

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL HANDBOOK

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

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SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY AND GOALS

WELCOME LETTER

September 2021

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

Welcome to Methuen High School! This school year is my seventh as principal and it is my honor and privilege to lead our school community. We have a proud history of providing the best learning experiences for students and our goal is to once again raise the bar.

In 2021-2022, students will continue to learn with an emphasis on 21st century learning expectations. Our 1-to-1 iPad program is entering its ninth year, and high-quality instruction and student engagement will be a point of emphasis in every classroom, whether in person or remote. Lessons will be designed and delivered to stimulate collaboration, communication, creativity, and critical thinking. All students will be challenged. College and career readiness is the priority, and it is our mission for all students to be prepared to access any desired postsecondary opportunity.

Methuen High School is a large, comprehensive high school with a diverse student population. To meet the needs of all students, we foster an inclusive learning environment - enabling learners of all types to access course content, participate in learning activities, and demonstrate understanding. Our schoolwide commitment to Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), Social and Emotional Learning (SEL), and Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will continue to guide instructional practices in all learning spaces. The principles of PBIS, SEL, and UDL combine to provide the framework necessary to cultivate an inclusive school environment that is safe, supportive, and conducive to teaching and learning for all. We aim to educate the whole student.

A successful high school experience requires committed partnering between community members, parents and guardians, and high school staff. This “village of caregivers” working together will provide the support network necessary for student success. Methuen is a community built on pride, and this pride will inspire and empower students to take advantage of all that MHS has to offer.

It is with great enthusiasm that I enter the 2021-2022 school year as principal of Methuen High School. I look forward to working together to provide our students with a rich learning experience. I wish everyone the very best this school year.

Sincerely,

Richard Barden

Principal
Methuen High School

DISTRICT GOALS

In order to improve student achievement at all levels and across the curriculum, the district will pursue the following goals:

1. Provide, supervise and sustain effective interventions to increase the success of all underperforming students, including those in the transient and subgroup populations.
2. Continue curriculum development and revision and ensure appropriate classroom implementation of new curricula.
3. Provide, supervise, and support effective instruction that communicates high expectations and meets the needs of all learners.
4. Improve classroom standards-based assessment practices and use of assessment data for formative and summative purposes.
5. Expand parental communication and involvement in the schools.
6. Support our students' learning by organizing effective organizational structures, nurturing a healthy culture, and providing well-maintained facilities.
7. Review and refine the district's business and financial practices, including budget preparation, to ensure that they identify and effectively deploy resources to support the student achievement goals.

Revised & Readopted: September, 2014
Methuen Public Schools

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

We believe that the schooling of young people is a responsibility that is based upon the expectation that all students can and will master a carefully crafted school curriculum designed to provide youngsters with the skills and abilities to compete in a worldwide economy.

We recognize the diversity of our student body and celebrate differences in racial and ethnic background, abilities, talents, interests, and life experiences. This diversity provides us with the opportunity to learn from each other and to develop the skills necessary to function as good citizens and tomorrow's leaders.

Curriculum content and course offerings shall reflect the very latest educational thought and should be consistent with the requirements placed upon all school systems in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Learning experiences must provide youngsters with a solid foundation in the basic skills. However, basic skill attainment is merely an educational beginning. We expect all our students to communicate effectively, express themselves through the arts, understand healthful living, think critically about situations, be creative problem-solvers, and develop a thirst for lifelong learning.

The school system must also share in the responsibility for the social development of young people and ensure that the school environment is physically and emotionally safe. Students must develop a sense of social awareness, self-esteem, self-discipline, respect for themselves and others, and the need to take responsibility for their own actions. They must also develop a sense of community that extends beyond the school. The school system must also provide a program of co-curricular activities that teaches youngsters the value of teamwork, develops self-confidence, and generates a sense of spirit and belonging.

Teachers, administrators, and support staff must collaborate with each other, with the home, and with outside agencies. All adults must, themselves, demonstrate and model continued growth and development and must use new learnings and understanding in the educational context. Instructional

staff must focus their attention on the individuality of children and adapt teaching styles and techniques to the needs of learners. In this sense, the teaching role is dynamic, exciting, and experienced-based.

We also believe that there is a relationship between the role that parents play and academic achievement. To this end, we view parents as partners in the intellectual and social development of our children. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in their child's education, taking an interest in lessons, projects and homework. We believe in involving parents in decision-making that involves their children and providing them with opportunities to actively participate within the school community

MSC Adopted: July 22, 1997

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS, AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Core Values

- PRIDE
- Diversity
- Responsibility
- Achievement
- Community
- Creativity and Innovation

Beliefs

- Students learn best when they take responsibility and pride in their education and character.
- Student learning should be supported by partnerships between the school and extended community.
- All students have the potential to achieve in rigorous courses.
- Honoring diversity is a cornerstone of a safe and rewarding learning community.
- Creativity, innovation, and ingenuity should be fostered through instructional support, which encourages authentic problem solving.
- Social, psychological, and emotional well-being promote student success.

21st CENTURY LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

Academic Competencies:

1. Students will demonstrate effective communication and literacy skills for varied contexts and purposes.
2. Students will engage in critical thinking independently and/or collaboratively to creatively solve problems and accomplish goals.
3. Students will effectively utilize media and technology to research information with adaptability.

Social Competency:

4. Students will embrace diversity through cultural understanding and value personal, social and emotional well-being.

Civic Competency:

5. Students will aspire to be contributing members of the school and extended community through their participation and embodiment of good citizenship.

SERVICES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Some students with disabilities who are eligible for special education receive specialized instruction and/or supportive services to enable them to make effective progress in school. These services can include, but are not limited to, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized

instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Parents or teachers may refer students for a special education evaluation when they suspect that the student has a disability, and that the disability is affecting their ability to make effective progress. Referrals can be made to the Special Education Administrator at the student's school or to the Student Services Office. Within five (5) school days of a written request for an evaluation of a student's eligibility for special education, a consent form authorizing an evaluation of the child will be forwarded to the parent(s). Upon receipt of the parent(s) consent, an evaluation will be conducted and a Team meeting will be held to determine if the child is eligible for special education services. If the child is found eligible for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

In some cases, the evaluation Team determines that a child with a disability may require only individual accommodations as opposed to specialized instruction and/or related services. Such children are then referred for an evaluation of their eligibility for an individual accommodation plan in accordance with section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ("Section 504") provides: "No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." Pursuant to Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student's individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

Progress reports for students receiving special education services are issued in accordance with the requirements of federal and state laws and regulations.

For more information regarding the services available to students with disabilities, please contact the school guidance counselor or Special Education Administrator at your child's school or the Office of the Director of Student Services.

OBSERVATIONS OF GENERAL EDUCATION AND SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Observations of a student's current and/or proposed special education program may be conducted by a parent/guardian or his/her designee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71B § 3 and the policies and procedures set forth in the Methuen Public Schools policy on Observations of Special Education Programs (See IHBA and IHBA-2 available on the Methuen Public Schools website. Parents must request an observation five (5) days in advance, and can submit the request to the building Special Education Administrator and building Principal. Observers may be required to sign a non-disclosure form to protect student confidentiality.

CODES OF CONDUCT

BULLYING / CYBER BULLYING

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

The Methuen Public Schools (MPS) created the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (the Plan) required under M.G.L. c.71, §37O, in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The Plan is posted on the district website: www.methuen.k12.ma.us.

The Methuen Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyber-bullying. The district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of

violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

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

The district recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one (1) or more of these characteristics. The district has taken specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

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

DEFINITIONS

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

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c.71, §37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff (including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional) of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

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

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

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

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

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

I. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

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

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

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

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

II. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

Reporting Bullying or Retaliation.

The district expects staff, students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of suspected bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or associate principal. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Reports may be made orally or in writing. The “MPS Suspected Bullying Incident Reporting Form” has been developed for student, parent or other non-school or district staff use to report incidents of suspected bullying. This form can be obtained in every school office or it can be printed from the district’s website www.methuen.k12.ma.us. Use of the “MPS Suspected Bullying Incident Reporting Form” is not required as a condition of making a report.

Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or associate principal.

Reporting by Staff

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

Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The Methuen Public Schools expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal/headmaster or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others

may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or their designee.

Responding to Complaints and Reports

Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or their designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; predetermining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or their designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or their designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. The confidentiality of students and witnesses reporting alleged acts of bullying will be maintained to the extent possible given the school’s obligation to investigate the matter.

Obligation to Notify Others

a. Notice to Parents/Guardians:

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or their designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it.

b. Notice to another School or District:

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

c. Notice to Law Enforcement:

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

In making this determination, the principal or designee will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with local law enforcement/school resource officer, and other individuals the principal or their designee deems appropriate.

Investigations and Determinations

Within fifteen (15) school days of the principal's receipt of the complaint of bullying or retaliation, the principal or associate principal will conduct an investigation and make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or associate principal will determine what remedial action may be required, if any, and determine what responsive and/or disciplinary actions will be taken. The principal's finding and determinations shall be documented in writing. The notice to the parents or guardians of the target shall include information about the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's (DESE) problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the DESE Office of Problem Resolution System, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: 781-338-3700; TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370.

All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or associate principal cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations or except in the event of a health or safety emergency as determined by the Principal.

Responses to Bullying

The Methuen Public Schools have incorporated a range of individualized strategies and interventions that may be used in response to remediate a student's skills or to prevent further incidences of bullying and/or retaliation.

Teaching Appropriate Behavior/Skill Building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.

Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or associate principal decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or associate principal, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct. Disciplinary sanctions may include, but are not limited to, long-term suspension from school.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws and regulations regarding student discipline including M.G.L. c.71, 37H3/4 and 603 CMR §53.00.

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

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or associate principal will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or associate principal will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. The principal or associate principal will monitor the effectiveness of any such interventions employed and, where appropriate, recommend alternative or supplemental interventions.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

Upon making a determination of bullying, the principal or their designee will consider what

adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. In determining the steps necessary to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents, the principal or designee shall consider that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

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

Referral to Outside Services

Where appropriate and consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policies, students found to have engaged in or been the victim of bullying, may also be referred to outside agencies and/or service providers. It shall be the responsibility of the principal or designee, through consultation with staff, community service organizations, and district administration to identify resources and services available to such students.

Monitoring of Interventions

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

III. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Methuen Public Schools' ongoing professional development plans reflect the requirements under M.G.L. c.71, §37O, and provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and para-educators/ABA Techs.

Annual Staff Training Plan

Annual training for all school staff on the Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan will include staff responsibilities under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school building. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years.

Ongoing Professional Development

The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of school-wide and professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;

- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- The complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- Research findings on bullying, including specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- The incidence and nature of cyber bullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber bullying;
- The recognition that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics; and
- How to recognize various forms of bullying including physical, verbal and posturing.

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

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

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

Written Notice to Staff

Each school will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Methuen Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff responsibilities.

IV. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A key aspect of promoting positive school climates is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of all students are addressed. These students include targets, aggressors or bystanders of bullying or cyber bullying. Schools will also address the emotional needs of these students' families. The Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes strategies for providing supports and services necessary to meet these needs. In order to enhance the schools' capacity to prevent, intervene early, and respond effectively to bullying, available services reflect an understanding of the dynamics of bullying and provide approaches to address the needs of targets, aggressors and bystanders. The schools provide counseling or referral to appropriate services for students who are aggressors, targets, and family members of those students.

Identifying Resources

School counselors, together with building administrators, will work to identify the school's capacity to provide counseling, case management and other services for these students (targets, aggressors, bystanders) and their families. Schools will conduct an annual review of staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments, focusing on early interventions and intensive services, and develop recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. The Methuen Public Schools work in collaboration with local and state agencies to adopt evidenced-based curricula and to provide additional preventative services to students, parents and guardians, and faculty and staff.

Counseling and Other Services

School counselors, nurses, school psychologists and special educators provide a variety of skill-based services to students within the educational setting that include on-going emotional support, risk assessment, crisis intervention, and help with community based counseling referrals when appropriate. School counselors meet with parents and teachers as needed to help address students' academic, emotional and behavioral concerns as collaboratively as possible. School counselors work with administrators to provide linguistically appropriate resources to identified families. School counselors maintain up-to-date information on community based mental health referrals as well as Community Service Agencies (CSAs) within the local vicinity, providing services to Medicaid eligible students. School counselors, school psychologists and intensive special needs educators work collaboratively to develop behavior plans and social thinking groups for students with social skill weaknesses. In addition, school counselors, school psychologists and special education professional's work together to educate and support parents, conduct parent workshops and apprise parents of outside resources to enhance parenting skills and provide for the needs of children.

Below is a list highlighting activities offered at various schools:

- One-on-one and small group counseling
- Case management services
- Crisis intervention
- Facilitating classroom meetings to resolve problems
- School counseling curriculum on issues of respect, sexual harassment, and student success skills
- Assertiveness training workshops
- Social thinking education groups
- Mindfulness groups
- Lunch/friendship groups
- Study skills/time management groups
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Parent workshops
- Transition planning
- Parent guidance
- Behavioral plan development
- Classroom observations
- Teacher consultation

Students with Disabilities

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP TEAM determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the TEAM will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. Whenever an evaluation indicates that a child has a disability on the autism spectrum, the IEP Team shall consider and shall specifically address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

Referral to Outside Services

The Methuen Public Schools will establish a protocol for referring students and families to outside services. School counselors and other specialists will help students and families access appropriate and timely services. All Referrals will comply with relevant laws and policies.

Academic and Non-Academic Activities

The Methuen Public Schools, through the building principals or their designee, will provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the schools' evidence-based curricula. Effective instruction includes classroom approaches, whole-school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development.

Specific Bullying Prevention Approaches

Bullying prevention curricula is informed by current research, which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber bullying;
- emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications;
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference;
- helping students recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics and
- providing parents and guardians with information regarding the schools' bullying prevention curricula.

Initiatives will also teach students about the student-related sections of the Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan through school assemblies and/or small group meetings at the beginning of each school year.

Teaching Approaches that Support Bullying Prevention Efforts

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

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including the consideration vulnerabilities of students based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics
- communicating with parents and guardians regarding the schools' goals and expectations for students and students' safety
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;

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

V. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

The Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of each of our schools as well as the district to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication with them are essential aspects of effective collaboration. Provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention curricula used by the schools include: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curricula at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber bullying. Parents and guardians will also be notified in writing each year about the student-related sections of the Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Schools will collaborate with School Councils and overarching parent organizations (Parent-Teacher Organizations, Special Education Parent Advisory Council and English Learner Parent Advisory Council) to create parent resource and information networks. Schools will join with these parent groups to offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the school(s).

Schools will annually inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber bullying and online safety. The schools will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and the Methuen Public School Internet Usage Policy and the Computer Network Agreement.

All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. Each school will post the Methuen Public Schools Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and related information on its website.

VI. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of disability, race, color, sex, religion, gender identity, national origin, or sexual orientation. M.G.L. c.76, §5. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c.71, §§37H, 37H½, or 37H3/4 or other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

Revised and Readopted: September 9, 2019
Methuen Public Schools

CO-CURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

Methuen High School students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner, which will bring credit to, and reflect positively upon themselves, their school, their families and their community. Furthermore, participation in any school-sponsored activity is a privilege, not a right, extended to all Methuen High School students. Those students who exercise their privilege of participation in school sponsored co-curricular activities assume total responsibility for their behavior. *They agree to follow all rules and regulations set forth for their participation and understand the consequences for failure to do so.* Methuen Public Schools' nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities are provided in such a manner as necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation. Please note there is no inherent right to participate in extracurricular activities and it is within the governing agency's (e.g, MIAA, NHS) and/or the school's discretion to exclude a student from interscholastic and extracurricular activities consistent with School Committee Policy JCDA.

All students involved in school sponsored co-curricular activities shall strictly adhere to the following code of conduct:

A. School Rules

Any student who habitually violates any school rule, attendance policy or whose conduct is unbecoming to a student of Methuen High School or whose actions or behaviors are inconsistent with the rules and policies of Methuen High School and are not specifically addressed in the foregoing code of conduct will be excluded from participation in co-curricular activities.

B. Academic eligibility

The participation in co-curricular activities requires time, effort and responsibility. It must be understood that a student's academic growth and achievement are the most important factors in their education. To this end, Methuen High School has set the following standards for participation in any Team/ Club organization.

To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional yearlong major English Courses.

All courses offered at Methuen High School are considered for determining eligibility. In courses graded on either a pass/fail or satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis, "unsatisfactory" will be considered a failing grade. In the event of an incomplete grade, the student will be considered ineligible until the grade is issued.

C. General requirements for participation in co-curricular activities

1. Students must be in school a full day and are expected to attend all scheduled periods during the school day in order to practice, participate or play. Extenuating circumstances which would necessitate a school tardiness or early dismissal must be presented in writing by the parent/guardian and must receive prior approval by the school administration whose decision shall be final.
2. **Students may not participate in a practice or a meet/games until the term of school suspension (either "out of school" or "in school suspension") is completed. Likewise, if a student has accrued more than three (3) office detentions that have gone unserved, he/she must fulfill the disciplinary obligation before being granted participation in school activities.**

3. Respective supervisors may designate and enforce appropriate curfews.
4. A student must be academically eligible in accordance with the Methuen High School Athletic Handbook in order to participate in athletics.

D. **Stolen Lost/Vandalized Equipment**

1. All students are responsible for equipment/materials issued to them and will be assessed for the replacement cost of any lost, stolen, or vandalized item.
2. All students who fail/refuse to pay such replacement costs by the time set for repayment will be prohibited from further participation in all aspects of the extra-curricular activity from which the equipment/materials were lost, stolen, or vandalized.

