitors free from sexual harassment, bullying, hazing, and intimidation. These terms are referenced herein as "harassment". Such action may occur on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation or disability, or for any other reason.
- B. It is a violation of this policy for any administrator, teacher or other employee, or any student to engage in or condone harassment in school or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of harassment.
- C. This policy is not designed or intended to limit the school's authority to take disciplinary action or take remedial action when such harassment occurs out of school but has a nexus to school, or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school related activities.

Reports of cyber bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed and, when a nexus to work or school exists, will result in discipline. Parents of students alleged to have engaged in cyber harassment will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words or images subject to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for cyberbullying will not be readmitted to the regular school program until his or her parent(s) attend such meeting.

- D. It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent to recognize acts of harassment and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented.
- E. Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment has the right to file a complaint and to receive prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any or all information received.
- F. The Building Principal/Designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of harassment.

## **II. Procedures**

## **A. Definitions – Sexual Harassment Prohibited**

"Sexual Harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other inappropriate verbal, written, electronically transmitted, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, including but not limited to unwelcome comments, touching, written notes, pictures/cartoons or other inappropriate conduct, such as leering, whistling, brushing up against the body, commenting on sexual activity or body parts or other activity referred to by the Model MCAD policy prohibiting such behavior. Harassment has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment that takes place under any of the following circumstances:

1. When submission to such conduct is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment, instruction, or participation in school activities or programs;
2. When submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used by the offender as the basis for making personal or academic decisions affecting the individual subjected to sexual advances;
3. When such conduct has the effect of unreasonably interfering with the individual's work, attendance at school or participation in academic or curricular activities, or
4. When such conduct has the effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or learning environment.

## **B. Definitions – Bullying Prohibited**

Bullying may take a variety of forms. It is unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result no student or employee shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyberbullying in any public educational institute:

1. "Bullying and cyberbullying," means unwelcome written, electronic, verbal or physical acts or gestures where a student or employee feels coerced, intimidated, harassed or threatened and under the circumstances (1) may cause a reasonable person to suffer physical or emotional harm to a student or employee, (2) may cause damage to another student's or employee's property, or (3) may cause a disruptive or hostile school environment. The behavior must interfere with an employee's ability to perform his or her duties or with a student's academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges:
  - i. that are being offered through the school district; or
  - ii. during any education program or activity; or
  - iii. while in school, on school equipment or property, in school vehicles, on school buses, at designated school bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events; or
2. Through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer,

computer system, or computer network or any public education institute.

3. As used in this Section, "electronic communication" means any communication through an electronic device including a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

### **C. Definitions – Hazing Prohibited**

The term "hazing" shall mean any conduct or method of initiation, even if consented to, 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.

1. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, 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 person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.
2. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing and is at the scene of such activity, shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such activity to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such behavior shall be subject to discipline.

### **D. Guidelines for Investigating Harassment Claims**

In school systems, harassment may take many forms and cross many lines. The situation may be an instance of staff member to staff member, staff member to student, student to staff member, or student to student. Guidelines for dealing with any charge of harassment are as follows:

1. By law, harassment is defined by the victim's perception in combination with objective standards or expectations. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the victim make it clear to the harasser that the behavior is objectionable.
2. In all charges of harassment, the victim should describe in writing the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. Oral and anonymous complaints will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard.
3. Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of harassment, bullying, or intimidation shall immediately report it to the administration; each school shall document any prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report all incidents of discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying or cyberbullying and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals, to the Superintendent's office as they occur.
4. A good faith report from a staff member renders the staff member immune from discipline for making a

report and is considered to have been made in the course of the staff member's employment for purposes of M.G.L. c. 258. As a result, the school district shall indemnify staff members from any cause of action arising out of a good faith report of harassment or the district's subsequent actions or inaction in connection thereto.

