

Dear Families and Students,

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year at R.H. Conwell School. The faculty and I hope that this handbook will be a helpful guide to many of the procedures, policies, and activities at R.H. Conwell. So please accept this handbook as an invitation to become an active and well-informed member of a very special team of dedicated educators who remain committed to creating a learning climate that respects, values, and challenges every child. By familiarizing yourself with its contents, you strengthen the partnership between school and home. Our aim is to find as many ways as possible for school and home to work together for the benefit of your child.

Please take some time to review the handbook. Your questions, concerns, and suggestions are, as always, encouraged and welcomed. And, please take our invitation to join us in this very special work of teaching your children as seriously as we offer it. Working together we can maintain the quality of education the children deserve and the community expects.

If you have questions regarding the contents, or other areas not covered in the handbook, please contact the school. As we begin this school year, I would like to remind you that we are a community of learners, inclusive of parents, staff, and community members. By working together to provide a solid and comprehensive education in a safe and nurturing environment, we can lead our children to become their best emotionally, socially, and academically.

Warmly,

Gretchen Morse-Dobosz
Principal/Superintendent

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The Town of Worthington

Worthington is located in the heart of Western Massachusetts. Almost equal distance from the Vermont, New York and Connecticut borders, 115 miles from Boston, and halfway between Northampton and Pittsfield, the town is half an hour from the nearest large supermarkets or movie theater. Worthington has one General Store, a couple restaurants, several maple sugar houses, a number of farms, a smattering of small businesses, is proud of its one stoplight, and is one of only two in 38 contiguous Western Massachusetts towns. While Worthington has 32 square miles of land, the population of 1,156 individuals results in a population density of only 36 people per square mile. About half of its 64 square miles of road are unpaved, and a number of those are closed for five months of the year. It is a rural town.

R.H. Conwell Elementary School

In 1940, the Russell H. Conwell Elementary School was built. It was named after Worthington resident Russell H. Conwell, founder of Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and author of the inspirational lecture, Acres of Diamonds. The school sits on eight acres of land in a wooded setting. This picturesque school was completely renovated in 2001.

Profile

R.H. Conwell School is located in a small rural community. We serve children in grades pre-kindergarten through six.

School Mailing Address:

R.H. Conwell Elementary School

147 Huntington Road

Worthington, MA 01098

Telephone number: (413) 238-5856. Fax: (413) 238-5880

Web Site: www.rhconwell.org

Administration

Worthington School District has a five-member school committee, and a full time Superintendent/Principal. The Worthington School District has a fee-for-service contract with Hampshire Regional School District to provide Operations Support.

Worthington has a tuition relationship with Hampshire Regional School District guaranteeing placement for Worthington students in grades 7-12.

Vision Statement

Our school, families, and community collaborate to foster a place where all members contribute in a discovery-focused learning environment.

- We are supportive. We are learners who are inspired to take risks and we “find-a-way” with creative solutions.
- We are progressive. We explore new ways to learn in the classroom, outdoors, and in the community.
- We are inquisitive. We develop curious, life-long learners who affect change in the world.
- We are intrepid. We foster a safe environment where children are taught to be courageous individuals.

Through engagement and integration we invite our community to be empowered, to discover our strengths and to help us achieve our maximum potential.

General Information

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Alison Todd, Chair

Cai Walkowiak, Co-Chair

Amanda Brooks-Clemen

Pamela Thompson

Deb Clapp

See monthly calendars for scheduled meetings & locations. Typically the committee meets the second Thursday of each month in the cafeteria.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts enacted legislation that calls for the establishment of a School Council for each elementary, secondary, and independent vocational school in the Commonwealth. Each council is to have the following categories of membership: school representatives (including principal), parents, and community representatives who are not teachers or parents of students at the school.

Councils are to assist principals in adopting educational goals for the school, identifying the educational/programmatic needs of the students attending the school, and formulating a school improvement plan. As openings arise in the School Council, nominations are sought through the newsletter. If necessary, an election is held either at Open House or during a PTO meeting, allowing the community to elect the parent representatives.