Conduct which is unbecoming to a student of Methuen High School, but which is not specifically addressed in the foregoing code of conduct, may also jeopardize a student's privilege to participate in co-curricular activities. *(Please refer to School Committee Policy JCDA)*

STUDENT DRESS

The administration of Methuen High School respects the student's right to choose his/her manner of dress, however, clothing or accessories that distract or detract from the **educational mission** of the school are not allowed. Also prohibited are clothing choices that pose a safety hazard or do not comply with State and local health laws, such as wearing footwear. Additionally, **head coverings** of any kind, including hoods, are **not allowed**, except for religious or health reasons that are verifiable. All head coverings must be placed in lockers or book bags during school hours. **Violators risk having their headwear confiscated if visible.**

Methuen High School is committed to preparing students to become successful, productive members of the community beyond the high school experience. Our graduates will, at some point enter the work force where they will be required to comply fully with the terms of their employment. The school is a place of learning, and as such, **the expectation is that student dress, grooming, and comportment will be appropriate for an educational setting.**

The following is strictly prohibited:

- Clothing or accessories with language, pictures, or symbols that are profane, or sexually suggestive, or that endorse products that are illegal or that promote violence.
- Clothing that poses a safety hazard, such as metal chains or spikes.
- Extremely short skirts or shorts, torn clothing, backless tops, strapless tops, tank tops, or other garments that reveal shoulders, midriff, cleavage or undergarments.
- Wearing sunglasses inside the school building during the school day.

The administration reserves the right to determine whether student attire is acceptable. Parents of students who report to school dressed inappropriately may be called to bring a change of clothing. Repeated refusal to comply with the **reasonable expectation to support a learning environment** through appropriate clothing choices may result in disciplinary action.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Methuen High School students must adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating defeats the purpose of learning and can also affect the academic progress of students other than the one who cheats. Cheating is a very serious matter and will be dealt with accordingly.

PLAGIARISM

Definition	Plagiarism is cheating. It is the stealing of another person's ideas, thoughts, words, or expressions. Plagiarism, a serious offense, can take different forms; the most common are copying and paraphrasing. One is allowed to copy or paraphrase someone else's ideas, thoughts and expressions if credit is given to the original author(s). If one does not give credit for the copied or paraphrased words, thoughts, or ideas used from the original author(s), then it is plagiarism.
Policy:	Plagiarism will not be tolerated at MHS. If a student at MHS commits plagiarism, the teacher will contact the student's parents or guardians and notify the Department Chair of the student's violation of the MHS plagiarism policy. The Department Chair will enter the student's name and identification number into the plagiarism offenders report. Subsequent violations after the first offense may result in loss of eligibility to speak at the graduation ceremony (at the discretion of the Principal). Non-mandatory guidance for potential consequences for this offense (during the student's career at MHS) are listed below; however, MHS may impose more or less severe sanctions in its discretion based on the specific circumstances presented:

Negative Consequences						
1st Offense	Notification of department head who records it on Plagiarism Offenders Report	Notification of parents by the teacher	Notification of associate principal by the teacher	Consequence at the discretion of the administrator; student has ability to make up assignment while serving consequence	Possible loss of National Honor Society eligibility	National Honor Society advisor notified for each offense if still a member
2nd Offense	Notification of department head who records it on Plagiarism Offenders Report	Notification of parents by the teacher	Notification of associate principal by the teacher	Consequence at the discretion of the administrator; Zero on the assignment	Possible loss of eligibility for MHS affiliated scholarships and possible course level change (ie: dropped from AP course)*	Conference with student, parents, teacher, and associate principal
3rd Offense	Notification of department head who records it on Plagiarism Offenders Report	Notification of parents by the teacher	Notification of associate principal & principal by the teacher	Consequence at the discretion of the administrator; Zero on the assignment	Loss of eligibility for MHS affiliated scholarships and possible course level change (ie: dropped from AP course)*	Conference with student, parents, teacher, and principal

* determined by Department Head, Head of Guidance, Director of Advanced Placement Courses, and Principal or their designee

RIGHTS OF THE EIGHTEEN-YEAR-OLD STUDENT

Eighteen year olds enjoy certain rights in school that other students do not have. When you turn eighteen, you have the legal rights of an adult. However, the school can continue to keep your parents informed about your progress and whereabouts. The school cannot require that your parents sign your report card or sign permission slips for field trips. You, as an adult, can give yourself permission to go on a trip.

Your school cannot require that you have absence notes signed by your parent. Your school can notify your parents that you were absent. The rights of eighteen-year-olds have recently been limited by Chapter 460 of the Acts of 1981, which amends the Student Records Regulations. Parents may have access to the record even if the student is eighteen years of age. If a student who is 18 years or older wishes not to have his/her records sent to the parent or guardian then a request must be made in writing and submitted to the Principal of the High School.

HAZING – REVISED AND UPDATED LAW

If a Methuen High School student is found to have organized or participated in the crime of hazing, he/she will be suspended in accordance with the school decorum code and law enforcement officials will be notified.

Chapter 269, Section 17-19 An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Hazing

Section 17: Hazing: organizing or participating: hazing defined

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

The term "hazing", as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

Section 18: Failure to report hazing

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

Section 19: Compliance Statement and Discipline Policy

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an

institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

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

CIVIL RIGHTS-EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Methuen Public Schools does not discriminate against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or age. Accordingly, no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school or in employment in its services in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VI); on the basis of sex, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; on the basis of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II); or on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (Age Discrimination Act) and the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967. Nor does it discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation, in accordance with Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 (M.G.L. c. 76 s. 5) and M.G.L. Chapter 151B. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. The District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness in a manner consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act. Similarly, consistent with the requirements of federal and state law, the District does not discriminate against students on the basis of pregnancy.

The Methuen Public Schools have duly appointed individuals responsible for the overall monitoring, auditing, and ensuring compliance with this policy. For compliance issues regarding employment activities, employees should contact: Ms. Gina Bozek, Director of Student Services, Methuen Public Schools, Methuen, Massachusetts, and the Coordinator for compliance issues regarding employment. For compliance issues regarding educational activities, contact the building Principal or the Director of Student Services, Methuen Public Schools, Methuen, Massachusetts. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the District's educational or employment activities can file a written grievance with the appropriate officer.

HARASSMENT POLICY

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

It is the policy of the Methuen Public Schools as well as state and federal law, that sexual harassment of a student, present or prospective employee, visitor, or any other individual associated with the school system is unlawful and shall not be tolerated. Violation of this policy and of the law, if substantiated, will result in disciplinary action. Any person who believes that he/she has been the victim of sexual harassment may seek redress through the Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedure.

Chapter 151C s. 1(e) of the Mass. General Laws defines sexual harassment as:

"any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (i) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (ii) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment."

As such, sexual harassment can be viewed as unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or success as a student;
- b. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual; or
- c. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment.

By definition, sexual harassment is not limited to prohibited conduct by a male toward a female, by a supervisory employee toward a non-supervisory employee, by a student toward a student, by a student toward a staff member, or by a staff member toward a student. The Methuen Public Schools' view of sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- a. A male, as well as a female, may be the victim of sexual harassment and a female as well a male may be the harasser.
- b. The harasser does not have to be the victim's supervisor. He/she may also be an agent of the employer, a supervisory employee who does not supervise the victim, a non-supervisory employee (co-worker), or, in some circumstances, a non-employee (student, parent).
- c. The victim may be the same or opposite sex as the harasser.
- d. The victim does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The victim may also be someone who is affected by such conduct when it is directed toward another person. For example, inappropriate attempts of humor of the sexual harassment of an employee may create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment

for another employee or may unreasonably interfere with an individual's work or educational performance.

- e. Sexual harassment does not depend on the victims having suffered a concrete economic injury as a result of the harasser's conduct. For example, improper sexual advances which do not result in the loss of a promotion by the victim or the discharge of the victim may, nonetheless, constitute sexual harassment where they unreasonably interfere with the victim's work or education, or create a harmful or offensive work or educational environment.
- f. Sexual harassment is not always a physical act. It can occur through the spoken word as well. Sexual harassment can include inappropriate jokes and sexual innuendo. It can also include the exposure of an individual to inappropriate photographs or literature.

Sexual harassment can cover a range of behaviors, including sexual insults and name-calling, off color jokes, intimidation by words or actions, offensive touching, and pressure for sexual activity. Harassment may be perpetrated by peers, school staff, or others with whom the victim must interact in order to fulfill school or job duties. In schools, sexual harassment may be student to student, staff to student, student to staff, or staff to staff.

It is important to remember that sexual harassment, or the existence of a sexually hostile environment is determined from the viewpoint of a reasonable person in the victim's situation. When an individual complains about sexual harassment or a sexually hostile environment, school officials must assess all the facts and circumstances from that viewpoint.

All personnel will be responsible for implementing, monitoring, and enforcing this policy. It is the duty of all students and staff to assist in creating a positive school climate of respect and decency and to model valued behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs. Further, the staff of the Methuen Public Schools will, on a consistent basis, assist students in understanding the impact of their behaviors.

The Methuen Public Schools also recognize that harassment can also include verbal or physical conduct that shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, religion, gender, gender identity sexual orientation, national origin, age, or disability. The standards outlined above in relation to sexual harassment apply with equal force to such harassment and are subject to the same complaint procedures and penalties. All complaints of harassment and discrimination will be addressed in accordance with the Harassment/Discrimination Complaint Procedure, below.

HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

A complaint of discrimination or harassment based race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, or age may be filed at any time by a student, employee, administrator and/or applicant who believes that his/her rights as outlined in the Sexual Harassment and/or Civil Rights - Equal Opportunities policy have been violated. This may be done in writing or orally.

- A. The complainant shall file within thirty (30) days of the alleged harassment. Complaints of sexual harassment and other Title IX violations shall be directed to the Title IX Coordinator, Director of Student Services, 10 Ditson Place, Methuen, MA (978) 722-6014. Complaints of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, disability, creed, and/or national origin shall be directed to the Title VI and Section 504 Coordinator, Director of Student Services, 10 Ditson Place, Methuen, MA (978) 722-6014. They are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about the policy against discrimination and harassment and our complaint procedure. The complainant may, however, file a complaint directly with the Superintendent of Schools at his/her option. In the case of a student, the complaint may, initially, be discussed with any responsible adult with whom the student is

comfortable. This adult will then serve as the liaison between the student and the responsible Coordinator. The liaison must document the incident in a written form and submit the form to the appropriate Coordinator within one working day of the receipt of the complaint.

- B. The Coordinator shall conduct an investigation of the harassment'/discrimination complaint within ten (10) working days.
- C. Such investigation may consist of, but not be limited to, the following actions:
 - 1. Interview (s) with the complainant.
 - 2. Interview (s) with the individual alleged to be the harasser.
 - 3. Interview (s) with other employees, students or witnesses.
 - 4. Interviews with other individuals at the discretion of the Coordinator
 - 5. Review of pertinent records.
- D. Within fifteen (15) school working days the receipt of the complaint, the Coordinator shall inform the alleged harasser and the complainant of the disposition of the investigation.
 - 1. If the Coordinator determines that the allegations are not credible, the matter shall be closed. The Coordinator shall keep the documents, notes and other material from the investigation as a permanent record. The purpose for retaining this record is to enable the Methuen Public Schools to document that an appropriate investigation was undertaken.
 - 2. If the Coordinator determines that the allegations or any part of the allegations constitute discrimination or harassment he/she shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory or harassing environment, which may include but is not limited to: (1) determining whether the matter should be referred for consideration of disciplinary action against the person(s) who engaged in discrimination or harassment; and determining what steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate.
 - 3. When the investigation has been completed, to the extent possible, both the complainant and the person alleged to have committed the offense will be informed of the results of the investigation.
 - 4. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the complaint, he/she may request a review of the Coordinator's investigation by the Superintendent of Schools.
 - 5. At any stage in the grievance procedure, the complainant has the right to file formal complaints with:

Regional Office for Civil Rights	or	Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination
5 Post Office Sq., 8 th Floor,		One Ashburton Place, Sixth Floor, Room 601
Boston, MA 02109-3921		Boston, MA 02108
(617) 289-0111		(617) 727-3990

For complaints of discrimination on the basis of disability the complainant may also file a complaint with:

Massachusetts Department of Secondary and Elementary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
(617) 338-3300

or may file a Request for Hearing with:

Massachusetts Department Secondary and Elementary Education
Bureau of Special Education Appeals
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148
(781) 338-6500

Complaints of discrimination in employment practices may also be filed with:

United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)
475 JFK Federal Building
Boston, MA 02203-0506
(800) 565-3200

Miscellaneous

- A. Any retaliatory action of any kind taken by an employee or student of the Methuen Public Schools against any other employee or student of the Methuen Public Schools as a result of that person's seeking redress under these procedures, cooperating in an investigation, or otherwise participating in any proceeding under these procedures is prohibited, and shall be regarded as a separate and distinct matter under this procedure and shall be subject to disciplinary action. .
- B. All complaints and subsequent proceedings will, to the greatest extent possible, be held in confidence by all persons directly or indirectly involved in them.
- C. If the alleged sexual harassment constitutes sexual abuse of a child by a "caretaker" (i.e. by a school staff member), then mandated reporters are required by Mass. General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51A to report the suspected child abuse to the Department of Social Services.

Penalties for Harassment/Discrimination

Remedial actions will depend on the severity of the incident (s). Because of the private nature of certain incidents, particularly those involving sexual harassment and the emotional and moral complexities surrounding such issues, every effort will be made to resolve problems, where appropriate, on an informal basis.

An admission of guilt, an acknowledgement of the verbal warning, a promise not to commit such abuse again, and action taken to provide appropriate relief for the complainant may be sufficient resolution. At the informal level, it is hoped to sensitize the person at fault to the effects of such behavior, to be constructive, and not unduly punitive in the disciplinary action. If informal resolutions are not adhered to, or if the allegations involve conduct for which informal resolutions are not appropriate, the Superintendent of Schools may deem it necessary to take appropriate action that can include formal letters of reprimand, suspension, expulsion, discharge, or other disciplinary action. A complaint cannot be required to engage in the informal process and may seek formal investigation at any time.

Revised and Readopted: September 9, 2019
Methuen Public Schools, Methuen, MA

NON-DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT POLICY

The Methuen Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status. The Methuen Public Schools is also

committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age or disability. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The Methuen Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Methuen or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, homelessness, disability or immigration status.

In addition to designating at least one administrator to handle inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies, the Superintendent shall adopt and publish one or more grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy. If an individual interested in filing a complaint that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, disability, or immigration status, their complaint should be filed in accordance with the District's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

The student handbooks and grievance procedures shall identify the name, office address and telephone number for the compliance officer(s) for the above-referenced statutes and this policy and be posted on the District's website.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI: 42 U.S.C. 2000d; 34 CFR 100.3(a),(b); EEOA: 20 U.S.C. 1703(f); Title IX: 20 U.S.C. 1681; 34 CFR 106.31, 106.34, 106.35; Section 504: 29 U.S.C. 794; 34 CFR 104.4; Title II: 42 U.S.C. 12132; 28 CFR 35.130; IDEA 2004: 20 U.S.C. 1400; 34 CFR 300.110; NCLB: Title III, Part A, Sec. 3121(c)(1)(C); Title X, Part C, Secs. 721, 722(g) (4); Mass. Const. amend. art. 114; M.G.L. c. 71A, s. 7; c. 76, s. 5; 603 CMR 26.03 as amended by Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011; MLG c. 71, s370; 42 USC s. 2000c et seq.; 42 USC s. 2000d et seq.; 20 USC s. 1701 et seq.; M.G.L c. 71, Sec. 84.

Adopted August 24, 2020
Methuen Public Schools

[CLICK HERE: TITLE IX SEXUAL HARASSEMENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE](#)

[CLICK HERE: CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE](#)

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other

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

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR 46.02. The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited. The use of prone restraint except as permitted under 603 CMR 46.03 or of any physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with the regulations at 603 CMR 46.00, is also prohibited.

Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate. The parent(s) and or guardian of any student who has been restrained will be notified as soon as is possible and no later than twenty-four hours after a restraint has occurred.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying: appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention; methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals; descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations; descriptions of the school's requirements, follow-up procedures, and training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements; including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent/guardian of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition and sending written notice to the parent within three school working days; procedures for receiving and investigating complaints regarding restraint practices; methods for engaging parents/guardians in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure; procedures for conducting periodic review of data and documentation on the use of restraint as required by the regulations; and the use of time-out as a behavioral support strategy, including a process for obtaining approval from the Principal or his/her designee for a time-out exceeding twenty (20) minutes.

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

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

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

The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff continuously observe and remain immediately available to the student shall not be considered seclusion restraint.

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents/guardians of enrolled students. The School Committee policy #JKAA relative to physical restraint is available at:

<https://sites.google.com/a/methuen.k12.ma.us/mps/district/mps-policies>

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

It is our belief and expectation that high school students possess the maturity and good judgment to regulate their own behavior. The primary function of school is to educate, not discipline. However, we are aware of the statutory responsibility to maintain a positive learning environment where students and school personnel feel safe, secure, and respected.

Discipline is an educational service to which every child is legally entitled. The discipline code at Methuen High School is written in the best interest of your child's protection and personal growth and balances students' rights with the school's right to maintain safety and order. Conduct by any student that interferes with or disrupts such an atmosphere will not be tolerated. Students are expected to follow all school rules.

Non-compliance penalties are outlined in the pages that follow. Any infraction not covered by rules set forth will be handled at the discretion of the administration.

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORTS

Teachers and students thrive in school environments that are safe, supportive, and conducive to teaching and learning. By responding to the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students, school staff can create a supportive school climate and reduce the amount of time that students are removed from the academic environment for disciplinary reasons. With a goal of increasing student access to meaningful educational opportunities, Methuen High School is implementing an initiative called Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports.

PBIS is a process for creating safer and more effective schools by implementing a systematic approach to educating all children. Through the consistent application of research-based techniques in the school-wide environment, this process supports a school's ability to teach and acknowledge positive behavior for all students. The PBIS model provides a framework for schools to design and implement effective school wide and classroom behavioral interventions. This strategic team process identifies consistent procedures for problem solving, behavioral planning and intervention, and continual evaluation.