5. If an instance of student to student harassment is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the Assistant Principal/House Master, or the Building Principal.
6. If a situation involving a charge of staff member to student harassment is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the Building Principal or Assistant Superintendent immediately.
7. In a situation involving a charge of student to staff member sexual harassment the staff member should notify the Building Principal or Assistant Superintendent.
8. In a situation involving a charge of staff member to staff member harassment the staff member should notify the Building Principal or the Assistant Superintendent.
9. Once a charge of harassment has been made, including charges of mental, emotional or physical harassment as well as threats to a person's safety or position in the school or work environment, the following course of action should be taken.
  - a. The Building Principal should investigate the charge through discussions with the individuals involved. In situations involving allegations against a staff member, he/she should be informed of his/her rights to have a third party present at the time of the discussion. In situations involving students the Principal should engage the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents will be informed of the situation and invited to participate in resolution discussions. It is important that the situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as the circumstances permit.
  - b. If the harasser and the victim are willing to discuss the matter at resolution meeting in the presence of the Principal/designee or Assistant Superintendent, a supportive faculty member and/or parent should be included in the discussion. During this discussion, the offending behavior should be described by the victim and administration, a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop. If circumstances do not permit a face to face meeting the administration will present the victim's position. Follow-up verification procedures will be explained. Failure to comply after a resolution meeting will result in appropriate discipline.
10. If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the Building Principal determines that further disciplinary action must be taken, the following could occur:
  - a. In instances involving student to student or student to staff member harassment, the student may be subject to discipline including but not limited to counseling, suspension, and in appropriate cases expulsion.
  - b. In instances involving staff member to student and staff member to staff member harassment, findings will be reported to the Superintendent of Schools for further action. Personnel action may also be initiated at this point, consistent with the applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.

c. In all cases a referral to law enforcement will be considered by the Principal or Superintendent based on the circumstances. School officials will coordinate with the Police Department to identify a police liaison for harassment cases.

**11. Retaliation:**

Retaliation in any form against any person who has made or filed a complaint relating to harassment is forbidden. If it occurs, it could be considered grounds for dismissal of staff personnel and/or removal from the educational setting for a student. A referral to law enforcement may be made.

**12. Confidentiality:**

Reports of harassment should be kept completely confidential, consistent with necessary investigation procedures, with the goal of protecting the victim and stopping the behavior.

For further information about these guidelines or help with sexual harassment problems or any other form of harassment, consult:

Harassment Coordinator, Tim Luff at the Natick Public Schools

If the alleged harasser is responsible for conducting an investigation, the Superintendent or Committee shall designate an alternative Harassment Coordinator.

**Discipline of Students with Special Needs**

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the Student Handbook. Chapter 71a of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as Chapter 766, requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation TEAM to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students.

**Definition:**

Suspension shall be defined as any action, which results in the removal of a student from the program that is prescribed in his/her Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). This includes in-school suspensions as well as any exclusion from transportation services that prohibits the student's participation in his/her prescribed program.

**Procedure:**

IEP for every special needs student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if the student's handicapping condition requires modification. Any modification will be described in the IEP

The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education office of the suspendable offense of a special needs student, and a record will be kept of such notice.

When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate to ten days in a school year, a review of the IEP as provided in Section 333 of the Chapter 766 Regulations will be held to determine the appropriateness of the student's placement in the program. The TEAM will make a finding as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her handicapping condition and either:

- a. Design a modified program for the students or
- b. Write an amendment to provide for the delivery of special education services during the suspension and any needed modification of the IEP relative to discipline code exceptions.

In addition, the Department of Education will be notified by a SPED administrator as required by law, and the procedures promulgated by the Department of Education for requesting approval of the alternative plan will be followed.

#### **MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS RELATED TO SCHOOL DISCIPLINE**

##### **M.G.L. 71, Chapter 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 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 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) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

## **M. G.L. 71, Chapter 37H ½**

(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.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the

student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

## **M. G.L. 71, Chapter 3 7H ¾**

- (a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H½ .
- (b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.
- (c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.
- (d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.
- (e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the

student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

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

# **M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 Bullying Policy and Procedure**

## **I. LEADERSHIP**

The Natick Public Schools has and will continue to employ multiple layers of involvement in the development of our Plan as required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370. Under the direction of the Superintendent, Natick's 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. Natick has established a Bully Prevention Committee that meets on a monthly basis to review and evaluate our progress. In addition, at all eight of our schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention is an objective in the School Improvement Plans and thus, is discussed and reviewed by all School Councils. The Natick Public Schools have partnered with MetroWest Community Health Care Foundation (MWHCF) to survey our students for baseline data on bullying and harassment. In addition, MWHCF has funded a grant to support bullying prevention and intervention efforts at both of our middle schools.