2021 - 2022 Members:

Gretchen Morse-Dobosz, Principal/Superintendent

Open Slot, Parent representative

Open Slot, Community representative

Emily Lak, Staff representative

Open Slot, Parent representative

PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization)

The R.H. Conwell PTO is an active group that supports and enriches the experiences of our students. Meetings are generally held on the second Monday of each month and are advertised in the school newsletter. All parents in the school are members of the PTO!

PTO Board Members 2021-2022

Jaime Ricci and Tiger Thomas, Co-President

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Gretchen Morse-Dobosz, Superintendent/Principal

Phone: (413) 238-5856

gmorsedobosz@hr-k12.org

R.H. Conwell shares the services of Hampshire Regional School District's Central Office as well as other District personnel. The other elementary schools with which we collaborate are:

- Anne T. Dunphy Elementary, Williamsburg

- Westhampton Elementary, Westhampton
- New Hingham Regional Elementary, Chesterfield/Goshen
- William E. Norris Elementary, Southampton

At the completion of their sixth grade year, students from these five elementary schools come together into the middle and high school programs of Hampshire Regional High School, located at 19 Stage Road in Westhampton.

SCHOOL HOURS

Morning Drop Off begins at 8:30 a.m.. The buses and parent drop off begins no earlier than 8:30 a.m..

School begins at 8:50 a.m.. All students will report to the classroom with their teacher. Anyone reporting after 8:50 a.m. will be tardy.

After School Enrichment is offered at R.H. Conwell and run by Shannon Madden. Please contact smadden@hr-k12.org for more information.

Preschool through Grade 6 (Preschool Tuesday-Friday)
Hours: 8:50 - 3:10

Early Release Days Preschool – 6
Hours: 8:50 – 12:00

Recess Schedule
11:30 – 12:00 Preschool - 2
12:00 - 12:30 Grades 3- 6

Lunch Schedule
12:05 – 12:35 Preschool - 2
12:35 - 1:05 Grades 3 - 6

*Lunch is not served on half days.

R.H. Conwell Faculty and Staff

Gretchen Morse Dobosz.....Superintendent/Principal
Lisa OuelletSchool Office Manager

Samantha Pease.....	Nurse
Devon Wolf.....	Custodian
Ashley Tompkins.....	Cafeteria Manager
Felicity Rovatti	Preschool Teacher
Samantha Briotta.....	Kindergarten Teacher
April Rose.....	Grade 1/2 Teacher
Kimberly Orzechowski	Grade 3/4 Teacher
Alec MacLachlan.....	Grade 5/6
Teacher	
Raven Tumbledown.....	Preschool
Paraprofessional	
	& Technology
	Teacher
Maryse Pommenville.....	Kindergarten Paraprofessional
Theresa Pease.....	½ Paraprofessional
Tamara Donatelli.....	¾ Paraprofessional
Tim	
Kosuda.....	
..... ⁵ / ₆ Paraprofessional	
Carolyn Hawthorne.....	Art Teacher
Veronica Rovatti.....	Music Teacher
Holland Gage.....	Physical Education Teacher
Julia Sharron and Gail Bergeron.....	Library Volunteers
Shannon Madden	After School Enrichment
Emily Lak	Special Education Teacher
.....	School Counselor

CONTACT US

During school hours, faculty can be contacted at (413)238-5856. They can also be contacted through school email. Faculty will respond within 24 hours. Please set up an appointment with the classroom teacher if you would like to address a concern or have questions. Due to Covid, all parent meetings will be held outdoors or virtually.

All district staff members' email addresses are structured as follows:
first initial last name @hr-k12.org

Example: Gretchen Morse-Dobosz's email is gmorsedobosz@hr-k12.org

Day-to-Day Information

PROCESS OF COMMUNICATION

Concerns and complaints from students and/or their parents are encouraged to follow the sequence below whenever possible:

1. Talk with the teacher for clarification of the problem.
2. Meet with the teacher and if no satisfactory solution is found then meet with:
 - a) Superintendent/Principal
 - b) Full School Committee

Following the above order will help to expedite the procedure in that the individual(s) closest to the situation can most likely be expected to help with the resolution.