A PBIS school prioritizes the direct teaching of identified school-wide expectations to all students, while also providing frequent opportunities for students to practice these expected behaviors in all school locations. Students who model appropriate behaviors are recognized and celebrated in a variety of ways. Using prescriptive instruction and rehearsal, a PBIS school provides specific acknowledgement for positive behavior and continual teaching to promote a positive school culture.

Raising the next generation is a shared responsibility. When families, communities and schools work together, students are more successful; thus benefiting the entire community. We encourage you to communicate regularly with your child's teachers, guidance counselor and the associate principal. Please read and review with your child the [PBIS Diagram](http://www.methuen.k12.ma.us/schools/methuen-high-school/pbis-mhs) located on the Methuen High School website <http://www.methuen.k12.ma.us/schools/methuen-high-school/pbis-mhs>.

TEACHER DETENTION

Each teacher, within the policies set forth by the Methuen School Committee, will establish behavioral expectations in their own classes. **The right of students in the class to learn in a safe, orderly, and effective manner outweighs the rights of one to disrupt.** A teacher may detain a student after school when the student is not behaving to the expectancy level. A 24-hour option will be offered to students who may need to arrange alternate transportation home. A phone call home or requesting to meet with parents is strongly encouraged.

OFFICE DETENTION

Office detention is held after school in a designated area with a staff member to supervise students. Teachers may directly assign office detentions for certain infractions of the Discipline Code. Students are expected to arrive on time and stay for the hour. Students serving detention may not talk, sleep, or listen to music. Students who are not assigned detention are not permitted in the area and may not “visit” students who are serving detention. They are to come prepared to do schoolwork or with appropriate reading material. Failure to comply with detention regulations or to be respectful and cooperative while serving detention will result in escalated consequences. **Students are expected to report to detention on the day assigned unless prior arrangements have been made with the associate principal. Students absent from school on the day they are assigned detention are expected to report on the next detention day following their absence.**

SUSPENSION/DUE PROCESS

Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, Section 37H ¾

(For all offenses except for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on staff and felony offenses)

Definitions Under M.G.L. c. 37H ¾

Superintendent – the Superintendent or designee for disciplinary purposes.

Expulsion: the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

In-School Suspension: the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. ** Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.*

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Suspensions or exclusions pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H and 37H ½ do not count towards the calculation of the number of days of suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾. Similarly, days of emergency removal do not count as days of suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾.

Principal: the primary administrator of the school or the Principal’s designee for disciplinary purposes.

Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

(Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ only. For offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 please see the appropriate sections below)

In every case of student misconduct under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

Emergency Removals; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: - A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall: (1) make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. Before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent, the Principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing. Additionally, the Principal is required to render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension at set forth below, whichever is applicable. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

In-School Suspension M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or

cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 CMR 53.00.

Due Process for In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent.

Principal's Decision – In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: – On or before the day of suspension, the principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the In-School Suspension, including the reason and the length of the In-School Suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. Students have the right to appeal an In-School Suspension that will result in their In-School Suspension for more than ten (10) school days in a school year.

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Due Process for Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Notice – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the

principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

Principal's Decision – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. The Principal's decision shall be final with no opportunity for appeal. If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or in section 37H 1/2 of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Due Process for Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

Notice - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; and (5) the right to request that the hearing be

recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The student will have the rights identified in the written notice and the principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Principal's Decision – Long-Term Suspension: M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a Long-Term Suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; (3) identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language: (a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

Superintendent Appeals – Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: A student who is placed on Long-Term Suspension under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

Superintendent Appeal Hearing; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension. The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent

shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension as identified above.

Superintendent's Decision; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which: (1) identifies the disciplinary offense and the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) sets out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Superintendent; (3) identifies the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) includes notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; and (5) notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the Methuen Public Schools with regard to the long-term suspension.

M.G.L. c. 71, Section 37H and 37H 1/2 Offenses (Dangerous Weapons, Drugs, Assaults on Staff, and Criminal Felony Matters)

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term suspension or an interim suspension of less than ten (10) consecutive days pending formal proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of the formal disciplinary hearing.

Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student for means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for (1) possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H 1/2. The Principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below apply to suspensions under M.G.L. c. §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

Dangerous Weapons, Drugs and Assaults on Staff - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H

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

marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the Methuen Public Schools by the Principal.

2. Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the Methuen Public Schools by the Principal.

Principal's Hearing, Long-Term Exclusion – 37H - Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraphs 1 or 2 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraphs 1 or 2 above.

Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – 37H - Any student who has been expelled from the Methuen Public Schools 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 or her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Suspensions or expulsions are decisions that must consider a student's due process rights. Building Principals or designees are required to report to the police department the presence of any weapon on school premises.

Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 1/2

Issuance of a Felony Criminal Complaint

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.

Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion – 37H 1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges 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 the hearing, the Principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of his or her 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.

Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - 37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent in writing of their 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 their behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. 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 Methuen Public Schools with regard to the suspension.

Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction

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 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.

Notice of Principal's Hearing – Long-Term Exclusion - 37H 1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges 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 the hearing, the Principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of their 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.

Superintendent's Appeal – Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion - 37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, of their 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. The hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf, and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. 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 Methuen Public Schools with regard to the expulsion.

Opportunity to Make Academic Progress

The Methuen Public Schools shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school district shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

For all suspensions, students will be entitled to the following in terms of the opportunity to make academic progress:

Less Than 10 Consecutive Days - Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

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

SATURDAY DETENTION

As an alternative to out-of-school suspension, some disciplinary infractions of school rules will carry as a consequence a Saturday detention. Examples include, but are not limited to; repeated tardiness, excessive class cuts, smoking, truancy, failure to report to office detention, out of bounds on school property, Transportation to and from Saturday detention is the responsibility of the student. Students who fail to report to the assigned detention will be suspended from school.

HABITUAL SCHOOL OFFENDER

Chronic school offenders or a student who commits a serious offense, including, but not limited to, those listed in Category D of the discipline code that follows, may be referred to the School Committee for permanent expulsion.

Any student who has accrued more than five (5) suspensions in a school year will be considered a habitual offender. This includes in-school and out-of-school suspensions. In the event of any further infractions, a habitual offender will receive an automatic out of school suspension for 1-10 days.

POLICE INVOLVEMENT

The Methuen Public Schools, in collaboration with the Methuen Police Department, are committed to ensuring a safe school environment for its students. This collaborative effort supports a “zero tolerance” for drugs, alcohol, weapons, and violence. In accordance with these goals, the MPD becomes involved with Methuen High School in these areas and in any others that may violate the law. The Principal reserves the right to involve the police in the investigation of suspected illegal activity.

STUDENT MISCONDUCT

The list of prohibited conduct below is intended to serve as a general guideline and shall not limit the authority of the building principals to impose consequences, including suspensions, for other acts of misconduct. The guidelines listed below are merely designed to assist in the processing of school rules violations. Staff may impose more or less severe sanctions in their discretion and consistent with appropriate due process.

1. CATEGORY A: (handled by teachers)

- Tardiness to class (except for 1st block)
- Any violation of an individual teacher’s classroom rules or a school-wide policy, such as a minor class disruption, class cut, non-cooperation, failure to complete academic assignments, cheating, unauthorized use of electronic equipment, dress code violation (i.e., wearing head coverings), food or drink in the academic area, inappropriate language not directed to a peer or staff member, leaving class without permission, etc.)
- Second consecutive cut, chronic (4 or more) class cut-refer to administration.

Potential Consequence: Verbal warning, teacher detention, office detention, parental contact.

For chronic (4 or more) infractions, referral to administration.

*****IF A STUDENT IS NOT PRESENT FOR THE LAST CLASS OF THE DAY, AND THERE IS NO STAFF MEMBER THAT WILL VERIFY HIS/HER WHEREABOUTS, IT IS ASSUMED THAT THE STUDENT HAS LEFT SCHOOL PROPERTY WITHOUT PERMISSION (a suspendable offense)**

(Categories B, C, and D are handled by administration)

2. CATEGORY B:

- Bus violation (See also School Bus Conduct)
- Corridor/bathroom pass violation
- Excessive class cuts (4 or more)
- Failure to follow tardy procedures
- Failure to report to teacher detention
- Habitual unauthorized use of electronic equipment
- In hall without pass
- Misbehavior in the cafeteria
- Refusing to give name or ID to any staff member or giving false information
- Lunch block cut

Potential Consequence: Office detention, Saturday detention, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS) at the discretion of the administrator, given the circumstances and the student's prior conduct history.

3. CATEGORY C

- Leaving school without following proper dismissal procedures
- Chronic cheating, plagiarism (See plagiarism policy p.17)
- Computer network violation (See AUP p. 55)
- Inappropriate videotaping of students or staff during the school day or during school events
- Cut lunch block/out-of-bounds in cafeteria during lunches
- Failure to report to office detention
- Forgery, lying
- In parking lot or outside the school building during school hours without permission
- Loitering in parking lot/school grounds before or after school hours
- Lack of respect for the property/privacy of school neighbors
- Insolence/insubordination (refusal to follow a reasonable request)
- Intentional defacing or destruction of school property. (restitution possible)
- Obscene, profane, or vulgar language directed toward a peer.
- Out-of-bounds within the school building (ice rink, ice rink lobby, field house, locker rooms, under stairwells, dining rooms, custodian's corridor, etc.)
- Smoking/vaping or possession of tobacco products including vaporizers, e-cigarettes, and smoking paraphernalia.
- Truancy
- Failure to follow Saturday detention rules
- Violation of Methuen Public School Acceptable Use Policy (See AUP p. 54)
- Violation of iPad Student Responsibilities Form

Potential Consequence: Saturday detention, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS) or other consequence at the discretion of the administrator, given the circumstances and the student's prior conduct history

4. CATEGORY D

- Any act that has the potential to cause or that results in the injury of students or staff
- Any act which disrupts the educational climate of the school

- Any unlawful act taking place in school or on school property, which makes the student subject to legal prosecution
- Assault and/or battery on a peer
- Assault and/or battery on a staff member***
- Direct insubordination concerning penalties assigned by administration or refusing to report to an administrator
- Encouraging escalation of a physical fight or videotaping from the sidelines.
- Engaging in a physical fight
- Felony charge***
- Flagrant disrespect
- Gambling/possession of gambling paraphernalia
- Harassing language or behavior directed toward another based upon gender, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability
- Inappropriate touching, as defined by administration
- Bullying (abusive remarks, name calling, teasing, spreading rumors, etc.), Cyber-bullying (See separate section on Bullying/Cyber-bullying for detailed description)
- Obscene language/gesture directed toward a staff member
- Organizing or participating in hazing acts
- Possession, sale, and/or use of a controlled substance (alcohol/drugs) or possession of drug paraphernalia on school property*+**
- Possession or use of a weapon (gun, stun gun, knife, etc.)***
- Possession and/or use of fireworks
- Present on school grounds or at school events while on out-of-school suspension
- Tampering with or pulling a fire alarm or being a party to such an act
- Theft, possession of stolen property
- Threats, instigating, intimidation
- Vandalism (restitution required)/being a party to an act of vandalism
- Violation of another's civil rights***

Potential Consequence: Out-of-school suspension (OSS) at the discretion of the administration

*** Any of the above offensives may result in long-term suspension or expulsion.**

*** May be subject to long-term suspension from school by the Principal if the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.**

+ This infraction requires a re-entry Program Student Contract (see appendices [B and C](#))

Discipline and Students with Disabilities

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and related regulations require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that substantially limits a major life activity, as defined under sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, are generally also entitled to increased procedural protections prior to imposing discipline that will result in a student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or that would constitute a change in placement. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

- (1) The IEP for every student eligible for special education or related services shall indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified to address the student's individual needs.

- (2) Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a “change of placement”, building administrators, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team will meet to conduct a Manifestation Determination Review. In most instances, the student has the right to receive appropriate alternative educational services during any days of exclusion in excess of ten (10) days in a given school year.
- (3) If building administrators and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team determine that the student’s conduct was not a manifestation of the student’s disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students but will continue to provide a free, appropriate public education to those students with IEPs and 504 plans. The student’s IEP or 504 Team will identify the services necessary to provide a free, appropriate public education during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan, or where appropriate, conduct a functional behavior assessment.
- (4) If building administrators and relevant members of the student’s IEP or 504 Team determine that the conduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student’s disability. The student will not be subjected to further removal or exclusion from the student’s current educational program for that conduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others) unless the IEP or 504 Team develops, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) consent to, a new placement, or unless the District obtains an order from a court or from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA) authorizing a change in the student’s placement. The student’s Team shall also review, and modify as appropriate, any existing behavior intervention plan or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment.
- (5) If a special education student possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA hearing officer may also order the placement of students who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS, EXCLUSION BY THE PRINCIPAL EDUCATION REFORM ACT OF 1993

- Assault and battery on a staff member
- Possession or sale or use of controlled substance
- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Felony suspension

THREATS

Life-threatening statements (spoken or written) will be referred to the Police for prosecution, as the administration and police department deems appropriate. The school system reserves the rights of the Principal, Superintendent of Schools and School Committee to impose disciplinary actions, up to and including exclusion from Methuen High School, for threats that disrupt the educational process. *References: M.G.L.c.272, s.40, Disturbance of Schools or Assemblies: M.G.L. ec. 269, s. 14, Bomb threats; and M.G.L. c. 275, ss. 2, 3, 4, Threatening to Commit a Crime (7/99).*

ASSAULT ON ANOTHER STUDENT

Any student, who assaults another student on school premises or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from school or school district by the School Committee. The School Committee, however, shall not permanently exclude a student from the public school for alleged misconduct without first giving the student and his or her parent or guardian an opportunity to be heard. *M.G.L. C.76, §17*

The school administration reserves the right to impose other restrictions it may deem necessary to ensure the safety and decorum of the student body. Any reckless behavior that endangers the health and well-being of students and staff will result in disciplinary action.

GENERAL POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND REGULATIONS: VISITORS

Students are not allowed to invite guests to Methuen High School. All tours of the school must be arranged through the guidance department.

GROUND RULES BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL:

To afford courtesy and respect for the community and our immediate neighbors, students should not trespass on private property, nor loiter or congregate within sight of the school building before or after school. Upon arriving on school property in the morning, students are to enter the school building. Likewise, students are to leave school property upon being dismissed at the end of the school day. Failure to follow these procedures will result in disciplinary action.

TRESPASSERS

No person is permitted to enter or remain in Methuen High School without proper authorization. Violators may be subject to arrest for criminal trespass. Students on suspension and/or exclusion from Methuen High School are not allowed on school property or at school-related events. Violators may be subject to additional disciplinary action or arrest for criminal trespassing.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL)

The district will administer a Home Language Survey (HLS) to the parents/guardians of all new students enrolling in Pre-Kindergarten (Pre-K) through 12th grade. The Language Acquisition Department must, according to the MA DESE, screen every newly enrolled student whose HLS indicates that there is a language other than English spoken at home. In other words, districts must administer a language proficiency-screening test when the answer to any question on the HLS is a language other than English with the following limited exceptions:

- students who were previously classified as ELs and were then reclassified as FELs in their former districts;
- students who transferred from another district within Massachusetts or another WIDA state and who did not qualify as ELs on the English proficiency-screening test administered in their former districts; and students who transferred from another district within Massachusetts or another WIDA state with ACCESS results from the **last calendar year**.

The district will use the results of the language screening assessment to determine whether the student **is or is not** an EL.

Students determined to be EL will receive English language support services during the school day. Additionally, these students are required to participate in the annual ACCESS for ELLs state assessment in January. If parents/guardians elect to exclude their child from EL services, they must notify the Language Acquisition Department, in writing, of their wishes of “opt out”, for each school year that the student is still an English Learner. These students will still be considered EL and will take part in the ACCESS for ELLs annual assessment. Students will be reclassified as former EL when they receive a predetermined score on the ACCESS for ELLs assessment and students have been determined to be able to do regular schoolwork in English.

HOMELESSNESS

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES

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

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

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

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

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

The district’s liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools, family shelters and soup kitchens. The district’s

liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students.

To the extent practical and as required by law, the district will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students and unaccompanied youths will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. A child who is homeless or an unaccompanied youth and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for Title I services and the Free and Reduced Lunch program.

The term "unaccompanied youth" includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence. This definition shall include:

(i) children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; or are abandoned in hospitals;

(ii) children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings (within the meaning of section 11302(a)(2)(C) 1 of this title);

(iii) children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and

(iv) migratory children (as such term is defined in section 6399 of title 20) who qualify as homeless for the purposes of this part because the children are living in circumstances described in clauses (i) through (iii).

If you need more information, contact the Homeless Liaison at your child's school or Ms. Gina Bozek, Director of Student Services at (978) 722-6014

MSC

Revised and Readopted September 9, 2019

STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the educational stability of students in foster care and their equal access to the same free and appropriate public education through high school graduation as provided to other students as required by law. Educational stability has a lasting impact on students' academic achievement and wellbeing, and the School Committee is committed to supporting district and community efforts to ensure that students in foster care have access to high-quality, stable educational experiences.

The law requires that foster care students continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and

attend school in the district in which a foster care provider or facility is located (if different). The law also requires that when it is not in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin, the student is immediately enrolled and attending in a new school district, even if records normally required for enrollment cannot be quickly produced. Additionally, the law requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF), The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the school district to designate points of contact; and also that the district collaborate with DCF and other school district to ensure that students will receive transportation to the school of origin if needed.

Best Interest Determination

Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend the school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (and if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when different) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and take into account a variety of factors. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care. However, if there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, DCF will finalize the best interest determination.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. Under the law, to promote educational stability, students should continue to attend their schools of origin while best interest determinations are being made.

Transportation

The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be provided and arranged to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care.

Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaboration districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.

Immediate Enrollment

If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be enrolled in school in the local school district immediately. To minimize disruption of the student's education, the law requires the district to enroll the student in a new school right away, without waiting to receive the typical student enrollment documentation (other than emergency contact information). The enrolling school must immediately contact the child's school and district of origin to obtain the relevant records and documentation, and the school and district of origin should immediately transfer those records.

To facilitate enrollment, DCF representatives will present the district with a form that indicates that the student is in foster care, along with their state-agency identification badge, when enrolling students.