## **GOALS**

The Natick Public School Department is committed to providing our students equal educational opportunities, and a safe learning environment free from bullying. This will be possible when all members of the Natick school community treat each other with respect, appreciating the rich diversity in our schools. This policy is an integral part of the Natick Public Schools' comprehensive effort to promote optimal learning and eliminate all forms of violent, harmful and disruptive behavior. All students require this support to achieve their personal and academic potential.

The Natick Public Schools will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including bullying, in our schools or during school-related activities including on school buses. All reports of bullying will be promptly investigated by Natick Public Schools' administrators.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students 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 of damage to his 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. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying. It is equally important for all members of the school community to understand that conflict is not automatically synonymous with bullying. Arguing, bantering back-and-forth, ignoring, roughhousing and fighting, while potentially serious forms of conflict, are not necessarily instances of bullying. Bullying is characterized by intention, repetition and power imbalance. Not every conflict meets these criteria.

"Cyber-bullying" - is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, cell phone text messaging, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of

bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

The Natick Public Schools response to bullying actions will include, when appropriate, referral to a law enforcement agency. The Natick Public Schools will support this policy in all aspects of its activities, including its curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities and parental involvement. Lastly, retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

## **II. RATIONALE**

The Natick Public Schools prohibits all forms of harassment, discrimination and hate crimes based on race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. The civil rights of all school community members are guaranteed by law. The protection of those rights is of utmost importance and priority to our school district. The Natick Public Schools also prohibits bullying of school community members for reasons unrelated to their race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, age or disability. Further, the Natick Public Schools will also not tolerate retaliation against persons who take action consistent with this policy.

## **III. APPLICATION**

This policy applies to all sites and activities under the supervision and control of the Natick Public Schools, or where it has jurisdiction under the law. The policy applies to all students, school committee members, school employees, independent contractors, town employees, school volunteers, visitors, parents and legal guardians of students, whose conduct occurs on school premises or in school-related activities, including school-related transportation. Nothing in this policy is designed or intended to limit the District's authority to discipline or take remedial action under General Laws Chapter 71, §37H, or in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this policy covers the conduct. It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent to recognize acts of harassment and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented.

## **IV. DISCIPLINARY AND CORRECTIVE ACTION**

Violation of this policy is a serious offense. Violators may be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or corrective action to stop the conduct and prevent its reoccurrence. The District is committed to protecting a complainant, and other similarly-situated individuals, from bullying in the future. Procedural manuals containing responsibilities of staff and students, reporting procedures, complaint process, resolution, and protection against retaliation shall be in place at each level. This policy shall be printed/listed in each school handbook/web page.

- It is a violation of this policy for any administrator, teacher or other employee, or any student to engage in or condone harassment in school or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of harassment.
- This policy is not designed or intended to limit the school's authority to take disciplinary action or take remedial action when such harassment occurs out of school but has a link to school, or is disruptive to

an employee's or student's work or participation in school related activities.

- Reports of cyber-bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed and, when a link to work or school exists, will result in discipline. Parents of students alleged to have engaged in cyber harassment will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words or images subject to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for cyber-bullying will not be readmitted to the regular school program until his or her parent(s) or guardian(s) attend such meeting.
- The Building Principal/Designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of harassment, bullying, or cyber-bullying. As a means of support counseling services will be available upon request or referral for targets, aggressors and appropriate family members of the involved students.

Strategies for protecting the target: Each school will employ clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a target and assessing that target's need for protection including but not limited to strong disciplinary procedures, parental contact and availability of administration/counselors for support.