Questions or concerns regarding bus matters should be addressed to Beth at Lecrenski Bus Co. at (413) 862-8080.

CURRICULUM

The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks provide a foundation for ongoing curriculum development. Teachers and administration work collaboratively to develop curriculum, which aligns with the state frameworks. Teachers implement this curriculum in a creative and thought-provoking manner based upon sound educational theory and each teacher's special talents and strengths.

Your child's classroom teacher offers instruction in reading, writing, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Teachers use a variety of materials and methods to meet the needs of all their students.

We evaluate all aspects of our program annually to ensure that all students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, disability or housing status have equal access to all programs, including athletics and other extracurricular activities.

HOMEWORK

Homework assignments are used to reinforce, to enrich, and to provide the student with the opportunity to prepare subject matter independently. Homework may be assigned in grades one through six as needed.

Generally homework is not given on Friday, however, there may be long term projects assigned which require students to set aside blocks of work time per night. These projects provide students with the opportunity to budget their time to complete assignments. Parents or guardians will be notified if a student continuously fails to complete homework assignments on time. If necessary, the teacher may request a meeting with the student/parents to create a plan to ensure the future completion of homework assignments.

Homework Tips:

- Provide a quiet place to do homework.
- Ensure that the study area is well equipped with pens, pencils, paper, ruler, etc.
- Look over homework assignments to check for understanding.
- Encourage students to work independently, but be available to assist during homework time.

CALENDAR

A current R.H. Conwell School District Calendar has been provided for your family's reference. It is also available on the school's website. This calendar lists all early release days, in-service days, holidays, and vacations.

In addition, R. H. Conwell's events will be communicated to you through classroom and school newsletters.

NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

If there is a "no school" or delayed opening announcement for the Worthington School District and R.H. Conwell Elementary School due to inclement weather or other conditions, it will be made over the following stations: WSHM (Channel 3), WRGB-Albany (Channel 13), WWLP (Channel 22), and WGGB (Channel 40) and over the following radio stations: WHYN-AM and FM, WMAS, WHAI, WRNX, WRSI, WPVQ. Additionally, the announcement will be made on the school's Facebook page. The announcement will be made utilizing the media at approximately 6:00 a.m. If a delay announcement is made, please continue to monitor the news for a potential school closing. R.H. Conwell will be announced on T.V. as the Worthington School District.

In addition, a phone call and email from the district's SWIFT K12 system will be placed in order to notify families of a delay, cancellation, or closing. In order to maintain clear communication for emergencies, **please notify the school of updated phone numbers.**

HOME AND SCHOOL COLLABORATION

At R. H. Conwell, we understand that our student's academic success will improve as a result of collaboration between the school, its families, and the local community. Parent and teacher communication is essential and we encourage any family members interested to volunteer in a number of different ways. Some ideas include joining the PTO, and talking to your child's teacher about volunteering in the classroom.

Of course, good learning starts at home and building healthy habits around learning is important to creating a long and successful academic career. The following are some suggestions in supporting your child's academic success:

- Be certain that your child is absent only when necessary.
- See that your child arrives at school on time.
- Encourage your children to prioritize their activities.
- Read to your child and encourage your child to read each day.
- Encourage positive attitudes toward school.
- Praise children often and have high expectations for their success.

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

The American Academy of Pediatrics defines chronic absenteeism as a student who misses more than 10% of school. They recommend pediatricians be aware of student's attendance rates because it can give an indication of other health and mental health issues that would normally go untreated. Students who are absent from school more than 10% of the time can have their attendance record sent to their primary care provider if they completed the opt in form at the start of the school year. Absentee reports will be run during the second, third and fourth quarters and physicians notified at that time. If families would like to exempt their child from this public health initiative, a parent/guardian should not complete the opt in form.