STUDENTS PERMANENTLY LEAVING SCHOOL, M.G.L., C. 76, §18

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered to have permanently left public school unless an administrator of the school which the student last attended has sent notice within a

period of 5 days from the student's tenth consecutive absence to the student and the parent or guardian of that student in both the primary language of the parent or guardian, to the extent practicable, and English. The notice shall initially offer at least 2 dates and times for an exit interview between the superintendent, or a designee, and the student and the parent or guardian of the student to occur prior to the student permanently leaving school and shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview. The notice shall indicate that the parties shall agree upon a date and time for the exit interview, and that interview shall occur within 10 days after the sending of the notice. The time for the exit interview may be extended at the request of the parent or guardian and no extension shall be for longer than 14 days. The superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with any such interview without a parent or guardian if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. The exit interview shall be for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and to consider alternative education or other placements.

The superintendent or a designee shall convene a team of school personnel, such as the principal, guidance counselor, teachers, attendance officer and other relevant school staff, to participate in the exit interview with the student and the parent or guardian of the student. During the exit interview, the student shall be given information about the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school, the benefits of earning a high school diploma and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

TRUANCY

Massachusetts has a compulsory school attendance law, which applies to all children between the ages of 6 and 16. (M.G.L., chapter 76, Section 1).

Truancy refers to any intentional, unauthorized absence from compulsory schooling. Once students are registered at a school, **parents are legally responsible** for making sure their child attends regularly. **Students who are found to be truant will face disciplinary consequences.** In cases of **chronic truancy**, the following actions may be taken:

1. The school may file an application for a [Child Requiring Assistance \(CRA\)](#) with the Juvenile Court Department of the Trial Court of Massachusetts for students under sixteen (16) years of age if a student is identified who is “Habitually absent and doesn't attend school for more than 8 days in a quarter without a proper excuse.”
2. Pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, chapter 76, section 2, the school may seek that the court **imposes a fine on the parents.**
3. The school may seek criminal charges pursuant to M.G.L. chapter 119, section 63 for inducing and abetting delinquency of a child, which is punishable by a **fine of not more than \$500.00 or by imprisonment of up to one year or both.**

Student non-attendance is detrimental to students’ achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment potential. Clearly, students who miss school fall behind their peers in the classroom. This, in turn, leads to low self-esteem and increases the likelihood that at-risk students will drop out of school.

PUPIL ABSENCE NOTICES

Pupil absence notices to parents and pupil absence meetings with parents will be conducted in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 76, §1B. Each Principal or designee will notify a student’s parent/guardian within 3 days of the student’s absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence. Under M.G.L. c. 76, § 1B, the Methuen Public Schools has a policy of notifying the parent/guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year or who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a

school year. This policy requires that the school principal, or a designee, make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

CREDIT DENIAL POLICY

Credit Denial is when a student exceeds the number of allowable unexcused absences for the marking term or for the entire course.

Students will be allowed five unexcused absences per marking term. On the sixth absence for the term in a course, the student's grade will be replaced with a CDF (Credit Denial Failure) on the report card. For reporting purposes, the CDF will be followed by a dash and then the grade the student would have earned (e.g., CDF-D+). If the student earned a passing grade (e.g., CDF-B), the teacher will replace the passing earned numerical grade with the numerical grade of 59 when calculating the student's final grade in the course. If the student earned a failing grade (e.g., CDF-F), the teacher will use the failing earned numerical grade when calculating the student's final grade in the course. The numerical grade of 59 will not be used in the event that a student earns the credit back (see below).

Students are able to earn credit back for marking terms one, two, and three. If a student has five or less absences in the term immediately following a CDF term, the passing numerical grade will be reinstated for the previous term. The fourth marking term of a yearlong course or the second marking term of a semester-long course is the final marking term for that course. Therefore, a passing grade cannot be reinstated in the fourth term of a yearlong course or the second term of a semester-long course and the numerical grade of 59 is used for that term.

Students will be allowed twenty unexcused absences for a yearlong course and ten for a semester-long course. On the twenty-first unexcused absence for the year or the eleventh unexcused absence for the semester, the student is denied credit for the course. The final grade on the student's report card will be CDF followed by the grade the student would have earned (e.g., CDF-C+). If a student has earned a CDF as a final grade in a course, he/she will be required to replace the credit in summer school.

When a student's unexcused absences become a concern, a meeting will be held. Present at the meeting will be the student, parent/guardian, and school personnel related to the student. The purpose of the meeting is to improve student attendance and strengthen the bond between the school and the family while emphasizing the importance of attendance to school.

Attendance for school records is taken during the first block of the day. (7:15 a.m. - 8:13 a.m.). All students who arrive to school after 7:15 a.m. must sign in at the Main Office before heading to class. If a student signs in tardy at 7:45 a.m. or later, he/she will need to see the first block teacher before or after school to make up missed work. For the purpose of after school activities, a student who signs into school after 10:30 a.m. is considered absent for the day. A student who is dismissed before 10:30 a.m., and does not return to school, is considered absent for the day. It is suggested that students return to school following any appointment, when possible. Students who are absent from school **may not participate in school-related activities or athletic events** that afternoon or evening.

Due to the early dismissals, late arrivals, and other reasons, a student's absenteeism may vary from one class to the other. If a student misses more than half of a class, the student is considered absent from

that class. For the absence from class to be excused, the student must provide documentation of his/her whereabouts. **The teacher in each course keeps the official number of absences.**

Unexcused Absences are counted toward Credit Denial. If documentation is not provided to the Main Office within ten (10) school days, an absence is considered unexcused. Days of absence are unexcused for any of the following reasons:

- Days out of school without documentation
- Arrival after 10:30 a.m.
- Dismissal for the remainder of the day prior to 10:30 a.m.
- Class cuts
- Truancy
- Family vacations

Excused Absences are not counted toward Credit Denial. For an absence to be excused, documentation must be provided to the Main Office within ten (10) school days. Days of absence may be excused for any of the following reasons:

- Death in the immediate family (documented by a note from a parent/guardian)
- Observance of religious holidays (documented by a note from parent/guardian)
- Medical treatment (e.g., surgery or hospitalization) **with verification.** Doctor's note must contain the statement that the student may not attend school on the dates listed. Routine medical visits are not excused and if the student is dismissed, he/she should return to school after the appointment, when possible.
- Suspension from school
- Authorized school sponsored activities and related activities, e.g., college visits and field trips.
- Court appearances, **with documentation from the court.**
- Absences approved by the Principal/Associate Principal.

Valid documentation must be provided for a student's absence(s) and submitted on the appropriate form to the Main Office. Medical documentation must state the date(s) that the student is excused for medical reasons. Routine doctor's visits do not excuse students for the day unless specifically stated. The administration has the right to excuse or deny some or all of a student's absences.

- It is the responsibility of the student to provide and maintain all documentation needed for the purpose of excusing absences.
 1. Forms for excused absences may be obtained from the Main Office.
 2. Request(s) for excused absences must be submitted within ten (10) school days of the student's absence.
 3. Failure to submit excused absence requests in the required time frame will result in the denial of the request.
- If a student is absent twenty (20) or more days in a full year course or ten (10) or more days in a semester course, it is the responsibility of the student to recover the credit in summer school.

When a student is not present in class, excused or unexcused, it is the responsibility of the student to complete all make-up work and submit it in accordance with arrangements made with individual teachers.

Generally, students have five (5) school days to complete missed assignments. After five (5) days, it is considered an incomplete assignment.

Students tardy for class must be admitted to that class with or without a pass. Tardiness to class is a disciplinary matter between the teacher and the student with the exception of first block. The MHS tardy policy addresses student tardies for the first block of the school day. Teachers are expected to work individually with those students who are late for class. Only those students who are habitually late for class should be referred to the associate principal. Students should only be sent to the Main Office, to sign in for the day, when they are late arriving to school. As mentioned previously, if a student misses more than half of a class, the student is considered absent from that class, unless it is excused.

If you receive a CDF for the term, semester or year and believe that your circumstances merit a waiver of the attendance policy, you may submit a written appeal to the Principal. The written appeal must include an attendance printout from Infinite Campus, which can be obtained from the Main Office. A written explanation and/or documentation must be provided detailing the reasons for your appeal prior to being granted a meeting with the Principal. ***All appeals must be initiated no later than one week following the distribution of report cards.***

DISMISSALS

Dismissals will be granted for appropriate and legitimate reasons, such as medical appointments, court appearances, or family emergencies. If a student misses more than half of a class, the student is considered absent from that class. On the morning of the day of the dismissal request, students must present documentation or a parental note, which includes the name and telephone number of parents/guardian to the main office. Phone-in dismissals will only be allowed on an emergency basis, and at the discretion of the administration. **Dismissals that cannot be verified will be denied. Failure to follow proper dismissal procedures will result in out-of-school suspension.**

Any student who becomes ill during the school day should report to the school nurse, who will be responsible for contacting the parent/guardian if a dismissal from school is appropriate. **Failure to follow dismissal protocols will be considered leaving school without permission.**

TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

Punctuality is an important work habit, which must be learned from the time a student begins school. Good habits developed at school are carried over throughout adult life. The following procedure will be followed relative to student tardiness:

- Any student who is not in his/her classroom at the 7:15 a.m. bell will be considered tardy. For the purpose of discipline only: Excusal for tardiness will be granted for medical and emergency reasons, or for the arrival of a late bus. Students must provide reasonable justification for tardiness and provide it at the time of tardiness. Phone numbers or medical confirmation should be attached for verification purposes. All tardiness, regardless of reason will be considered time missed from class.
- After 7:15 a.m. teachers are to prohibit students from entering the first block class without a tardy pass.
- Chronic tardiness to class will result in disciplinary action.
- Any student arriving to school after 7:15 a.m. must sign in at the Main Office.
- Students who report to school after 7:15 a.m. without reporting to the Main Office will automatically receive disciplinary action up to and including out of school suspension.
- Student drivers who are late to school five (5) or more times, or who leave school without permission, will be subject to the student driver consequences in addition to the consequences listed below.

TARDY POLICY: (PER TERM)

- 1st, 2nd, 3rd tardyWarning
- 4th and subsequent tardy is an Office Detention

VALEDICTORIAN, SALUTATORIAN AND HONOR ESSAYIST

The valedictorian and salutatorian of the graduating class will be determined by the calculation of the rolling cumulative GPA of all seniors at the conclusion of the 3rd quarter of senior year. The student with the highest rolling cumulative GPA will be identified as valedictorian and will be invited to deliver the valedictory address at commencement. The student with the second highest rolling cumulative GPA will be identified as salutatorian and will be invited to deliver the salutatory address at commencement. The honor essayist will be selected by administration based on academic achievement and contributions to the school community. GPA calculation will be performed to the thousandth place. Eligibility for the distinction of valedictorian, salutatorian, or honor essayist is limited to students who have been enrolled at Methuen High School for the four consecutive semesters immediately preceding graduation. Students and families are encouraged to view the MHS Program of Studies for more information on GPA calculation.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for graduation with a Methuen High School diploma, a student must matriculate for four full years at the high school level (9-12) and complete Methuen High School's graduation requirements found in the program of studies, along with state requirements. Students are awarded a diploma in the year in which the requirements are met (unless otherwise authorized by the principal).

All students must meet the Standards for Competency Determination as outlined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This information can be viewed on the following documents [Amendments to Regulations on MCAS and Competency Determination, 603 CMR 30.00, for Transition to New Standard](#) and [Education Laws and Regulations](#).

All graduation requirements and subjects listed below, but not limited to, are in the program of studies located [HERE](#)

<i>MassCore</i>	<i>Dual Enrollment</i>	<i>Early College</i>
<i>Report Cards</i>	<i>Honor Roll</i>	<i>Course Levels/ Grade Point Average (GPA)</i>
<i>National Honor Society</i>		<i>Seal of Biliteracy</i>
<i>Minimum Credit Requirements for Graduation</i>		<i>Failed Courses/Credit Denial – Recovering Credits</i>

HOMEWORK

Research shows that homework is a valid means of increasing students' achievement and supporting reinforcement of classroom instruction. As such, it is an integral part of the educational process at the high school level and will be assigned on an on-going basis; however, the nature and frequency of homework assignments will be dependent on the ability level of the student to whom they are assigned and the nature of the subject matter studied.

EXAM AND QUIZ MAKE-UP

Deadlines for completing or submitting work missed or making up tests and quizzes vary, based upon the length and nature of the illness and complexity of the assignment(s) missed. In most cases, students will have the number of days absent, plus 1 to 10 additional days, at the discretion of the teacher, to make up tests, quizzes, and assignments missed. This policy applies to **legitimate absences** from class only.

ADVANCED PLACEMENT EXAMS

Students who are enrolled in Advanced Placement (AP) courses are expected to take AP exams in May. The exam schedule is established by the College Board, and exams are administered nationwide according to this schedule. Advanced Placement fees are due in November; the exact date is announced in October each year. Exam fees are non-refundable. Students are encouraged to contact the school's AP Coordinator to explore eligibility for exam fee reductions if needed.

EXTRACURRICULAR CODE OF CONDUCT

Methuen Public School students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner, which will bring credit to, and reflect positively upon themselves, their school, their families and their community. Furthermore, participation in any school-sponsored activity is a privilege, not a right, extended to all Methuen Public Schools students. Those students who exercise the privilege of participation in school sponsored extracurricular activities assume total responsibility for their behavior. Methuen Public Schools' nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities are provided in such a manner as necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation. Please note there is no inherent right to participate in extracurricular activities and it is within the governing agency's (e.g., MIAA, NHS) and/or the school's discretion to exclude a student from interscholastic and extracurricular activities consistent with School Committee Policy JCDA found on our webpage:

<https://sites.google.com/a/methuen.k12.ma.us/mps/district/mps-policies>

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

but not limited to: any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear message to students, parents, and the community that the use, possession or distribution of illegal drugs and alcohol will not be tolerated.

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event. Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

- I. It is the policy of the Methuen Public Schools that the following actions are strictly prohibited and will result in the student being disciplined:
 - a. Student use of any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items on school property, of any quantity, on school busses, at school bus stops or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
 - b. Student possession any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance;

- or any other related items of any quantity on school property, on school busses, at school bus stops or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
 - c. Being under the influence of any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items on school property, on school busses, at school bus stops or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
 - d. Student sale, distribution or attempted sale or distribution of any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items on school property, on school busses, at school bus stops or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- II. The following procedures will be utilized in any case where a student is suspected of engaging in any of the prohibited conduct enumerated in paragraphs a-d above.
- a. The student will be referred to the Principal or Associate Principal.
 - b. The Principal or Associate Principal will contact the school nurse concerning the case if he/she feels that it is warranted. If the nurse is unavailable, an alternative medical evaluation will be sought. If it is determined that physical symptoms may be present after speaking to the student and evaluating the symptoms, the nurse or other medical professional will make recommendations to the referring Administrator.
 - c. The Principal or Associate Principal will, notify the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the student.
 - d. The Principal or Associate Principal will inform the student, in the presence of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) of the conduct prohibited by paragraphs I a-d, in which the Principal or Associate Principal believes the student has engaged.
 - e. All students shall be provided with the due process in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, which shall include, but not be limited to, the opportunity to respond to the violations of which the student is accused, prior to the imposition of disciplinary sanctions for violations of this Policy. Depending on the offense(s), the Methuen Public Schools will follow the procedures outlined in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H1/2 and 37H3/4 and the student will be punished accordingly.
 - f. As a general rule, following the conduct enumerated in paragraphs I a-d, the student will be released only into the care and custody of his/her parent (s), legal guardian(s) or other responsible adult designated by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
 - g. Prior to the student's return to school, and as a condition of his/her return to school, the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) and the student must meet with the Principal or Associate Principal and/or other staff for the purpose of determining a specific plan of intervention and/or support services.
 - h. Should the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) fail to cooperate with school authorities at any point in this procedure, the school authorities will report to DCF and to other outside agencies as needed to assist with supporting the student.
- III. The Methuen Public Schools reserves the right to discipline students for drug or alcohol-related actions or offenses which are committed by the student during non-school time, on property other than school property and/or at functions or events which are neither sponsored by, nor related to, the Methuen Public Schools. This right will be exercised where the student has been charged with a felony relating to said use of any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; or

any controlled substance and the building principal determines, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H1/2, that student's continued presence in the school will have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school

- IV. Students found in possession of any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items while on school property, on a school bus, while attending school-sponsored or school-sanctioned functions will be referred to the police.
- V. For those students who are involved with extra-curricular activities in the Methuen Public Schools, violations of this policy will jeopardize their continued participation in those activities, as more fully outlined in the Extra-Curricular Code of Conduct.
- VI. This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice of this policy shall be provided to parents and students in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district policy shall be submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in accordance with applicable laws and regulations and in the manner prescribed by the Department.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L.71:2A; 71: 37H; 71:96; 272:40A

Re-Adopted: September 23, 2019

BREATHALYZER TESTING

In order to safeguard the individual and general welfare of all students, the Methuen Public Schools may administer a breathalyzer test as a condition of admission to school or school-related activity to any student or his/her guests. It may also administer such a test at any time during the school day or activity.

Breathalyzer Testing

Students exhibiting signs of having consumed alcohol, including, but not limited to glassy eyes, slurred speech, unsteadiness on the feet or emission of an alcoholic odor may be requested to take a breathalyzer test administered by a school administrator. If test results are negative, no action shall be taken. If a student tests positive for alcohol, he or she will receive one additional opportunity to take the test. Students who test positive for alcohol (a .02 reading on the breathalyzer test) or students who refuse to take a breathalyzer test upon reasonable suspicion to suspect they have consumed alcohol will be subject to all school rules relating to the use and/or possession of alcohol.