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

#### Student Disciplinary Actions

##### Remediation Actions

###### -Target Safety

- Admonishment, warning
- Parental Contact/Letter
- Student Apology/Think About it Form
- Temporary removal from the classroom
- Loss of privileges
- Classroom or administrative detention
- In-school suspension during the school week or the weekend for students
- Out-of-school suspension
- Student Re-entry Plan
- Legal action
- Expulsion or termination
- Consequences for repeat offenses

- Meetings between parents
- Counseling
- Education including strategies to repeating behavior
- Revision of IEP, if applicable
- Individual Behavior Plan (for repeat offenders)
- Guidelines for avoiding further unnecessary contact with the target
- Clarification about who will be notified
- Notify staff about incident and danger of further contact
- Strategies to avoid further bullying
- Identifying trusted adults and “safe areas”
- Education about rights to be free of retaliation and reasonable expectations about social consequences for being part of a bullying investigation
- Identification and empowerment of bystanders

## **Student Records**

The Student Record Regulations adopted by the Board of Education apply to all public elementary and secondary schools in Massachusetts. (They also apply to private day and residential schools that have state approval to provide publicly funded special education services.) The regulations are designed to insure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in carrying out their responsibilities under state and federal law.

The regulations apply to all information kept by the school or school district on a student in a way that all students may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into two parts: the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school district for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results; class rank; school-sponsored extracurricular activities; evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons; disciplinary records; and other information. The temporary record is destroyed within seven years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of the major provisions of the Student Record Regulations concerning the rights of parents and eligible students. Under the regulations, "eligible students" are at least 14 years old or have entered the ninth grade. Eligible students may exercise these rights just as their parents may.

### *Inspection of Record*

A parent or an eligible student has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available within two days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay.

The parent or eligible student has the right to receive a copy of any part of the record, although the school may charge a reasonable fee for the cost of duplication of the materials.

The parent or eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional from the school, or may invite anyone else of their choice to inspect or interpret the record with them. Third parties are required to present specific written consent of the parent or eligible student prior to gaining access to the student record. A copy of such consent will be placed in the temporary record.

### *Confidentiality of Record*

Except where the regulations specifically authorize access by third parties, no individuals or organizations other than the parent, eligible student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent

or eligible student.

This constitutes public notice that the school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date of birth, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards without the consent of the eligible student or parent unless the eligible students and parents notify the school within two weeks of receipt of this Bennett-Hemenway Handbook that this information may not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent.

The school may release information in or from the student record upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance. The school may release information regarding a student upon receipt of a request from the Department of Social Services, a probation officer, a justice of any court, or the Department of Youth Services.

Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents shall have access to student records as necessary in connection with the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws, or programs. The school may disclose information regarding a student to appropriate parties in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures to the local police department and the Department of Social Services.

This provides notice that when a student leaves, Bennett-Hemenway forwards student records to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

School health personnel and local and state health department personnel shall have access to student health records, including but not limited to immunization records, when such access is required in the performance of official duties, without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

#### *Amendment of Record*

The parent or eligible student has the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent or eligible student has the right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. They are entitled to meet with the principal (or the principal's designee) to discuss their objection to information that is in the record and to receive a written decision. A parent or eligible student who is not satisfied with the principal's decision may appeal to higher authorities in the school district.

#### *Destruction of Records*

The regulations require school authorities to destroy a student's temporary record within seven years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. In each case, the school must first notify the parent and eligible student and give them the opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before it is destroyed.

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the Student Record Regulations that relate to the rights of parents and eligible students. The Student Record Regulations are included in the Code

of Massachusetts Regulations at 603 CMR 23.00. For more detailed information, please review the regulations (copies of which should be available in every public school) and the Questions and Answers Guide published by the Massachusetts Department of Education in 1995.

Copies of the Education Law and Regulations (603 CMR 23.00: Student Records) are available from the office upon request.

## **FERPA**

### **Notification of Rights Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) and Massachusetts Student Records Regulations**

#### **Notification of Rights under FERPA**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Massachusetts Student Records Regulations affords parents and students over 14 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records. Access is generally provided within 10 days of the request. State law sets forth specific procedures prior to the release of records to a non-custodial parent (M.G.L. c. 71, §34H).

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record will be furnished to the parent or eligible student, subject to a reasonable copying fee.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA or state law.

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

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

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility. Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school district to comply with these legal requirements.