We cannot stress too greatly the importance of your child being in school every day, on time, if he/she is to achieve the greatest success in his/her work. A typical school day is filled with learning that is not limited to books, i.e. group projects, discussions, and activities. Paperwork can be made up, but the valuable learning opportunities cannot. However, when children are

sick, they should stay home from school. If your child will be absent or tardy, please call the school before 9:30 A.M.

According to Chapter 76, Section 1 of Massachusetts General Law, more than fourteen (14) absences per year is considered excessive. Regulations that govern MCAS performance appeals state that students must have maintained at least 95% attendance level during the school year prior to testing and the year of the appeal. Student may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

1. Bereavement or serious illness in the family.
2. Documented legal responsibilities.
3. Observance of major religious holidays.

Response to Excessive Absences or Tardiness

Following 5 incidences of absence or tardiness- letter home from principal reminding parents / guardians of the attendance policy and their responsibility in supporting it.

Following 10 incidences of absence or tardiness- certified letter home from principal requesting meeting to develop a plan to improve attendance.

Following 15 incidences of absence or tardiness- certified letter home from principal requesting meeting to revisit plan to improve attendance; possible referral to Department of Children and Families.

REGISTERING NEW STUDENTS

Parents or guardians of new students to R.H. Conwell Elementary School should register their child(ren) at least one day before starting school. Copies of school medical records and all immunization records and birth certificates are required before a child enters school. Copies of school records from the child's previous school will be requested and copies of educationally significant documents such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a 504 Plan would be very helpful in our efforts to provide your child a smooth transition into R.H. Conwell. Discipline records may also be requested.

ENTRANCE AGE

Students must be 3 years old to attend the R.H. Conwell Elementary Preschool Program. Students who will be five years of age prior to the first day of the school year during which they wish to enroll will be eligible to enter kindergarten for that school year.

DISMISSAL

Written permission from the parent/guardian is required for a child to change regular dismissal procedures --- regardless of their grade level.

A NOTE IS REQUIRED IN THE FOLLOWING INSTANCES:

1. If a child must leave school at any time other than the regular dismissal time.
2. If a child who regularly rides the school bus is to be picked up by anyone, including a parent.
3. If a child who regularly rides the school bus plans to walk or ride a bicycle home or to another destination.
4. If a child rides a bus to any destination other than his/her regularly scheduled bus stop.

Any of the above changes need to be communicated to the office no later than 2:00. You can send a note in your child's green folder, call the office or email louellet@hr-k12.org. If you are picking up your child before 3:10, please report to the office and sign him/her out. The office staff will call your child to the office.

Dismissal for students in preschool through sixth grade at the R.H. Conwell School begins at 3:10. Students may walk, bike, or ride the bus. Students may also be picked up; however we encourage families to make use of the bus service provided by the school district.

Students riding the bus will be accompanied out of the cafeteria door and will board the buses near the cafeteria entrance.

Student Drop Off/Pick Up Procedures for EVERY DAY Parent Pickup

We ask that you please help us keep our children safe by adhering to the following procedures:

Student AM Drop-Off

- Student Drop-Off will begin at 8:30 am. Parents are to pull in front of the school, by pulling in slowly and all the way down, and maintaining a single file line.
- If your child requires assistance to get out of their car seat/booster seat, you may exit the car to assist them.
- R.H.C staff members will be there to greet your child out of the car and into the morning recess area.
- R.H.C staff members will not be expected to open/close car doors, undo seat belts, car seats, etc.
- If you arrive after 8:50 am, you must park and bring your child(ren) in through the main entrance. Do not block the mailbox. Students need to check in at the front office before going to the outdoor class.

Student PM Pick-Up

- Student Pick-Up will begin at 3:10 pm.