Protocol for Use of Breathalyzer

1. The breathalyzer can be used during the school day and at all school-sponsored activities including but not limited to: dances, proms or other extra-curricular activities.
2. The breathalyzer is administered to any student who is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol using the approved checklist (JICHA-R).
3. The breathalyzer will be administered by a school administrator only. Any administrator who administers the breathalyzer must have been previously trained through demonstration by a Methuen Police Officer.
4. There will always be two people present when the observation checklist is completed and the breathalyzer is administered (either another school administrator or a teacher).
5. The breathalyzer will be administered in a private area, away from other students.

6. The student will have two opportunities to take the breathalyzer. The initial test may be administered at any time. A second test will be conducted fifteen minutes after the first test has been administered. The results of the breathalyzer test(s) will be documented and attached to the observation checklist.
7. If a student does not pass the breathalyzer, his/her parents will be notified and must come to pick them up. If a parent/guardian cannot be reached the student will be placed in protective custody by the police department in the town where the event is located until a parent/guardian can pick up the student. The Methuen Police will be notified if the student is still in possession of alcohol.
8. Students who test positive for alcohol or refuse to take the breathalyzer test upon determination that there is reasonable cause to suspect that they have consumed alcohol will be subject to all school rules relating to the use and/or possession of alcohol. Any student suspected of using, possessing or distributing drugs or alcohol will be referred to the principal or designee. If the student is determined to be in violation, the student will be suspended from school and/or co-curricular activities for a period of up to ten (10) days. The superintendent, principals, parents and police will be notified.

LEGAL REF.: MGL 272: 40A

Methuen Public Schools: Adopted May 9, 2016

SMOKING/TOBACCO USE *(Please refer to School Committee Policy ADC)*

Smoking by students and all other individuals is not permitted in or near any Methuen public school or elsewhere at a school-sponsored function. Condoning smoking by young people on school grounds would be imprudent and wrong for legal, ethical, moral, psychological, physiological, pedagogical, and economic reasons

The Education reform Act of 1993 requires all public schools to be smoke free. Pursuant to Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Massachusetts General Law, the following Policy on Tobacco Products has been adopted by the Methuen School Committee. The Methuen Public Schools, supported by the Methuen School Committee are committed to having a smoke and tobacco free environment. Therefore, the possession or use of any tobacco product within the school building, school facilities, school grounds, or on school buses by individuals is prohibited at all times. **Also, any student who is in close proximity of other students who are smoking may be subject to disciplinary action.** Cigarettes, lighters, and other smoking paraphernalia will be confiscated.

USE OF TOBACCO/VAPORIZERS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS-Definitions

- School: Public primary, secondary, and vocational schools located in Methuen
- School – Sponsored Activity: An activity at least partially funded or controlled by a school or a parent-teacher organization to which students are invited and which occurs off school grounds such as a field trip, class picnic or prom.
- School Ground: Property owned or controlled by a school within 100 feet, including but not limited to school buildings, structures, open space, sports or recreational facilities whether enclosed or not, vehicles owned or leased for the purpose of transporting students, school driveways, and parking lots. School grounds shall not mean any university property, college property, or adult education facility except during the time that these areas house public primary, secondary or vocational school programs.
- School Personnel: A person who performs services for a public school in Methuen, including but not limited to principals, associate principals, teachers, teacher's aides, school counselors, coaches, assistant coaches, school nurses and therapists, cafeteria workers, administrative staff, janitorial staff, volunteers and interns.

- Student: A person enrolled at any primary or secondary school in Methuen.
- Tobacco Product: Cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, bidis, snuff, or tobacco in any of its forms, or any product containing tobacco or nicotine (including but not limited to e-cigarettes, vaporizers, or other nicotine-delivery devices). Possession of a nicotine-delivery device, including but not limited to vaporizers, is a violation of this policy. This also includes any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes, whether or not that device contains tobacco.
- Tobacco Use: The inhaling, exhaling, chewing or burning of any form of tobacco. Additionally, if an administrator witnesses tobacco smoke coming from a lavatory stall, he will anticipate tobacco use.
- Visitor: A person on school grounds who is not a student or school personnel.

TOBACCO PRODUCT USE PROHIBITED

No student, school personnel, or visitor shall use a tobacco product at any time while on school grounds or at school-sponsored activity as defined above.

IDENTIFICATION BADGE POLICY

Safety and security are a top priority at Methuen High School. In order to promote safety and security, and to facilitate student identification, all students and school personnel, in accordance with Methuen School Committee Policy, must have ID badges. Identification badges may be used for student use of the media center, for entrance into the lavatories and cafeteria areas of the school, and for signing in tardy.

Policies concerning wearing and possession of ID badges:

- All high school students and employees will have ID badges.
- Any unauthorized person on school property who has not registered at the front desk and obtained a visitor's badge will be considered a trespasser and will be dealt with according to the current town statutes and school policy.

PROHIBITED EQUIPMENT

The administration recognizes the allure and the necessity for young adults to own cell phones and other electronic devices. However, these items, when in use, create major distractions and concerns in an academic setting. The school's policy on electronic devices supports the educational mission of Methuen High School and is written in the best interest of our students and staff.

The use of electronic devices during or between classes is prohibited and devices **will be confiscated**. Additionally, **earphones must not be visible during the school day. It is advisable for students to leave such items at home.** If seen or heard, electronic devices **will be confiscated**. **Parents will be required to meet with their student's respective associate principal to retrieve confiscated items.**

In the case of **cell phones**, students may bring them to school at their own risk, although their use is prohibited. **Cell phones must be turned off and not visible during school hours or they will be confiscated.** Parents **should not** call or text their child during school hours. The main office is happy to take essential messages and deliver them to students. Likewise, students have access to school phones if they need to call home. For a first offense, students may retrieve their phone at the conclusion of the school day. For subsequent offenses, parents will be required to meet with the administrator to collect the phone.

The school is not liable for electronic devices that are lost, stolen, or damaged on school property.

- **All confiscated contraband will be held in the office of the School Resource Officer at the High School.**

DINING ROOM REGULATIONS

Students can either purchase food at a nominal cost or bring a “bag lunch” from home. The use of the cafeteria is a privilege, not an automatic right. Students are expected to be courteous and respectful to cafeteria servers, custodians, teachers, and other students, as well as to maintain proper decorum while eating. **All students seated at a lunch table are responsible for leaving the table clean and free of trash at the conclusion of the lunch block.** Additional lunch regulations are as follows:

1. Lunch line must be single file-no line hopping.
 2. Students must buy their own lunch.
 3. No food or other objects should be thrown.
 4. All food and drink must be consumed within the cafeteria or at the designated Senior Tables.
 5. Food and/or Drink delivery is strictly prohibited. Food and/or drink delivered will be discarded at the expense of the student.”
- **Failure to adhere to dining room regulations will result in disciplinary action and possibly the loss of cafeteria privileges.**

School Lunch will be FREE of cost to all students for the 2021-2022 school year

CORRIDOR PASSES

If it becomes necessary for a student to leave the classroom, a corridor pass **must** be issued by the teacher **and filled out completely**. **Bathroom passes are to be used for bathroom use only**. In order to maximize time on learning and cut down on distractions in the corridors, **teachers should limit passes to lockers during class time**. If a student needs medical attention, he/she must request a pass to the nurse from his/her classroom teacher.

LOCKERS *(Please refer to School Committee Policy JCAB)*

Students are to use only the locker assigned to them, and should not divulge the combination to anyone. Student lockers are school property and should be treated as such. No materials should be affixed in or on lockers. **If a circumstance arises where an administrator requires access to a locker, the lock will be removed. The school is not held liable for the cost of the lock.**

STUDENT SEARCHES

ACCESS TO STUDENT LOCKERS

For the convenience of students, the Methuen Public Schools does provide for the assignment of lockers to students for the purpose of storing lawful materials. For the purpose of this policy, the same guidelines that apply to student lockers will apply to student desks, physical education lockers or any property of the Methuen Public Schools that is, from time to time, put to student use.

It is the policy of the Methuen Public Schools that student lockers are the sole property of the Methuen Public Schools and are, as stated above, made available for the convenience of students and are not their private property. Further, the Methuen Public Schools asserts that it maintains control of lockers and students have no expectation of privacy in their school lockers. .

Consistent with this policy, students are hereby notified that school officials maintain the right to inspect and/or exercise their right to access and search lockers for any reason without the consent of the student. School officials have the right to cut off any non-school issued lock to a locker.

Revised & Readopted: September 9, 2019

Methuen Public Schools

SEARCH OF STUDENTS AND THEIR BELONGINGS

1. Search of a student will only be performed, and seizure of a student's belongings will only take place, if there exists reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The search will be conducted in a manner reasonably related to its objectives and will not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. Whenever a personal search is deemed necessary, the student shall be advised of the reason for the impending search prior to its implementation. Search of a student may extend to articles of clothing such as pockets; and to the removal and search of outer garments such as hats/caps/headgear, jackets, coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, or shoes; and to items such as pocketbooks, lunch bags, book bags, athletic bags, or backpacks.
2. Search of a student's belongings will only be performed, and seizure of a student's belongings will only take place, if there exists reasonable suspicion that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The search will be conducted in a manner reasonably related to its objectives and will not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. When reasonably possible, search of a student's belongings will be conducted in the presence of a second school official. Use of canines on the exterior of vehicles or other items to detect odors do not constitute a search.
3. Should a student refuse to voluntarily comply with a request for a search, the student will remain under adult supervision until parents, and, if necessary, police, can arrive at school to assist, as appropriate, in the investigation.
4. Search of a student or his/her belongings in accordance with the above policy may take place at school or at any school sponsored event on or off school property or during the transportation to such event.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

1. FIRE DRILLS

Evacuation plans are in place and posted in every area of the building. When the fire alarm sounds, students are to follow directions given by their teachers. Once the students have left the building, they should proceed away from the facility to permit firefighters free and unrestricted access to the building. Students will be permitted to re-enter the building when administration determines that it is safe to return or when the drill is completed.

2. ALICE PROCEDURES

Methuen High School, in conjunction with local law enforcement, has an Emergency Management Plan in place in the event that an emergency situation occurs in the building that necessitates mobilizing to a lock-down situation or an evacuation of the building. To familiarize students and staff with these procedures, several simulations are conducted during the school year.

Keeping our students safe, both physically and emotionally, is of paramount importance at Methuen High School. Once the school day has begun, all outside doors are locked. Visitors to the building are buzzed in and must sign in at the main office. Teachers and administrators supervise during passing time and during lunches. There is a full-time School Resource Officer on duty and the school grounds have regular security checks.

SCHOOL DANCES

All school rules, regulations, and policies are in effect at any dance, semi-formal, or prom. Only MHS students will be permitted to attend dances held at the school, but students may invite guests from other schools to semi-formals and proms held off-campus with the understanding that they are responsible for the behavior of their guest. A **Guest Contract** (see appendix A) is available from the associate principals and must be submitted for approval, two weeks prior to the school event. Students attending dances are expected to dress appropriately and to extend to each other, to chaperones, to wait staff, and to other individuals present at the event courtesy and respect. **Inappropriate displays of affection or provocative dance moves (i.e. grinding) will not be tolerated.**

***** As per adopted school policy to ensure a safe school environment, the administration at the high school can use breathalyzers during school sponsored events and functions. Any student, who is caught on school grounds or at a school function under the influence of alcohol and/or illegal drugs... (please refer to S.C. Policy #JCDAB) and (must comply with the district-wide ALCOHOL PROGRAM. This program includes a contract (see appendices [B and C](#)) and drug testing.**

SCHOOL BUS & SCHOOL BUS CONDUCT

Buses are a special service provided by the City of Methuen. Rules must be followed by bus riders so that the trips to and from school are safe and enjoyable for everyone. All school rules shall remain in effect on school buses and at school bus stops. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should be aware that the right to ride a school bus may be temporarily or permanently revoked if the "School Bus Code; General Rules for Student Conduct" or other school rules are violated. Anyone who violates these rules will not be able to ride the bus. If bad behavior on the bus or at the bus stop is severe, it is cause for a possible out-of-school suspension as well as a suspension from the privilege of riding the bus.

- **Please note that all buses may be equipped with either a video monitor or a hired monitor enabling school personnel to view/review information on activities on each bus as appropriate. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are not allowed to view videos due to student confidentiality laws.**

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are responsible for the safety of their children from the time they leave home in the morning, until the time they board the school bus; and at the end of the school day, from the time the school bus departs the bus stop and the children reach home. Once the child enters the school bus, the responsibility generally lies with the bus driver and the bus contractor.

For the safety and welfare of our students, we would remind you that Massachusetts law prohibits the unnecessary idling of motor vehicles on or within 100 feet of school property. M.G.L. c. 90, §16B prohibits operators of motor vehicles from allowing any motor vehicle to idle unnecessarily on school except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles. Fines of up to \$100 may be imposed for a first offense and \$500 for second and subsequent offenses.

If you have transportation concerns, you are welcome to call your School Principal, the School Districts' Central Administration Office at 978-722-6003 or Trombly Bus Company at 978-937-3422.

I. Student Eligibility

- A. Transportation shall be furnished by the Methuen Public Schools to:

1. High School and Upper School students, grades 5 through 12 living more than two miles from their assigned schools.
 2. Elementary school students, grades K through four, living more than 1 mile from their assigned schools.
- B. Eligibility distances, in all disputed cases, shall be measured from the end of the pupil's drive area to the entrance portal of the school by the most direct, traveled route. This traveled route may be roads or walkways.
- C. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) or other adults who are designated as chaperones may ride the bus during the school day for an educational field trip. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) may **not** enter school buses when buses are being used to transport children to and from school on their normal runs.

II. Bus Routes and Stops

- A. Routes will be planned so that a maximum number of children are picked up and discharged at the nearest spot to their home.
- B. Request for extension of existing routes should be submitted to the Central Administration Office at 978-722-6013. Criteria for granting such requests are as follows:
1. The distance between the home and the closest designated bus stop must exceed one mile. This traveled route may be roads or walkways.
 2. If the bus must turn around, a safe and adequate turning place must be available.
 3. The turn from the existing route and entrance back onto the existing route must be safe.
- C. Exceptions to the distance a pupil must live from the school or an established route may be made for disabled and special education pupils, or where the safety of the pupil is jeopardized by an exceptional hazard.
- D. Bus stops shall be located, whenever possible, at points where vision is unobstructed in both directions and room is available for children to stand off the traveled portion of the road while waiting for the bus. To provide minimum obstruction to traffic flow and minimum time to complete the run, the bus stops for all children shall be designated at least a quarter of a mile apart. Exceptions may be made, at the discretion of the Transportation provider and Central Administration Office at 978-722-6013 in concert with the Methuen Police Department, where unusual conditions exist.

III. School Bus Code: General Rules for Student Conduct (Policy JCDAD-R)

Bus drivers are in complete charge of school busses. Students are expected to cooperate with them in every way for their own safety as well as the safety of others. The bus driver must be obeyed at all times. Misconduct, carelessness and thoughtlessness are hazards to the safe operation of the school bus. Bussing is an integral part of the total school program; the driver, who is an adult in a position of authority within the Methuen Public Schools, must insist on appropriate behavior. All school rules remain in effect on the school bus.

1. **All grade K, 1 and 2 bus riders must be easily identified as to bus route number. Each child must wear a badge with his/her bus route number on it; these badges will be provided by each school. These Students must be picked up from their respective bus stops by a parent, guardian or older sibling, 5th grade or higher. If no one is there to receive the child, the child will be brought back to the school. In the event that school personnel are not available, the child will be brought to the central office until such time that a parent/guardian can pick up the child. At 5 PM, the close of the day at central office building, the child who is not picked up by an adult will be transported to the police station to await the arrival of the parent/guardian.**
2. Students should follow correct safety procedures when walking to and from a bus stop.
3. Students must be on time at bus stop locations and shall not play when waiting for the bus.

4. Students will enter and leave the bus at school loading stations and at street bus stops in an orderly fashion and in accordance with instructions, without haste and without loitering, without crowding and without pushing, with each student showing due regard for his/her own safety and the safety of others.
5. Students will go directly to an available seat upon entering the bus and remain seated until the bus has stopped.
6. Students shall refrain from shouting and other boisterous activity, shall refrain from talking to the bus driver while the bus is in motion except for emergencies, and shall keep their hands to themselves.
7. Students shall neither purposely nor carelessly destroy property nor deface the bus in any manner.
8. Students shall keep feet off the seats.
9. Students shall keep sharp objects off upholstery.
10. Students shall not extend arms or other parts of body out through the windows, and shall leave the windows alone unless instructed by the bus driver.
11. Students shall not throw objects about in the bus nor out through the windows.
12. Books and other property should be properly stowed on laps.
13. Students shall not smoke, light a match, cigarette lighter or other flammable object.
14. Students shall not fight, use indecent or abusive language or molest others.
15. Students shall not open the emergency door without authorization from the bus driver, school or other official, or unless an emergency exists, then students should follow standard bus evacuation drill procedures.
16. Students leaving the bus who cross the road must do so ten feet in front of the bus immediately after leaving the bus, after being signaled to do so by the bus driver.
17. A Bus Conduct Report will be issued to all students violating the School Bus Code with a copy given to the Parent(s)/Guardian(s), school Principal, and Bus Company.
18. Any student, while under suspension from riding his/her bus, is not allowed to board another bus. If a student does board another bus while under suspension, he/she will receive additional suspension of riding privileges.
19. Students boarding a bus with ice skates shall not be allowed to ride the bus unless the blades of the ice skates are suitably covered with skate guards or unless the ice skates are in an equipment bag.
20. Students may not eat, drink or chew gum on the bus.
21. All school Principals are to keep a record of School Bus Code infractions and shall send a written notification to Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of each violation and accompanying disciplinary action.

IV. For Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

1. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) should be reminded that Massachusetts law makes Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of non-emancipated children under age 17 and over age 7 years liable in a civil action for any willful act committed by their child which results in injury or death to another person or damage to the property of another up to the amount of \$5,000.00.
2. The school bus driver and the bus company must conform to all applicable laws, rules and regulations of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts General Laws and Regulations of the Department of Education Pupil Transportation Guide and Registry of Motor Vehicles pertinent to transportation of students, City of Methuen, and the Methuen School Committee, including that which prohibits bus drivers from smoking on bus. If you believe that a violation exists, or if you have a complaint involving a bus driver or the bus company, please notify the school Principal or Central Administration Office at 978-722-6013 immediately.
3. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are reminded that, although a student's riding privileges are suspended, he or she is required to attend school on time.