Complaints may be filed with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), 75 Pleasant St., Malden, MA 02148 and/or the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

## **FERPA Directory Information Notice**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Natick Public Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Natick Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Natick Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

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

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses and telephone listings—unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

If you do not want the Natick Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, **you must notify your school principal in writing by October 1st of each school year.**

The Natick Public Schools have designated the following information as directory information:

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

## **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Home and school must work in a cooperative way to support the proposition that students have responsibilities as well as rights. Together, we must foster a mutuality of respect within the school environment. A goal of our elementary schools is to develop and maintain a positive self-image for each student combined with an appreciation for the rights of other persons with whom he or she interacts.

The elementary principals have prepared this statement to help families to understand what we expect of and for your children. We are requesting that you review with your children the expectations that we have of him or her and the expectations that you have of the school and classroom.

If the rules of the classroom and/or the school are not obeyed, the students will be disciplined by the teacher and, if deemed necessary, by the principal. If the rules of the classroom and/or school continue to be broken, parents will be notified and privileges will be withheld. Parents and students will be invited to meet in conferences. Call your child's principal if clarification of this procedure is necessary.

**Student Rights *It is expected that children will:***

1. Be respected and treated with kindness and understanding
2. Enjoy learning in an atmosphere that will lead to success
3. Be treated as individuals in order to develop a positive self-image
4. Learn to appreciate the purposes and understand the penalties associated with all of the school rules
5. Be assured of safety while at school
6. Be taught with a sufficient amount and variety of materials and methods
7. Have teachers who will show fairness and firmness
8. Receive training in manners and respect for others
9. Expect consistency in the application of corrective discipline
10. Be helped toward learning to assume responsibility for their behavior

**Student Responsibilities *It is expected that children will:***

1. Accept others regardless of size, race, creed, nationality, ability, or physical appearance
2. Do all that is educationally possible by completing class and homework assignments
3. Cooperate so that their activities will not interfere with the rights of others
4. Listen to and follow directions of those in authority
5. Be honest with themselves, teachers, and parents
6. Be willing to accept constructive criticism
7. Be polite and show concern for the values and feelings of others
8. Respect the person and property of others
9. Be sure that school papers and reports are taken home and, as needed, returned to school promptly
10. Cooperate & obey rules set up for areas such as the cafeteria, playground, and busses

## **Residency Policy**

### **1. Purpose**

- a. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to school administrators, parents, and/or legal guardians concerning the admission of students to the Natick Public Schools (the "Schools"). The Schools were established pursuant to statutes providing publicly funded education for students within The Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the right to attend the schools is also regulated by statute. Generally and as more fully set forth in this policy, the right to attend the schools is limited to students who reside in the Town of Natick and to certain nonresident students who are eligible to attend the schools under specific programs or conditions approved by the Natick School Committee.

### **2. Eligibility to Attend the Schools**

- a. A student between the minimum and maximum ages established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education who has not received a diploma or certificate from a secondary school shall be eligible to attend the schools if:
  - i. Kindergarten student is 5 years of age on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year.  
Grade 1 student is 6 years of age on or before August 31<sup>st</sup> of the enrollment year.  
Exceptions to age requirement will be considered in accordance with Natick Public Schools early admission protocol (See Appendix A).
  - ii. The student permanently, not temporarily or sporadically, resides in Natick with his/her parent(s) or legal guardian.
  - iii. The student actually resides in Natick with someone other than his/her parent(s) or legal guardian for the purpose of attending the schools and tuition for such student is paid as in accordance with Section 6 of this policy.
  - iv. The student actually resides in Natick with someone other than his/her parent(s) or legal guardian for the purpose of temporarily ameliorating personal extreme hardship, and may attend the schools at the discretion of the Superintendent.
  - v. The student, regardless of place of residence, has been selected to attend the schools under a statutory program for the education of non-resident students, duly accepted by the School Committee.
  - vi. The student is from a foreign country and meets the requirements of Section 7 of this policy.
  - vii. The student, regardless of place of residence, meets the requirements of Section 9 of this policy.
  - viii. Prior to entry, the student must meet all MA Department of Public Health immunization requirements in accordance with 105 CMR 220.

### **3. Verification of Residency**

- a. Before any student is enrolled in Natick Public Schools, his or her parent or legal guardian must provide:
  - i. A signed Statement/Affidavit of Occupancy (see below)
  - ii. Proof of Residency in Natick (3 documents).