- Parents are to pull in front of the school, by pulling in slowly and all the way down (to the cone by the farthest tree), and maintaining a single file line. DO NOT make a second row of cars.
- If the drive in front of the school building has a full line, please wait at the side of the road before the buses. DO NOT block the school buses, DO NOT create a second line in front of the school building, and DO NOT park on the grass.
- Stay in your car, until your child has been released to you. You may exit the car to assist your child in getting in and buckling up. It is your responsibility to place your child(ren) safely in the vehicle.
- The students will be dismissed to the first five cars. Once your child is safely into your car, it is expected that you leave the parking lot. If you plan to chat with other parents please park your car in the lot or at the church. Once these cars have left, people may pull forward to the cone and their children will be the next to be released.
- Please wait for the car in front of you to pull out, so not swerve around other cars to leave if your child is ready before others. This is for the safety of everyone.
- Please make sure you buckle your child in BEFORE leaving school property.
- If you are sending someone other than yourself to pick up your child, please make sure that you write a note, call or email letting us know, and that they have a picture ID with them or your children will not be released to that adult.
- If your child is typically picked up from school, but needs to ride the bus on a particular occasion, parents need to call, email or write a note notifying the front office that they need to take their bus home.
- The front office needs to be aware of any changes to your child's pick-up plans BEFORE 2:00pm.
- We appreciate your cooperation with these procedures to keep all of our children safe.

WALKERS & BICYCLES

It is important that walkers know the route to school. Parents are encouraged to review the following pedestrian safety rules with their children:

1. Always cross at crosswalks.
2. Look left--right--left for moving cars before crossing.
3. Make sure the driver sees you. Make eye contact with the driver.
4. Cross only when the road is clear.
5. Keep on looking for cars even as you are crossing the street.
6. Walk when you cross the road.
7. Always walk facing the oncoming traffic.

Children, with parental permission, may ride bicycles to school. Helmets must be worn in compliance with Massachusetts State Law. If students are not wearing helmets while riding bikes or scooters, they may lose the privilege of riding to school. We urge parents to review safe riding procedures and perform a regular safety inspection of bicycles. Students are reminded to walk their bikes on the school grounds during the school day. There is to be no riding during the school day including recess.

BUS POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

In late August, the policies, guidelines, rules, bus routes and school calendar are available at the school's main office. This also lists the bus company's pick-up times, bus number and route taken. The bus company used is Lecrenski Bus Company at 413-862-8080. Questions or concerns regarding bus matters should be addressed to the bus company.

Prior to Loading:

1. Be at the stopping place five minutes prior to designated pick-up time and ready to get into the bus with the least possible delay in order to keep the bus on schedule and to minimize traffic hazards.
2. Students loading the bus on a street where the bus passes in both directions are to wait until the bus passes on their side so they will not have to cross the road.
3. Students having to cross the road when loading and discharging are to cross in front of the bus, upon the driver's signal. All pupils are advised to use extreme caution by looking at traffic both ways before crossing.
4. Do not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
5. Remain at least five feet from the bus when it stops to pick up, and move forward only when the door opens.
6. After boarding the bus, take a seat as quickly as possible.
7. All students riding the bus will be assigned a seat.
 - Siblings will sit together.
 - Lecrenski Bus company has developed health and safety precautions.
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1NoJtEk4e3fTHgyMLjO5ev_ph5OuD7cboNMLuL4bCLOM/edit?usp=sharing
 - All students riding the bus will be dismissed by grade level from the bus driver. Students will be released slowly to allow proper distancing when walking to the outside classroom.
 - Faculty will be assigned to greet children, check to make sure students are distanced and wearing masks when exiting the bus. Dismissal will follow similar procedures.

While on the Bus:

1. Do not bring animals, glass, reptiles, or prohibited or illegal items on the bus.

2. Obey the bus operator at all times while under his or her supervision.
3. Maintain an acceptable manner of conduct at all times. Yelling, smoking, vulgarity, boisterous behavior, spitting, or throwing objects out of windows or other insubordinate behavior will not be permitted.
4. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
5. Do not extend any part of the body out of the bus windows at any time.
6. Keep aisles clear of lunch boxes, musical instruments, books, etc.
7. Assist the bus driver in keeping the bus clean by not eating or drinking while on the bus.
8. Do not deface or damage any part of the bus.
9. Remain absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
10. Do not play a radio or other audio devices on the bus.
11. Do not tamper with or try to operate either the service door or the emergency door; this is the responsibility of the bus operator.