V. Discipline for Violation of Bus Conduct Rules or Other School Rules

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of children whose pattern of behavior and misconduct on school busses and at bus stops or walking to and from bus stops endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other students will be notified that their children face the loss of riding privileges in accordance with the Parent/Student Handbook school discipline code and applicable bus conduct rules.

- The bus driver must issue a Bus Conduct Report to the building Principal about any students violating the School Bus Code. Parent(s)/Guardian(s) are to be notified prior to a bus suspension and sent a copy of the Principal's action for the violation. The building Principal, using the Parent/Student Handbook school discipline code and applicable School Bus Code: General Rules for Student Conduct as a guideline is to determine an appropriate consequence based upon the child's overall behavior.

The Parent(s)/Guardian(s) of a pupil who has been denied the right to ride a school bus for disciplinary reasons may appeal to the building Principal.

It is the Parent(s)/Guardian(s)'s responsibility to provide transportation to and from school for that pupil for the period of suspension.

VI. Transportation Disciplinary Guidelines

These guidelines have been broken down into two levels. The guidelines are intended to serve as a general guideline and shall not limit the authority of school official to impose more or less severe sanctions dependent on the individual circumstances. These guidelines will be applied in conjunction with the Methuen Public School's *Student/Parent Handbook* policy.

BUS BEHAVIOR INFRACTIONS

LEVEL II INFRACTIONS	LEVEL I INFRACTIONS
Improper boarding/departing procedures Unnecessary noise Refusing to obey the driver Improper bus line behavior Littering Riding another bus route without authorization from the building Principal. Other School Bus Code: General Rules for Student Conduct infractions as reported by the bus officials	Smoking, lighting matches or playing with hazardous items on the bus Fighting, pushing, tripping Vandalism Failure to remain seated Other behavior relating to safety Bullying/harassment behaviors Tampering with bus equipment Throwing object in or out of the bus Spitting Use of obscenities or abusive language toward bus occupants Other School Bus Code: General Rules for Student Conduct infractions as reported by the bus officials

Below are the guidelines that Principals/Administrators will use to determine appropriate bus behavior consequences.

BUS BEHAVIOR CONSEQUENCES

	1ST REPORT	2ND REPORT	3RD REPORT	4TH OR MORE REPORTS
LEVEL II	•Warning	•Warning or 1-3 day bus suspension	•Warning or 1-5 day bus suspension	•Warning or up to a 20 day bus suspension

LEVEL I	•Warning or up to a 20 day bus suspension	•Up to a 20 day bus suspension	•Up to a 20 day bus suspension •Possible loss of bus service for the remainder of the school year	•20 day minimum bus suspension •Possible loss of bus service for the remainder of the school year
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Note: Anytime a student defaces a bus, or any part thereof, or destroys property, in the principal's discretion, restitution must be made by his/her Parent(s)/Guardian(s) and the student may **not** be allowed on the bus after his/her suspension has been served and until such restitution is made.

Revised & Readopted December 9, 2019
Methuen Public Schools

SERVICES

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

Every student at Methuen High School is assigned to a guidance counselor who will generally follow him/her through his/her high school career. Counselors are available to students by appointment or as needed when a student is experiencing academic, social, or personal issues. Counselors also assist students with scheduling, career planning, and the college application process. . Parents are welcome to call between 7:00 a.m. and 1:55 p.m. on school days to speak with their child's counselor or to arrange for a conference.

SCHEDULING

Counselors meet with high school students in the spring to build schedules for the following year. Teachers make recommendations for the courses that are appropriate for the student

STUDENT RECORDS

The Methuen Public Schools complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to Student Records. Those laws and regulations are designed to ensure a parent's and eligible student's rights to access, inspect, and to request amendment of the child's student record.

The Massachusetts Student Record regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) apply to educational records maintained by a school on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into 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 system for at least sixty (60) years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extra-curricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of major parent and student rights regarding their student records:

Inspection of Record - A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen (14) years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student within ten (10) days of the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. In the event the parent/student requests copies of a student record, the District may charge the parents/student for said copies at the District rate.

Confidentiality of Record - With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student, and authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to information in the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent or the student.

Amendment of Record - The parent and student have the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, with limited exception under state and federal law, the parent and student have the right to request that information of the record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

Directory Information - Federal law requires that the District release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. In addition, the District may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances, parents may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying their school building office in writing by the end of September of each school year.

Destruction of Records - The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves 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. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

Transfer of Records – In accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g), it is the practice of the Methuen Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to enroll, or already has enrolled in another public-school district, if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. The parent or eligible student has the right to receive a copy of the school record that is forwarded to the new school.

Non-Custodial Parents - Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the student) of any public-school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first-class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where

school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent. M.G.L. c.71, §34H, 603 CMR 23.07.

Third Party Access - Authorized school personnel, to include: (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the Evaluation Team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary.

Complaints - A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901, (202) 260-3887 or with the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, (781) 338-3300. If you have any questions regarding this notice or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

TRANSFERS

It is the policy of the Methuen Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who transfers to another public school district upon request of the receiving district.

MEDIA CENTER

The media center is an information center that provides up-to-date print, non-print and electronic information resources. The media staff provides large and small group instruction and one-on-one instruction that teach students research and library and research information skills that will enable them to access, evaluate, and use information effectively. The Media Center is open to students from 7:00a.m. until 1:55p.m. (with the exception of lunch block). Monday through Friday.

Student Use of the Media Center

1. Individual students may obtain passes for media center use during class time from a subject teacher who has assigned work that requires the use of the media center.
2. The student is responsible for making sure the pass is properly filled out and must present the pass at the circulation desk upon arrival to the media center. A pass on which the name of more than one student appears will not be honored.
3. Passes to use the media center should not be requested from substitute teachers.
4. While in the media center, the students are expected to follow the behavioral expectations that are prominently posted.

SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY

A. Internet AUP still in force

This Methuen Public Schools policy is adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the School District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the school district's technological resources.

B. General Concerns

The Methuen Public Schools recognizes the proliferation and, in some instances, usefulness, of online conversation between teachers and students and/or their parents or guardians. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk, without care and planning, that the lines between one's professional life and personal life will be blurred. Our staff should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise. Should an educator "friend" a student on Facebook, subscribe to a student's "twitter" account, regularly engage in email "chat" with a student, exchange text messages with students or engage in other electronic communication, the school district is concerned, and the educator should be concerned, that such activities may undermine the educator's authority to maintain discipline, encourage inappropriate behaviors and compromise the educator's ability to remain truly objective with his or her students.

In addition, any online communication using one's own personal resources, as opposed to school district resources, compromises the teacher's, as well as the school district's ability to retain public records in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth's public records laws. The law requires public employees who send, receive or maintain records in their capacity as public employees, to retain, disclose and dispose of such records in compliance with strict provisions of the public records law. This law applies whether or not the record is in the form of a paper document or an electronic communication. When staff members communicate through school-based resources, such as staff email or school sponsored web pages, such records are retained and archived through the school's information technology department. If, however, a teacher communicates outside of these resources, such information is not retained. The burden falls on the teacher to comply with public records laws when using personal email or social network accounts to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians.

C. Expectations of Staff

With these concerns in mind, the Methuen Public Schools has instituted this "Social Networking Policy," and announces its expectations for staff members' use of social networks such as Facebook, Linked-in, Twitter, personal email accounts, text message features of cell phones, use of blogs, and other electronic or technologically based communication systems.

1. Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, teachers should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, Facebook requires account holders to take specific steps to "privatize" the information they place online. You must educate yourself to these features of Facebook or any other social networking site you select. You will be responsible should any information you intended to be "private" becomes "public" due to your own ignorance of the features of the social network you have decided to use or your failure to properly use such features.
2. You must also know that any information you share privately with a recipient could be re-distributed by such recipient, without your knowledge or consent. The same principles you apply to in person communication should be applied to online conversation: use discretion, and do not

place your trust in individuals who have not proven themselves trustworthy. In essence, nothing you post online is ever truly “private.”

3. The school district expects you to keep the line between your professional life and your personal life clearly drawn at all times. There is no reason why this cannot be done, even in light of the proliferation of social networking sites. All that is required is some forethought before using social networking for both your professional and personal life, to be sure that these lines never become blurred. For example, if the district does not maintain a web portal for staff to communicate outside of school hours as necessary with students and families, and an educator wishes to establish a Facebook or personal email account through which he or she will communicate with students, he or she should establish a Facebook identity and email identity that is separate from his/her “personal” Facebook identity or personal email account. He/she should only use his/her educational Facebook account or educational email account to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians on matters directly related to education. The “friends” associated with such educational Facebook account should only be members of the educational community, such as administrators, teachers, students, and parents of such students. It is strongly recommended that teachers will reject friend requests from individuals who do not fit into any of these categories.
4. At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, staff members will always adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personal and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information to retrieval by those third parties. For example, through an educational Facebook account, a teacher may not post confidential student information on the “wall,” the “information” section, or through any part of that Facebook account that would be accessible to other of the Teacher’s Facebook “friends” associated with that account. If a teacher wishes to communicate privately with a student through the educational Facebook account, such communication shall be conveyed only through the private email/message feature of Facebook, so that only the student may view the message and respond to it.
5. Teachers are encouraged to communicate with students and parents on educational matters only, and only through school-based resources, such as school-provided email or web portal accounts. Use of one’s personal email account or social networking account to discuss school business with students and parents is discouraged. It should be noted that, just because a teacher uses his/her personal email as opposed to a school email account, this does not shield such email from the provisions of the public records law or from discovery in litigation. It only prevents the archiving of such messages through the school district’s automatic email archiving system. We again remind teachers that information sent or received by them, even through personal email or social network accounts, that are related to their capacity as a school employee, are still subject to public records retention, exemption and disclosure requirements.
6. If a teacher conveys school related messages to students and parents on his/her private account, he/she should save such email or any communication conveyed through a social networking site, or print and save a paper copy of such email or other online communication, and file it, and regard its privacy, as he/she would any other document concerning that student. The teacher should forward copies of any such emails or online communications to his or her school based email account so that it can be properly retained and archived in compliance with the requirements of the public records law. Any document created or received by a public employee

in his or her capacity as such is subject to retention, and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.

7. No matter what medium of communication a teacher selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate teacher/student boundaries. You are a role model, not a student's friend, you are his/her teacher, and you should always conduct yourself in accordance with this understanding.
8. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a teacher's right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of your job duties. However, when you speak via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning your work, you are speaking as an employee and not as a citizen; restrictions may be placed upon your freedom to express yourself. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain your status as an educator who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in your classroom, and remain objective with respect to your students.
9. Teachers are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones, personal email accounts and personal Facebook accounts to communicate with students. Your communications with students, even if you do not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the school district to monitor as they arise out of your position as an educator. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school district or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose an employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Even if you are not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student that such contact is not outside of the school district's authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If your behavior is inappropriate, undermines your authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises your objectivity, or harms students, the school district reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior. A teacher may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians, as well as exposing the district to vicarious liability in certain instances.

At the same time, the district recognizes that, in limited cases, use of cell phone text messages or cell phone calls or emails outside of regular school hours may be reasonably necessary. For example, in connection with school sponsored events for which teachers serve as duly appointed advisors, they may need to convey messages in a timely manner to students and may not have access to school based email accounts, school provided telephones or school based web pages. In such limited circumstances, the district anticipates that teachers will make reasonable use of their cell phones or smart phones to convey time sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like.

10. Teachers may not access their personal email accounts or private Facebook accounts using school district computer resources.
11. If you are communicating as an employee of the district in your online communications, you must be aware that readers will assume you "speak for the school district." Therefore, all of your online communications, when you are actually acting on behalf of the district, or creating the appearance that you are doing so, must be professional at all times and reflect positively on the school district.

12. In the use of your Facebook account or other social networking site, you may not, without express permission from the superintendent of schools, use the school's logo, likeness or any school photographs or other property that belongs to the school.
13. References to "Facebook" are not included to limit application of their policy to use of that program. All online, electronic or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications.

Administrative Procedure #12-1

INTERNET AND INTRANET **ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY**

Introduction

The Methuen Public Schools (MPS) recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, collaborate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. Our goal is to promote educational excellence by encouraging and facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication. We are committed to helping students develop 21st century technology and communication skills. To that end, we provide the privilege of access to technologies for student and staff use.

Internet use that is integrated into the school curriculum fosters the development of research and information skills, encourages critical and higher level thinking, and provides expanded educational opportunities for both students and staff. While supporting the rights of students and staff to use all available tools, the Methuen Public Schools recognize that there is material on the internet that is objectionable or devoid of educational value in the context of a school setting. The Methuen Public Schools have taken steps to restrict access to inappropriate or controversial material. In addition to utilizing an internet content filter, MPS staff will closely supervise students' use of the internet.

Although guidelines cannot totally eliminate the possibility of inadvertent or intentional access to such information, we believe that they can significantly limit such possibilities. The Methuen Public Schools believe that the access to valuable resources on the Internet far outweighs the concerns that the users may procure material that is not consistent with the educational goals of the Methuen Public Schools, and we intend to maximize the Internet's educational value.

The Methuen Public Schools will insure that it adheres to the most recent Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requirements of 2001 by:

- implementing an Internet filter for the purpose of blocking access to visual depictions deemed obscene, child pornography, or harmful to minors. It may be disabled for adults engaged in bona fide research or other lawful purposes.
- providing for educating minors (in this case 'minors' refer to school aged children up to the age of 17) about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and cyber-bullying awareness and response.

This Acceptable Use Policy outlines the guidelines and behaviors that all users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally owned devices on the school campus, including:

- The MPS network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Users are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources can result in disciplinary action.
- MPS makes a reasonable effort to ensure users' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

Technologies Covered

MPS may provide the privilege of Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, and more. This Acceptable Use Policy applies to both school owned technology equipment utilizing the MPS network, the MPS Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections accessed from school owned devices at any time. This Acceptable Use Policy also applies to privately owned devices accessing the MPS network, the MPS Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections while on school property. As new technologies emerge, MPS will seek to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document cover all available technologies now and into the future, not just those specifically listed or currently available.

Usage Policies

All technologies provided by the district are intended for education purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics as well as the spirit of this document: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; don't try to get around technological protection measures; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know.

Web Access

MPS provides its users the privilege of access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. Access to the Internet will be restricted as required to comply with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely.

Users are expected to respect the web filter as a safety precaution and shall not attempt to circumvent the web filter when browsing the Internet. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate is based solely on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on whether a website has been blocked or not. If a user believes a site is unnecessarily blocked, the user should submit a request for website review through the email link provided on all blocked pages.

Email

MPS may provide users with the privilege of email accounts for the purpose of school related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies. If users are provided with email accounts, the account(s) should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origins; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful,

courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and as a school department, all email communications are archived for seven (7) years.

All faculty and staff e-mail communications through the Infinite Campus Portal “on file” parent e-mail:

1. must first receive written authorization from the Superintendent to send the e-mail if said event is not school sanctioned or city sanctioned.
2. must send any e-mail regarding non-city sanctioned or other non-school sanctioned events to the “on file” parent e-mail(s) immediately prior to or simultaneously with the same e-mail that will be sent to the student.

Technology Specialists who operate the system have access to all mail, including deleted messages. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities. All communications and information accessible via the network should be considered public property; however, the use of another person’s intellectual property without that individual’s prior written approval or authorization is prohibited. The school district will completely and periodically delete information from the system.

Legal Implications of Electronic Mail (Email)

For the purpose of this policy email is defined as messages created and received on an electronic mail system. The email message may be text or word processing documents, spreadsheets or other data compilations transmitted through such a system.

Email created or received by an employee of a government unit is a public record. In Massachusetts, the term “public record” is broadly defined to include all documentary materials or data created or received by any officer or employee of any governmental unit, regardless of physical form or characteristics. G.L. c. 4, sec. 7(26). Email is therefore a public record and subject to the requirements of the Public Records Law G. L. C. 66. Email messages are subject to public access through the Public Records Law G. L. C. 66. Sec.10. A determination as to whether an email message is exempt from disclosure depends upon the content of the message. G. L.C. 4. Sec. 7(26)(a-m).

Email messages may be sought through the discovery process in litigation and may be admissible in evidence. Like all electronically created and stored records, email is subject to the rules of evidence and a judge will rule on its admissibility.

Refer to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Public Records Division SPR- Bulletin No. 1-99 dated February 16, 1999 for additional information.

Network Accounts

Do not use another individual’s account or password. Do not give your password to others. Attempts to log-on to the system as another user may result in cancellation of user privileges.

Network Use Limitations

The district’s computer network may not be used to disseminate commercial or personal advertisements, solicitations, promotions, destructive code (e.g., viruses, self- replicating programs, etc.), or any other unauthorized materials. Staff and students may not use the school system’s Internet connection to download games or other entertainment software or to play non-educational games over the Internet. Additionally, you may not use the computer network to display, store or send (by email or any other form of electronic communication such as bulletin boards, chat rooms, Usenet groups, etc.) material that

is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory or otherwise inappropriate or unlawful.

Computer resources are not unlimited. Network bandwidth and storage capacity have finite limits, and all users connected to the network have a responsibility to conserve these resources. As such, the user must not deliberately perform acts that waste computer resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. These acts include but are not limited to, streaming music or videos for non-educational purposes, sending chain letters, spending, playing online games, or otherwise creating unnecessary loads on network traffic associated with nonbusiness-related uses of the Internet.

Social/Web 2.0 / Collaborative Content

Recognizing the benefits that collaboration brings to education, MPS may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally- identifying information online.

Mobile Devices Policy

MPS may provide users with mobile computers or other devices to promote learning outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use policies when using school devices off the school network as on the school network. Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution; these are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to your care. Users should immediately report any loss, damage, or malfunction to IT staff. Users may be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse. Use of school issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.