All applicants for enrollment must submit at least one document each from Column A, B, and

C and any other documents that may be requested, including but not limited to those from Column A, B, or C (noted below). A parent, guardian, or student who is unable to produce the required documents should contact the Superintendent.

<b>COLUMN A-Evidence of Residency</b>	<b>COLUMN B-Evidence of Occupancy</b>	<b>COLUMN C -Photo Identification</b>
Record of recent mortgage payment and/or property tax bill	Gas/Oil Bill, Electric Bill, Home (not cell) Telephone Bill, Cable Bill, Water Bill (Note: Bill must be dated within the past 45 days and address and name must be stated)	Valid MA Driver's License
Fully signed and executed Lease and/or Rental Agreement with the names of the children listed on the document. (Must be executed by both parties)	Recent bill dated within the past 45 days showing Natick address and name (Note: A Residency Statement/Affidavit is required with this option)	Valid MA Photo ID Card
Residency Affidavit	Excise Tax bill	Valid Passport
Fully signed and executed Purchase and Sale (P&S) Agreement (provided occupancy date occurs within 45 days of enrollment)		Other Government issued Photo ID
Section 8 Agreement		

#### **4. Determination of Eligibility**

The Superintendent, or his/her designee(s), shall determine whether a student is eligible to attend the Schools. In determining whether a student actually resides in Natick for purposes of Sections 2.b, 2.c and 2.d of this policy, the following factors shall be considered:

- A. Whether the student physically occupies a dwelling in Natick regardless of whether such occupancy is based upon ownership, lease, or consent of a person legally entitled to occupy the dwelling;
- B. With whom the student lives, such as parent(s), legal guardian, custodial parent after a divorce, relative, or other person and the duration of such living arrangement;
- C. If a student resides with someone other than his/her parent(s), legal guardian, or the parent with physical custody after a divorce, the reasons for doing so;
- D. The amount of time actually spent by the student in the dwelling in Natick;
- E. Whether the student's physical belongings are stored at the dwelling;
- F. Whether mail concerning the student, such as mail from doctors, etc., is addressed to the dwelling;
- G. Whether the residence is the center of the student's domestic, social, and civic life;
- H. Whether the student was included as an occupant of the dwelling for purposes of the town census;

- I. Such other information as the Superintendent or his/her designee(s) may deem relevant to determining where a student actually resides.

## **5. Post-Enrollment Verification And Enforcement**

Should a question arise concerning any student's residency in the Town of Natick while s/he is attending the Natick Public Schools, the student's residency will be subject to further inquiry and/or investigation. Questions concerning residency may arise on the basis of incomplete, suspicious, or contradictory proofs of address; anonymous tips; correspondence that is returned to Natick Public Schools because of an invalid or unknown address; statements made by students that they are moving or have moved, or other grounds. When he/she becomes aware of a question regarding a student's residency, the building principal or other member of the Administration (or his/her designee) shall contact the Superintendent. The principal may request updated proof of residence, and may obtain the services of the Natick Police Department to conduct an investigation into student's residence.

The Natick Police Department may use, but is not limited to, the following methods to conduct his/her investigation:

- Investigator will visit the residence without an advanced notice
- Investigator may attempt to contact/interview parent to gather documentation to either confirm residency or prove non-residency
- Investigator may interview landlord and neighbors when possible
- Investigator may keep residence under surveillance to establish patterns of occupancy
- Investigator will leave evidence of his/her visit by leaving a dated letter and business card with contact information
- The investigation will continue until residency or non-residency is confirmed and supported with appropriate documentation

The residency investigator will report his or her findings to the Principal/Superintendent.

## **6. Payment of Tuition for Certain Students**

It is the intention of this policy to require the payment of tuition in advance for all students legally required to pay tuition to attend the schools. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as acceptance by the Town of Natick of any financial obligations for the education of students who temporarily reside in Town for the purposes of obtaining an education.