Covid-19 Specific Bus Protocols:

1. Students will be assigned seats and should remain in their assigned seat at all times while the bus is in operation.
2. Masks are to be worn at all times while on the bus.
3. Students will sit one person to a seat, except for the case of siblings who may sit together.
4. Bus drivers reserve the right to refuse transportation of any student with whom they suspect may be exhibiting symptoms of Covid-19.
5. A student with suspected symptoms of Covid-19 will not be allowed to ride on the bus and will instead be asked to be picked up at the school by a parent or guardian

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT ALL CHILDREN ARE SAFE WHILE ON THE SCHOOL BUS. RIDING THE BUS IS A PRIVILEGE AND ANY INFRACTION OF BUS RULES MAY RESULT IN THE LOSS OF THIS PRIVILEGE

SECURITY OF THE BUILDING

Except for student arrival and dismissal times, the doors of the building will be locked during the day. A doorbell to the right of the front door will notify the Administrative Assistant that a visitor would like to enter the building. When visiting our building, it is important to always sign in at the main office.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANS

R.H. Conwell has a response plan in place in the event of an emergency. We will continue to periodically have drills so that everyone understands the procedures.

Fire Drills will be held throughout the school year. Students should exit the building in an orderly fashion. It is very important that each student remain calm and attentive. Each classroom has a prescribed exit plan. Once all the students have cleared the building and have reported to designated outside meeting areas, they should wait for further instructions from their classroom teacher. We appreciate the support of the Worthington Fire Department in planning these drills.

With the support of local and state police departments, we also hold Lockdown Drills each year. A lockdown procedure is a response to various threats either inside or outside of the building. Procedures for these drills are practiced with children. We make every attempt to use care in our discussions with students so that we do not provoke any undue anxiety or create any situation in which children would be fearful. We approach this practice much as we approach fire drills, as a practice to keep us safe in an emergency.

PARKING

To ensure the safety of the children, it is important that parents or visitors park in designated parking spaces. This process is equally as important during arrival and dismissal periods. Cars should never park in the designated bus lane near the cafeteria entrance. Please exercise caution in the parking lot during arrival and dismissal, as there are many cars and children walking. Thank you for your cooperation in regard to this very important matter.

CAFETERIA INFORMATION

Students at Conwell can now start their day off on the right foot with a healthy breakfast. On Monday and Wednesday all students can sign up to enjoy yogurt, cereal or muffin, choice of fruit and milk. Hot breakfast is served on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Breakfast club is served every day from 8:30- 8:45 am.

Students may bring their own lunches, purchase milk only, or buy a school lunch. Prices for lunch and milk are subject to change as voted by the School Committee.

Student lunch and Milk (when purchased separately)

For the 2021-2022 school year, all breakfast and lunches are free to all students. The USDA has waived all expenses for student lunches.

Nutritional, well--balanced lunches are provided. Free and reduced lunches are provided for children whose parents meet the appropriate criteria established by the Massachusetts Department of Education. Applications for free or reduced lunches are distributed to all students in September and may be obtained at any time throughout the year from the school office.

A breakfast and lunch calendar will be sent home each month.

VOLUNTEERS

All volunteers will be required to complete a CORI form.

CORI

M.G.L. c. 71, § 38R requires all schools to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. CORI must be obtained from the CHSB at least every three years during an individual's term of employment or service. In addition, M.G.L. c. 6, § 172I, requires schools to obtain CORI of employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils under M.G.L. c. 71, § 7A. Contracting taxicab companies are required to submit the names of employees who may have direct and unmonitored contact with pupils to the appropriate school committee or school superintendent prior to those drivers transporting any pupil. [Note: Volunteers are not subject to the fingerprint- based state and national criminal record check required for all school and contractor employees.]