Personally-Owned Devices Policy

Students should keep personally-owned devices (including laptops, tablets, smart phones, cell phones, e-readers, iPod touch) turned off and put away during school hours—unless in the event of an emergency or as instructed by a teacher or staff for educational purposes. Devices are to be used as part of classroom lessons upon teacher approval, and they should not be used in between classes or in the hallways or other common areas. Because of security concerns, when personally-owned mobile devices are used on campus, they must be used over the school network. Access to cellular connections is strictly prohibited. Gaming devices are prohibited.

All devices are on a use at your own risk policy. The School District is not accountable for loss, damage, theft, etc.

Please remember, this Acceptable Use Policy applies to privately-owned devices accessing the MPS network, the MPS Internet connection, and private networks/ Internet connections while on school property. Virus protection for PC's is required.

Users who cannot access the MPS network or who may have technical issues with their technology tool need to take care of this issue by working with the user's manual that came with the device outside of the classroom. These are not MPS devices and the district is not allocating resources at this time to troubleshoot issues.

Security

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or attempt to download any programs to help remove the virus.

You are responsible for any misuse of your account, even if the inappropriate activity was committed by another person. Therefore, you must take steps to ensure that others do not gain unauthorized access to your account. In addition, you may not use your account to breach security of another account or attempt to gain unauthorized access to another network or server.

Your password provides access to your account. Sharing your password and account access with unauthorized users is prohibited. You should take care to prevent others from using your account by keeping your password secure since you will be held responsible for such use. Do not leave an unsupervised computer logged on to the network.

Downloads

Users should not download or attempt to download or run .exe programs over the school network or onto school resources without express permission from IT staff. You may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for education purposes.

Netiquette

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner. Users should recognize that among the valuable content online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should only use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. Users should remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want students, parents, teachers, or future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

Plagiarism

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author. (Please refer to page 17)

Personal Safety

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet in real life someone they meet online without parental permission. If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

MPS makes an attempt to protect private information but users who submit personal information online do so at their own risk.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyber-stalking are all examples of cyber-bullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyber-bullying can be a crime. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

Social Media Policy

The district has a separate Social Media Policy that applies to all staff, and may have implications for students. By signing the Acceptable Use Policy users are acknowledging they have been made aware of the Social Media Policy and agree to abide with the requirements of the Social Media Policy. Violations of the Social Media Policy are in effect violations of the Acceptable Use Policy.

Vandalism

Any verified acts of vandalism will result in cancellation of privileges. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy the data of another user, the Methuen Public Schools' network, or other networks that are connected to our system through the Internet. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.

Privacy

Staff and students are given access to computers and the Internet to assist them in furthering the educational process. Users should have no expectation of privacy in anything they create, store, send or receive using the district's computer equipment. In addition the district, through its designees, reserves the right to monitor, examine, evaluate and disclose all aspects of the technology resources and their use.

Methuen Public Schools is committed to protecting private information of staff and students contained within emails or other online transmissions.

While we cannot guarantee the privacy or confidentiality of information within electronic documents, which is public information, the following procedure will help to protect the privacy and confidentiality of such information.

1. Remember when sending emails regarding students to use ONLY the student identification numbers and the first initial of both their first and last name eg: John Smith would be J.S.#12345.
2. Remember when sending emails regarding staff to use ONLY the staff member's initials and job e.g.: John Smith teacher would be J.S. teacher.

Examples of Acceptable Use

I will:

- ✓ Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- ✓ Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- ✓ Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- ✓ Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- ✓ Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- ✓ Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- ✓ Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.

- ✓ Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- ✓ Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- ✓ Help to protect the security of school resources.
- ✓ This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies

Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will not:

- ✓ Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- ✓ Attempt to find inappropriate images or content; intent to seek inappropriate images or content is a violation of this Acceptable Use Policy.
- ✓ Create a personal mobile “hot-spot” or use a “proxy site” for the purpose of circumventing network safety measures and filtering tools.
- ✓ Create, distribute or deploy multi-user servers or gaming software on or within the MPS network.
- ✓ Engage in cyber-bullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- ✓ Use of obscene, inflammatory, harassing, threatening, or abusive language or images
- ✓ Try to find ways to circumvent the school’s safety measures and filtering tools; intent to circumvent safety measures and filtering tools is a violation of this Acceptable Use Policy.
- ✓ Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- ✓ Plagiarize content I find online.
- ✓ Post or otherwise disclose personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- ✓ Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- ✓ Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- ✓ Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- ✓ Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn’t intended for my use.
- ✓ Access materials or use email for nonacademic purposes or for purposes that are not approved by the staff member in charge
- ✓ Tamper with data and files being used by others.
- ✓ Use school accounts for personal messages, political lobbying, union messages, gambling, or business transactions, advertising, or commercial (offering or providing products or services) activities.
- ✓ Use or transmit materials that violates copyright laws

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

Limitation of Liability

MPS will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

While MPS employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

MPS will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

Violations of this Acceptable Use Policy

Violations of this policy may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension or termination of network, technology, or computer privileges;
- Notification to parents;
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities;

- Employment disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment;
- Legal action and/or prosecution.

The Methuen Public Schools will provide staff with Internet guidelines and training and support in the appropriate and effective use of the internet. The school system will inform parents about Internet guidelines through the use of letters, school newsletters, and handbooks. Additionally, the Methuen Public Schools will continually evaluate tools and software which can potentially assist staff in implementing guidelines, effectiveness, manageability, and any cost for initial purchase and upgrades will be considered.

LEGAL REF: Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), MSC Policy # IFBEC and MSC Policy #IFBED
Administration Procedure #13-2

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Methuen High School Nurse's office is staffed full time by at least one registered nurse. The nurse divides her time between coordinating nursing services and administering to the medical needs of students. The nurse is the custodian of student medical records, including emergency cards, which must include current contact information in the event that parents/guardians need to be contacted during the school day. Over the counter medication may be dispensed at the discretion of the school nurse to students as per order of the consulting physician with the written consent of the parent/guardian. Consent is renewed annually. Please refer to the medication policy for students who require prescription and non-prescription medication during school hours.

A Letter from the Methuen High School Nurses....

Dear Parents:

As we begin a new school year, we would like to share some thoughts with you regarding your child's health status.

We believe that fostering good health habits in our students results in a decreased number of illnesses. Some of these positive health habits include proper nutrition, exercise and appropriate hours of sleep. As seasons change, please encourage your child to wear appropriate clothing for the current weather conditions.

If your child shows signs of illness, such as fever or vomiting, please keep him/her home from school. The most contagious period of viruses is usually the first 24-48 hours.

Students must stay home from school if they have the following:

1. A rash or skin condition not diagnosed by a physician.
2. A fever above 100 degrees.
3. Uncontrolled vomiting and/or diarrhea
4. Inflamed eyes, yellow or green drainage from eyes.
5. Bacterial infection not treated for 24 hours with antibiotics

On occasion, emergencies do occur. In such events, first aid will be administered by school staff. The responsibility for further treatment rests entirely with the parent/guardian and family physician. If your child is involved in a multi-student incident/event, you will receive a phone call from the school nurse and/or an administrator the same day. In cases of serious injury, an ambulance will be called to take the

child to the nearest hospital. Parents will receive a general notification at the end of each day for any unscheduled nurse visit.

It is extremely important that both the child and school staff know where to contact parents or some other responsible person in cases of emergency or illness. If your home address or working address, home telephone or emergency telephone number is changed, please update all information in the Infinite Campus Parent Portal.

Parents/guardians should inform the school authorities of any physical or emotional concerns their child may have so that adequate provisions may be made in his/her school program.

Sincerely,
Methuen High School Nurses

Each year the school receives many requests to administer access to children. The Methuen School Committee has an explicit policy on medication administration, intended to protect children, to which we strictly support and adhere. The policy is as follows:

POLICY REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION TO STUDENTS

Medications~~whether prescription or non-prescription, shall be administered to students on a daily basis by the school nurse; and/or those delegated by her in accordance with 105 CMR 210. .

In the event that a student requires non-emergency medication during the course of a school day, such medication must be administered by the school nurse or the parent/guardian, or delegate. The parent/guardian must notify the school nurse of such need ahead of time. If the parent is to administer medication it must be given at the school's nurse's office. Medication to be administered by the school nurse must be brought into the nurse's office at the beginning of the school day and must remain in the office for the duration of treatment. Initial doses of any newly prescribed medication will not be given at school. Students are not to administer medication to themselves, except as approved by the school nurse and their parents, nor are they to possess medication during the school day without the knowledge and approval of the school nurse. In order for a student to carry an inhaler, the school nurse will require a permission slip signed by the student's parent/guardian and physician.

If a student has a condition which requires emergency medication such as Epi-pen or Glucagon, such medication will be administered by the school nurse if she is present. Epi-pens may be administered by a delegated staff member in accordance with Methuen Public School's Epi-Pen Policy and 105 CMR 210.100. If a student has a condition which requires medication it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to do the following:

- A. Provide the medication in its original container with a pharmacy label including the student's name, name of the medication, dosage, and instructions for administering, prescription number, and physician's name.
- B. Insure that the medication is sufficient in quantity and is replaced when necessary.
- C. Sign and submit, at least annually, to the school nurse, a standardized authorization, which may be obtained from the nurse's office, to be signed by the prescribing physician and to include all the information in "A" above.
- D. Parent or guardian must provide controlled substances in an amount sufficient (usually 30-day supply) to administer medication to child without disruption in the child's daily routine. They are to be counted by the parent/guardian in the presence of the school nurse and co-signed.
- E. Parents must bring in and pick up medication.

Non-prescription medication policy

As per standing orders by the “on call” school physician, select non-prescription medications (see Physician Standing Orders) shall be dispensed to school children. Parental consent may be obtained by telephone but must be followed by written permission. Consent is to be renewed annually. Students are not permitted to be in possession of non-prescription medication while in school without the written consent of parent and prior approval of the school nurse. There are very few medications that are necessary during school hours!

Revised & Readopted December 9, 2019

Methuen Public Schools

Health Screenings

In February 2009, the state of Massachusetts amended their regulations on Physical Examination of School Children, 105 CMR 200.00, to improve the screening and monitoring of the health assessment of children across the Commonwealth. Among other changes, the amended regulations require screening for height and weight and the recording and reporting of BMI (Body Mass Index) for all students in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. You may access the regulation, 105CMR 200.50, on the Mass Department of Public Health, School Health Services Unit. You may also contact your child’s school nurse with any questions or concerns.

Other Annual Screenings Include:

Vision in Grades K - 5, 7 and 10

Hearing in Grades K - 3, 7 and 10

Scoliosis in Grades 5 – 9

SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, all parents/guardians of students in our school are notified by means of this handbook of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be provided with a handbook at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Within the scope of the existing curriculum, the following courses have components that include issues of human sexual education or human sexuality issues:

Anatomy & Physiology	Health
Biology	Psychology
Environmental Science	Sociology

Under Massachusetts Law, you may:

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

SCHOOL INSURANCE

The high school maintains a group accident insurance policy. This insurance is available to all members of the student body at a minimal cost and is sold soon after school starts in the fall. It is particularly recommended that students enrolled in shop classes or in athletics be covered by school insurance. It is further recommended that students participating in physical education classes participate in the program. When a student insured under this plan is injured, he/she will be given a Claim form from the main office, which must be filled out by the parent and brought to the doctor or hospital. **The school merely offers the insurance to students and assumes no liability, either for the injury or the subsequent negotiation with the insurance company.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PHONE MESSAGES

In an effort to minimize interruptions to the learning environment, announcements over the public address system will be limited to essential messages and cancellations. **Parents who need to get a message to their child during the school day may call the school and the message will be delivered.** Since the student handbook prohibits cell phone use during the school day, **parents should not call students on cell phones from 7:15 a.m. to 1:55 p.m.**

FUNDRAISING: No fundraising by students for the school or for any organization is permitted without written approval of the Principal or his/her designee.

HOMEBOUND INSTRUCTION

Home instruction is available for students who are unable to attend school due to a temporary or prolonged illness. A minimum of four hours per week can be arranged at home or in the hospital by contacting the guidance department. Although home-bound instruction cannot replicate the in-school classroom experience, it can be beneficial to prevent students from falling behind in curriculum.

TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER MATERIALS

Textbooks, iPad (\$400), iPad repair (\$45), wire cable (\$10), brick (\$10), cover (\$20), library books, magazines, manuals, and other printed educational materials are on loan from Methuen High School and remain the property of the school system and the town. These materials should be kept in good condition and returned when called for by the staff. **Students are financially responsible for all lost, stolen, or damaged educational materials issued to them.**

STUDENT SAFETY AND WELFARE:

All professional staff are informed annually of their obligations to report cases of child abuse and neglect as specified in M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A-51F and M.G.L. c. 71, § 37L.

INTERVENTION PROGRAMS:

Methuen High School offers alternative education options for students who need a different setting than the traditional day program and may be at risk of not being promoted to the next grade level. Seniors who successfully complete the Methuen High School graduation requirements via any of the alternative education options described below and meet the Standards for Competency

Determination as outlined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education are eligible to receive a Methuen High School diploma.

ALPHA:

ALPHA is an alternative education program at Methuen High School designed generally for students in grades 10, 11, or 12. It is a full year program that offers students courses in ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies, Physical Education and Health. The program includes a work component that allows students to receive credits for work experience. Students can be recommended for the ALPHA program by parents, administrators, counselors, and teachers. An interview with the administrator in charge is a prerequisite for entering the program. ALPHA classes run Monday through Thursday from 2:15 p.m. to 5:15 p.m. All classes are held at Methuen High School and are taught by Methuen High School teachers.

GradPoint: GradPoint is a self-paced web-based instructional program that may be offered to students who are short of the required credits to move on to the next grade level or are in need of completing credits for a graduation requirement. GradPoint courses can be assigned during the day program as part of a student's 7-credit schedule or as a standalone class."

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Students at Methuen High School are encouraged to participate in co-curricular activities. These experiences provide for valuable social contacts as well as enrichment to the standard curriculum offerings of the school. Methuen Public Schools' nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities are provided in such a manner as necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation.

Each student activity has a properly assigned faculty advisor who is present at all meetings and activities. Additional responsibilities of faculty advisors are outlined in the Co-Curricular Advisor Handbook.

CLUBS AND ACTIVITIES

Adopt-A-Grandparent

Bible Club

DECA

Green Club

Books and Bagels

Mock Trial

National Art Honor Society

History Honors Society

Blue and White Student Newspaper

Photo Club

Spanish Club

Stage Door 22 Theatre Club

Student Council

WinterGuard

Video Club

E-Sports

Best Buddies

BIPOC Club (**black, Indigenous and people of color**)

French Club

GSA (gender sexuality alliance)

Key Club

MultiCultural Club

National Honor Society

Science National Honors Society

Peer Leadership

SADD

Science Club

Strategy Games Club

Students Helping Others

Yearbook

Chick-Fil-A Leader Academy

Robotics

NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

The objectives of the Methuen High School Chapter of the National Honor Society are to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, stimulate a desire to render service, promote leadership, and develop character in students. Candidates shall have spent at least one semester at Methuen High School and shall be members of the junior or senior class. A student must have achieved a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.8 to be considered a candidate for the National Honor Society. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, and character. Candidates interested in acceptance to the National Honor Society must fill out and submit a student information form by the specified due date. A faculty council will review the student information forms to determine acceptance into the Methuen High School Chapter of the National Honor Society. Once selected for membership, students must maintain the standards by which they were selected. Any student falling below the standard will be disciplined based on the procedures outlined in the Methuen Chapter By-Laws.

All rules and regulations of the Methuen Chapter are specified in the Chapter By-Laws which are subordinate to and in accordance with the National Constitution.

ATHLETICS

Baseball	Cross Country	Gymnastics	Swimming
Track/winter/spring	Lacrosse Boys	Lacrosse Girls	Football
Basketball	Volleyball	Cheerleading	Golf
Soccer	Wrestling	Field Hockey	Ice Hockey
Softball	Tennis	Unified Basketball	Unified Track

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT

WELCOME TO METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

Your child is about to become a part of the Methuen High School athletic family, a group rich in tradition. For years Methuen High School athletics have performed with dedication, skill, intensity and desire. Our athletes have performed well at the high school, college, and even for a select few, professional level. More importantly, the vast majority of them have become contributing members of the community and caring members of their family. High school athletics can be a wonderful and exciting educational opportunity. It is our hope that your child will seize that opportunity, run with it, and make the most of it.

This booklet contains information regarding policies, practices, and regulations that govern the athletic program at Methuen High School. We believe that this information will help answer many of your questions regarding interscholastic athletics at Methuen High School.

Keep this booklet and refer to it whenever you have a question regarding your child's athletic experience. If you feel that your questions are not answered in this booklet, contact your child's coach first. He or she will be able to be more specific with an answer. If your concern has not been addressed, you should then contact the Athletic Director. Please do not let your questions or concerns go unanswered, or depend upon answers from people who are not empowered to give them.

We look forward to your association with the athletic program at Methuen High school. Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation.

Matthew Curran
Director of Athletics

PHILOSOPHY

The interscholastic athletic program at Methuen High School is committed to the Mission Statement of Methuen High School which states:

- A community of learners from a wide spectrum of backgrounds and personal histories enriches Methuen High School. Our school cultivates the skills and tools required for our students' success in the 21st Century, by offering an evolving curriculum that builds knowledge, by embracing the changing world, and by inspiring curiosity and creativity. Methuen High School encourages good citizenship and civic responsibility on the local, national, and global levels.

An educational institution is a vital part of a larger community, and so we work with our students' families and others who are invested in their future. We provide a safe and secure learning environment that allows our students to explore a range of interests, through a variety of programs and an array of facilities. We believe in education for all.

Athletics are an extension of the school day: Our coaches are charged with the responsibility to teach the values of accepting success graciously, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, tolerance, handling disappointment, leadership, organizational skills, participation within the rules, performing under pressure, persistence, work ethic, physical well-being, responsibility, sacrifice, self-discipline, social skills, striving towards excellence, taking instruction and teamwork. This obviously is an awesome responsibility and we will do our best to see that it is never taken lightly.