- A. A student who resides temporarily in Natick with someone other than his/her parent(s) or legal guardian for the purpose of attending the Schools shall only be admitted to the Schools upon the payment of tuition by (i) the town in which the student's parent(s) or legal guardian resides(s), or (ii) by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian, as provided in M.G. L. Ch. 76, Sec. 6. Tuition payable by the parent or guardian shall, for the period of attendance, be computed at the average expense per pupil in such school for such period.
- B. Any student for whom tuition is payable shall only be admitted to the Schools for the period of time actually covered by a tuition payment and shall be required to withdraw from the Schools if future tuition payments are not received by the Schools in a timely fashion as determined by the Superintendent.
- C. The education of students with disabilities is the financial responsibility of the city or town in which the student resides. The programmatic and fiscal obligations for "tuition" students, who require special education services, is addressed in 603CMR 28.03 (4)

## **7. School Choice**

Natick has voted to be a Massachusetts School Choice District. Determination on allowing students to attend the Natick Public Schools under School Choice is determined on an annual basis. Factors determining that decision are:

- A. The availability of seats/space in the school/grade requested;
- B. The class sizes at the grade levels of enrollment;
- C. That enrollment of the student will not have an adverse impact on the schools' budget;
- D. The effect on the student of enrollment, if it is to be at a time other than the beginning of a school year; and
- E. Whether an appropriate educational program and current school resources for the student exist in the schools, provided that the education of students with disabilities remains the financial responsibility of the city or town in which the student's parent(s) or legal guardian resides.

## **7A. METCO**

Natick Public Schools adheres to the provisions of M.G.L. Chapter 76, section 12A (METCO) in enrolling non-resident students under the METCO program.

## **8. Foreign Students**

In order to provide students at Natick High School with the opportunity to meet students from foreign cultures and to be educated abroad, the School Committee supports the enrollment of foreign students in the Schools as provided for in this section.

- a. The Principal of Natick High School may enroll foreign students annually, subject to the approval of the Superintendent.
- b. A foreign student who wishes to reside in Natick for the purpose of attending the Schools shall be subject to the provisions of Section 6 and shall be required to pay tuition as provided therein, unless the Superintendent, if permitted by federal law, specifically waives payment of tuition.

## **9. Admission of Non-Resident Students**

Except as expressly provided for herein, non-resident students shall not be admitted to the Schools. In addition to non-resident students who are eligible to attend the Schools under Sections 2.e, and 2.g above, the Superintendent may, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations, permit a non-resident student to attend the schools as follows:

- a. A student who was legally enrolled in the Schools under Sections 2.b and 2.c and whose family moves out of Town on or after April 1 of a school year may, with the permission of the Superintendent, continue to attend the schools for the remainder of the year (see Section 10).
- b. Continued enrollment for grade 12 of a student who has completed grade 11 in accordance with Section 9.a is subject to application to and approval by the Superintendent
- c. A student whose family provides satisfactory evidence that he/she will be residing in Natick within a grading period and would be eligible to attend the schools under Sections 2.a, 2.b or 2.c of this policy may, in accordance with regulations adopted by the Superintendent, and with the permission of the Superintendent, attend the Schools prior to actually residing in Natick.
- d. The Superintendent may permit a non-resident student to attend the High School for not more than one year under a reciprocal arrangement with the Schools in the Town in which the student resides pursuant to M.G.L. Ch. 76, Sec 12, where such temporary attendance is (i) in the best educational interests of the student, (ii) there is no reason to believe that the student presents any risk to other students or employees of the Schools.

## **10. Superintendent's Permission**

The Superintendent may permit a non-resident student to attend the Schools under Sections 9.a, 9.b, and 9.c of this policy if:

- a. The school district in which the student's parent(s) or legal guardian reside(s) requests that the student attend the Schools; and
- b. There is space available for the student; and
- c. Attendance by the student would not impose an undue burden on the Schools' budget; and
- d. The student has a good disciplinary record and an acceptable custodial arrangement; and
- e. Refusal of the request would, in the judgment of the Superintendent, likely harm the student's education.

## **11. Transportation of Non-Residents**

Except as otherwise provided in state and federal laws and other policies, transportation of a non-resident student to and from school shall remain the responsibility of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian.