The athletic program strives to have all student-athletes play with "poise and class". This should be a very important part of the instruction that takes place at each practice session and game.

Tryouts are open to all students, providing they are in good standing academically, are good school citizens and are physically fit to participate. Participation in the program is a privilege which students earn by maintaining these standards.

SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Methuen Public Schools seeks to provide a safe return to academics and activities for all students after injury, particularly after a concussion. In order to effectively and consistently manage these injuries, a policy has been developed to aid in ensuring that concussed students are identified, treated, and referred appropriately, receive appropriate follow-up medical care during the school day, and are fully recovered prior to returning to activity. Finally, parental commitment in monitoring the status of the student at home is a critical component to the successful implementation of the policy.

The person overseeing the policy for Methuen High School is the Director of Athletics, Matthew Curran.

For further information, the following link is provided:

<http://www.methuen.k12.ma.us/mps-procedures-manual> (scroll down to 12-5)

GOVERNING BODIES

THE MASSACHUSETTS INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

Methuen High School is a member in good standing of the MIAA. With membership, the principal and Athletic Department agrees to abide by all rules and regulations of the MIAA.

One of the primary functions of the MIAA is to sponsor and conduct post-season tournaments at the varsity level leading to the determination of district and state champions. When our varsity teams qualify for and enter such tournaments, we are subject to specific rules and regulations that govern each tournament.

MERRIMACK VALLEY CONFERENCE

Methuen High School is proud to be member of the Merrimack Valley Conference. The MVC is governed by its own constitution and the MIAA. Our ice hockey team competes in the combined Merrimack valley Conference/Dual County League.

METHUEN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Additional policies, regulations, and rules are set by the Methuen School Committee and the Principal. Under MIAA guidelines, local communities are allowed to set additional policies, rules, and/or regulations as long as they are not less restrictive than those stipulated by the MIAA.

TO THE PARENTS

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult responsibilities. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to children. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communications from the coach of your child's program.

COMMUNICATION YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM THE COACH

1. Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
2. Locations and times of all practices and contests.
3. Team requirements (i.e. practices, special equipment, out-of-season conditioning.)
4. Procedure followed should your child be injured during participation.
5. Discipline that may result in the denial of your child's participation.

COMMUNICATION COACHES EXPECT FROM PARENTS

1. Concerns expressed directly to the coach at the appropriate time.
2. Notifications of any scheduled conflicts well in advance.

As your child becomes involved in the programs at Methuen High School, they will experience some of the most rewarding moments of their lives. It is important to understand that there also may be times when things may not go the way you or your child wishes.

APPROPRIATE CONCERNS TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. The treatment of your child, mentally and physically.
2. Ways to help your child improve.
3. Concerns about your child's behavior.

It is very difficult to accept your child not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches take their profession seriously. They make judgment decisions based on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coaching staff.

ISSUES NOT APPROPRIATE TO DISCUSS WITH COACHES

1. Playing time
2. Team strategy
3. Play calling
4. Other student-athletes

There are situations that may require a conference between the coach and the parent. These are to be encouraged. It is important that both parties involved have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

1. Call the athletic Department (978-722-6043) to set up an appointment.
2. If the coach cannot be reached, speak to the Athletic Director. A return call from the coach will be arranged, or a meeting set up for you.
3. DO NOT CALL A COACH AT HOME. A coach's time with family is severely limited during the season. The family's privacy should be respected.
4. PLEASE DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFRONT A COACH BEFORE OR AFTER A CONTEST OR PRACTICE. These can be emotional times for both the parent and coach. Meetings under these circumstances do not promote resolution.

IF THE MEETING DID NOT PROVIDE A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION

1. Call and set up an appointment with the Athletic Director
2. The Athletic Director will listen carefully to your concerns and mediate a resolution between you and the coach.

REMEMBER your concerns are important to us. Never hesitate to follow the above procedures to make those concerns known. Together we can work to improve our athletic programs.

COMMITMENT

When trying out for a team and after being selected to be a member of a team, Methuen High School student-athletes are expected to attend all practices and games of that team. Practices will average two hours, exclusive of prep time, in duration. Weekend and holiday games/practices vary.

Interscholastic athletics demands much more commitment than a club or recreational activity. Students should make themselves aware of the time commitment prior to trying out for the team.

SCHOOL/FAMILY VACATIONS, EXTENDED ABSENCES

Every team member is expected to be present for all team practices and games. Because of scheduling parameters, many of our teams practice and/or play during scheduled school vacations. Student-athletes who plan to be absent for an extended period of time due to vacation or a planned extended absence must discuss this situation with the coach.

MIAA BONAFIDE TEAM MEMBER RULE

A "bonafide team member" of the school team is a student who is regularly present for, and actively participates in, all team practices and competitions. Bonafide team members are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition in order to practice or compete with an out-of-school team. **Any**

student who violates this standard is ineligible for the next two contests or two weeks (whichever is greater) immediately upon confirmation of the violation. (See MIAA Rule 95.1 for additional tournament penalty.)

A coach does not have the right to excuse a team member from practice so that he or she may practice or play for another team. The principal may request a waiver of this rule only in special circumstances.

TRYOUTS

Participation in athletics is a privilege given to those students who meet all requirements set by the MIAA and Methuen High School. Students try out voluntarily and, for some teams, risk being cut. During the tryout period, the coach will provide an explanation of his/her expectations. It is the student's responsibility to demonstrate to the coach that he/she can meet these expectations. Students cut from a team are encouraged to try out for another team if there is space on that team and the final cuts for that team have not been made.

After tryouts begin, no athlete may leave one team (voluntarily or due to the dismissal by the coach) and try out for another team without the consent of both coaches involved and the Director of Athletics.

DAILY TEAM ATTENDANCE

It is extremely important that a coach be notified if a student-athlete is not going to be present at a practice or game. Practice is where plans for upcoming contests are devised and perfected. The coaches in our program expect their athletes to be present at all team related activities. Suspension or dismissal may take place as result of such absences.

Student-athletes are excused from team activities for academic or religious reasons, family emergencies, illness or injury. Prior notification of the coach is expected.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Methuen High School student athletes are reminded at the beginning of each season of the requirements for good school and team citizenship. They are as follows: come to school every day, be on time for school and classes, attend all classes, do your homework; and behave at all times in a mature manner. The abuse of any of these citizenship requirements could result in suspension or dismissal from an athletic team.

Student-athletes must be in school a full day and are expected to attend all scheduled periods during the school day in order to practice or play. Extenuating circumstances which would necessitate a school tardiness or early dismissal must be presented in writing by the parent/guardian and must receive prior approval by the school administration whose decision shall be final.

MEDICAL EXAMS/PARENTAL PERMISSION FORMS

All students who plan to participate in athletics must have written proof of a current physical; it must be dated within one calendar year of any athletic involvement. It is strongly recommended that an annual exam be scheduled between June and August of each school year. Such an exam would cover a student for an entire school year.

Medical Exam Forms are available in the Athletic Office. It is a two part form. The first side is to be completed by the athlete and parents. The second side must be completed and signed by a physician.

Parental Permission Forms, which contain important emergency and insurance information, must also be completed and signed by the athlete and parents.

Athletes will not be allowed to participate without the completion of the Medical Exam and Parental Permission Forms.

INSURANCE

All members of Methuen High School interscholastic teams are covered by an excess policy which covers expenses your family plan might not cover, provided that the proper procedures are followed:

1. All injuries must be reported to the Athletic Trainer immediately.
2. If the parent feels that a physician should be seen, the athletic trainer will give the athlete an insurance form which will then be completed and returned to the Athletic Trainer.

ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have passed and received full credits for the previous academic year the equivalent of four traditional year long major English courses.

TIME ALLOWED FOR PARTICIPATION/AGE

Students shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than 12 consecutive athletic seasons from the time the student first enters grade 9.

Student must be less than 19 years of age as of September 1 of the current school year.

TEAM RULES AND REGULATIONS

At the start of each season, a coach, with the approval of the Director of Athletics, may issue a set of team rules and regulations to his/her team. It is suggested that these be in written form and passed out to all team members.

CARE OF EQUIPMENT

Students have an obligation and responsibility for all equipment issued to them. Each student is responsible for the proper care and retention of their equipment from the date of issue to the date of return. Equipment should be stored in a locked locker or locker-room at all times when not in use. Students will be charged the current replacement cost for any missing or vandalized equipment.

Payment for the loss is required at the time of the loss and prior to the next season of athletic involvement or graduation, whichever comes first.

A student will not be allowed to try out for another sport until all outstanding equipment has been returned or paid for.

If an athlete leaves the team during the season due to injury, academics, discipline or of his/her own choice, it is his/her responsibility to return all school equipment.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

All students are required to participate in their regularly scheduled physical education classes. Students who are medically excused from physical education are not allowed to participate in their team practice or game on that day.

The Physical Education Staff will attempt to notify each coach on a daily basis of those students who did not participate in P.E. classes that day.

TRANSPORTATION

The school provides bus transportation, or a suitable substitute, to most “Away” contests. All team members are expected to travel to these contests using the provided school transportation. Exceptions to this policy must be requested in writing 24 hours in advance to the Director of Athletics by the student’s parent/guardian.

Transportation to practice sites is the responsibility of the individual student.

DIRECTIONS TO AWAY CONTESTS

The Athletic Office has directions to away games on file. Students or parents may get these prior to a contest by calling 978-722-6043.

BUILDING AND FACILITY ACCESS

No student will be allowed access to any of the athletic facilities without proper supervision by a school staff member. Students may not use the gymnasium or weight room unless there is a staff member present.

TRAINER AND TRAINING ROOM

Methuen High School provides student-athletes with access to a licensed Athletic Trainer during the school year. He is available on most school days from 2:00 P.M. until 4:00 p.m. to evaluate and treat athletic injuries. The Athletic Training room is located in the Field House area. Additionally, the Trainer provides medical coverage for many athletic contests. The schedule of contests covered is arranged on a priority needs basis.

In case of an injury the trainer will evaluate and recommend to the parent or guardian the direction of care. If a visit to the hospital or physician is necessary, a written medical note releasing the athlete for treatment or return to participation is mandatory. Athletes may report to the trainer any time after school for treatment or evaluation.

PLAYING TIME

Perhaps the most emotional part of a student-athlete being involved in high school athletics centers around playing time. When the student-athlete becomes involved in interscholastic athletics for the first time and he/she usually finds that practices and expectations are more intense and demanding than that which they had experienced previously. Factors such as practice attendance, attitude, commitment, and, of course, athletic skill all enter into the coaches decision regarding an individual’s playing time.

There are many decisions made on a regular basis by the Methuen High School coaching staff. It is the coaches' responsibility to decide which athletes should start a contest, which should play what position, and how long each athlete should play. These coaching decisions, often difficult to make, are made only the coaching staff and are approached very seriously after having observed the student-athlete in practice sessions, game like situations, scrimmages and, at times, games.

At the Freshman and Junior Varsity levels, members of the coaching staff will make a strong effort to play all team members in each game for as much time as practical. At this level, the coaching staff is teaching the offensive and defensive philosophy of the program along with the skill necessary to move along to the next level. Student-athletes who attend practices daily and fulfill all other team obligation should have the opportunity to display what they have learned in games.

At the Varsity level, we look for our team to compete against opponents at the highest possible level of execution. This is the highest level of interscholastic competition, and players, coaches, parents, staff, and the community wants Methuen High School varsity teams to be successful on the field of play. As long as the score is being kept, Methuen High should attempt to win as many varsity games as possible. In order to accomplish this, there are many instances when the major burden of the contests will be carried by the most competitive, skilled team members. However, teams cannot and will not be successful without committed substitutes, "role" players, or "second team" players. These players have to be ready at all times to step forward and shoulder the burden when called upon. It is these student-athletes whose hard work in practice each day prepares the team for the upcoming contest.

Success should never be measured in wins and losses, but in the performance of our athletes. If they perform to the best of their abilities they will always be successful, no matter what the final score may be.

TEAM CAPTAINS

It is a coaching decision as to how team captains are selected, if at all. They may be elected by the team or appointed by the coach prior to the first regularly scheduled contest. Captains may also be elected or appointed on a game by game basis.

It is expected that team captains be leaders of their team and should be ready to assume duties an outlined by their coach. They are expected to be more aware of team rules and student-athlete responsibilities. Captains are expected to communicate with the coach and team in the event of any problems that may affect the team or its members. Captains may be asked to meet with the Director of Athletics during the school year to discuss the athletic program.

Captains of teams may be relieved of their position by the coach, for violation of team, department or school rules.

SECURITY OF PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Methuen High School cannot be responsible for loss of personal belongings. Students are encouraged to leave all personal objects of value either at home or in a secure location.

LOCKER ROOMS AND SCHOOL FACILITIES

Student-athletes are expected to respect the locker facilities, showers and general areas of the athletic wing at both Methuen High School and while visiting other schools and the new Club House at Nicholson Stadium. We expect the student-athlete to take pride in their facilities and those of our opponents by using trash barrels and keeping these facilities in good condition. Any type of vandalism will not be tolerated. All locker rooms will be locked at the end of the day and will be opened only by the coaching staff.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE OBLIGATIONS

A student-athlete with a school disciplinary obligation is required to fulfill that obligation before reporting to an athletic practice and/or game. Students cannot expect, and should not request, disciplinary action to be postponed or cancelled for any athletic reason. The Department of Athletics, in conjunction with the High School Administration, reserves the right to remove a student from a team for excessive disciplinary problems and may reinstate the student upon sufficient evidence of improved behavior. **If a student has accrued three or more office detentions that have gone un-served, he/she must fulfill the disciplinary obligation before participating in any school activity.**

Students may not participate in a practice or a meet/game until the term of a school suspension (either “out of school “or” in school suspension”) is completed.

COLLEGE / CAREER GUIDANCE

One of the most important decisions facing high school students is what to do with their lives after high school. The members of the Methuen High School athletic staff are willing and eager to assist all of their students with this extremely important decision. Staff members fully understand the importance of this assistance. They may be able to answer questions, contact schools and/or coaches, send video tapes (if available) and write letters of recommendation. The least they will be able to do is guide students to a more knowledgeable resource who can help with decisions.

If a student’s goal is to compete athletically at the collegiate level, it is very important to be aware of the ever-changing NCAA Regulations.

Methuen High School’s Guidance Department has copies of the NCAA Clearinghouse Registration Forms which must be completed by all students planning to participate at the college level.

SPORTSMANSHIP

Methuen High School expects all parties at a contest to display the highest possible level of sportsmanship. Players, coaches, and spectators are to treat opponents, game officials and visiting spectators with respect and the same “poise and class” we speak about in our philosophy.

The MIAA reserves the right to “warn censure, place on probation or suspend for up to one calendar year any player, team, coach, game or school official, or school determined to be acting in a manner contrary to the standards of good sportsmanship”. Methuen High School in turn, reserves the right to impose the same penalties on spectators displaying poor sportsmanship at any of our contests both home and away.

MIAA CHEMICAL HEALTH RULE: ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, DRUGS

(Also refer to page 43 ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED but not limited to: any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; any vapor/E-cigarettes, drug paraphernalia and/or similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization; marijuana; CBD oil; steroids; narcotics; illegal drugs; any controlled substance; or any other related items)

During the season of practices or play, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol, any tobacco product, marijuana, steroid, or any controlled substance. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student's own use by his/her physician.

The Minimum Penalties are:

First violation: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. During the suspension the disqualified student may not be in uniform and attendance at the competition site is determined by the high school principal. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

Second and subsequent violations: When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests (regular season and tournament) totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If after the second or subsequent violations the student of own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The high school principal in collaboration with a Chemical Dependency Program or Treatment Program must certify that student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If student does not complete program, penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal part of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional part of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season.

Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year (e.g. A student plays only football: he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of same academic year: he would serve the penalty [ies] during the fall season of the next academic year). If a student is not an athletic participant for one full year after affirmation of a violation, then the penalty period would close and the student would face no consequence. Prior to any chemical health violation a student's request for and enrollment in a substance abuse treatment shall not in and of itself constitute a violation of the chemical health/alcohol/drugs/tobacco Rule 62.

The Chemical Health Rule as it relates to out-of-season athletes

For out-of-season athletes, Methuen High School has its own policy. The MIA Rule will be in effect during the school day and at all extra-curricular and school sponsored activities. School is considered to be any location where a school sponsored activity is taking place. The prescribed penalties, listed above, will commence for the “out-of-school” student-athlete at the start of his/her athletic season.

SUMMER SPORTS INVOLVEMENT

Participation in out-of-season clinics, camps, leagues, or other related sport activities is strictly up to the discretion of the student-athlete and his/her parents. While such participation will undoubtedly improve one’s knowledge and skill, it is the individual’s decision on whether or not they wish to become involved in such activities. Participation in such activities will have no bearing on a student-athlete’s participation on a Methuen High School Athletic team. The Department of Athletics encourages all students to take full advantage of the activities we offer and become involved with more than one sport.

According to MIAA rules “Neither a coach nor any other representative of the school may require an athlete to participate in a sport nor training program outside of the MIAA defined sport season.” Voluntary conditioning sessions open equally to all students in the school and which are entirely devoid of sports-specific activity may be conducted between seasons provided no candidate is either required to participate or penalized for not doing so. A “Candidate” is defined as a varsity or sub-varsity athlete who participated in the high school program at some interscholastic level in that sport the previous season.

HAZING

Please refer to page 21 of this handbook.

WELLNESS POLICY

The Wellness Policy is a state mandated document that addresses the school system’s efforts to maintain a safe and healthy environment for students, school staff and the community who utilizes school grounds. The goal of the Wellness Policy is to promote overall wellness, protect students, and combat childhood obesity. A team of food service providers, physical education teachers, school health professionals, health and wellness teachers, parents, students and school administrators develop policies that support the nutritional and physical activity needs of the students. Please click the link below to view the Methuen Public Schools Wellness Policy.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B7uCpd_ZB63zaHpZU1RDUTZhUjQ/view?usp=sharing