## **12. Students with Disabilities**

The education of students with disabilities is the financial responsibility of the city or town in which the student resides. The programmatic and fiscal obligations for students, who require special education services, is addressed in 603CMR 28.03 (4)

## **13. Good Behavior**

Non-resident students attending the Schools under Sections 2.e, 2.f, 2.g, or 2.h do so subject to the terms and conditions established by those programs and any School Committee policies and regulations therefore, and their continued eligibility to attend the Schools is conditional upon such students' good behavior. Such students' eligibility to attend the Schools may be terminated as provided for by those programs or for bad conduct pursuant to the Schools' Code of Conduct.

## **14. Regulations**

The Superintendent shall adopt written regulations from time to time implementing this policy and requiring students, their parent(s), legal guardians, or persons having custody of a student to supply such information as may be reasonably necessary to make determinations about a student's eligibility to attend the Schools, whether tuition may be charged for such student, or for any other purpose relating to the implementation of this policy.

## **15. Failure to provide information or to pay tuition**

Failure by a student and/or parent/guardian to provide evidence or explanations as requested by the school administration to implement this policy and failure to promptly pay any tuition due shall result in the student being ineligible to attend the Schools.

## **16. Waiver of Tuition**

Upon recommendation by the Superintendent, the Committee may, in its discretion, waive payment of tuition.

## **17. Penalty**

Only students who qualify under this policy shall be eligible to attend the schools. Any person who knowingly misrepresents facts concerning a student's actual place of residence or reasons for residing in Natick, or any other material facts concerning a student's eligibility to attend the schools under this policy in order to enroll a student in the schools or to avoid paying tuition may be liable for the consequences. Natick Public Schools reserves the right to recover restitution based upon the costs of educational services provided during the period of non-residency.

## **18. Relationship to Federal and Massachusetts Laws and Regulations**

It is the intent of the foregoing policy that the Natick Public Schools shall also be in compliance with all Federal and State laws and regulations bearing upon enrollment issues, including but not limited to:

- The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, as amended [42 U.S.C. 725] by the No Child Left Behind Act Federal Immigration Law Regarding Foreign Students [8 U.S.C. 1184 (L) (3)]
- Massachusetts Special Education Regulations [603 CMR 28.03 (4)].
- Caregiver Authorization Affidavit (MGL Chapter 511 of the Acts of 2008 as amended by Chapter 20 1F)
- Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulations (105 CMR 220)

Adopted by the Natick School Committee – January 5, 2015

**NATICK PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
RESIDENCY AFFIDAVIT  
LANDLORD/SHARED TENANCIES**

**Instructions:** Any applicant for the Natick Public Schools who cannot produce a property deed or lease must ask the owner or lessee of the property where the applicant lives to complete and sign this legal affidavit.

It is the responsibility of the applicant (not the person who completes this affidavit) to attach a record of recent rent payment unless this affidavit affirms in Item #3 below that the tenancy does not require payment of rent.

**AFFIDAVIT**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I hereby depose and certify as follows: (Please complete all three items and sign below.)

1. I am the owner/lessee of property located at

\_\_\_\_\_ in the town of Natick.

2. (Parent or guardian name) \_\_\_\_\_,

who is the parent or legal guardian of (child's name) \_\_\_\_\_, leases or subleases this property as their principal residence from me, without a written lease, in a tenancy at will, from month to month.

3. PLEASE CHECK ONE:

I have received within the last thirty (30) days rental payment for the lease or sublease of these premises.

**OR:**

Alternatively, I hereby state that the party named above resides with me at the address above with no payment of rent.

Signed under the pains and penalties of perjury this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Print Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

The information contained in this legal affidavit is subject to verification by a residency investigator.

**Equal Opportunity Statement**

The Natick Public Schools is committed to equal employment and educational opportunity for all employees and applicants, students, parents, and members of the school community, including those parties who contract to perform work for the Natick Public Schools, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability in all aspects of employment and education. The members of the school community include administration, faculty, staff, and students and volunteers working in the schools while they work and study subject to school authorities.

Any student or employee of this district who believes he or she has been discriminated against, denied a benefit, or excluded from participation, in any district education program or activity, on the basis of being handicapped, under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, may file a written complaint with the Principal.

#### **Title IX**

In accordance with the federal government law under Title IX, "No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity receiving federal assistance..." Bennett-Hemenway school does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its education programs and activities