The law also allows schools to conduct CORI checks on subcontractors or laborers commissioned to do work on school grounds that may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. This includes school bus or van drivers employed by a transportation company under contract with the district to provide transportation services to students.

ELEMENTARY CODE OF CONDUCT

Teachers, staff, and students at R.H. Conwell work together in a proactive way to promote appropriate behavior. We help each other understand and reflect on our behavior. Children are empowered to solve their own problems and, when appropriate, are involved in determining consequences for their behavior.

The Code of Conduct is intended to cover disciplinary infractions that occur on school grounds or at school-sponsored events (on and off school grounds) OR for disciplinary infractions that

occur off school grounds but substantially disrupt the educational environment or create a hostile environment at school.

Responsibilities of Students

Each student shall adopt the code for good school citizenship as follows:

- Take pride in learning and building a diverse community
- Attend school regularly and adhere to school and community rules
- Respect all members of the community, including students, staff and faculty
- Respect the property of others
- Show consideration for the feelings, opinions and abilities of others
- Accept responsibility for one's own actions
- Develop habits of honesty, truthfulness and kindness
- Demonstrate tolerance in a diverse community of learners

Responsibilities of the School

The School Committee, administration and staff, pledge their full support to maintain an atmosphere of academic freedom in which a student may develop intellectual integrity and personal self-sufficiency. In extending certain rights to students, it must be assumed that students will accept the responsibilities inherent in these rights. The Committee, administration and staff will use their authority with justice and respect toward all students.

Violations and Penalties

The Code of Conduct is based on a system of progressive discipline with a goal of limiting the use of long-term suspension as a penalty for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered, as appropriate. The administrator will exercise discretion in the interpretation of rules and the imposition of consequences. In determining the severity of the penalty or suspension, particular attention will be paid to the context of an infraction and the individual needs of the students involved. Relevant factors may include, but are not limited to:

- the student's age;
- the student's disability, if applicable;
- the student's previous disciplinary record;
- the severity of the disruption of the educational process;
- the degree of danger to self, others, and the school in general;
- the student's willingness to be honest and accountable for their actions;
- the student's level of remorse and willingness to repair any damage caused by their behavior;
- whether alternative consequences are appropriate to re-engage the student in learning.

Upon consideration of such factors, the administration will issue a fair and appropriate response. Responses may include, but are not limited to: verbal warnings and student conferences; conferences with teachers; parent/guardian conferences; meetings with a school counselor; suspensions from extracurricular and after-school activities; teacher detentions; office detentions; in-school suspensions; out-of-school suspensions; community service; restitution; and police involvement. Alternative consequences may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, collaborative problem solving, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

LIST OF INFRACTIONS

The list of infractions presented in the Code of Conduct is not to be considered all-inclusive. The administration reserves the authority to discipline for other violations not listed. As such, students who engage in behavior that is contrary to the mission and values of the school, whether or not specifically listed in the Code of Conduct, subject themselves to disciplinary action.

SECTION A: WEAPONS/VIOLENCE

- Arson, Bomb Threats, and False Fire Alarms
- Assault/Battery: Instigation or provocation of a physical altercation
- Dangerous Behavior: Behavior that might endanger persons or property including threats of physical violence, disrupting the atmosphere of the classroom or the school, horseplay or physical aggression (behavior not done in a malicious manner)
- Hazing: Organizing or participating in hazing
- Obtaining Money, Material Goods or Favors by Threat of Harm
- Physical Violence towards School Staff: Physical violence and/or threat of physical violence directed toward any member of the school staff (mgl, c. 71, s. 37h; see Student Expulsion)
- Physical Violence towards Students: Including but not limited to, hitting, punching, pushing, slapping, shoving, grabbing, kicking, choking, hair pulling, biting, throwing things, restraining, or pinning
- Vandalism: Defacing or damaging school or personal property
- Weapons: Possession of, use of, or threat to use a dangerous weapon, such as a gun, knife or other articles which may be determined to be dangerous (mgl, c. 71, s. 37h; see Student Expulsion)

SECTION B: SUBSTANCES

- Distribution of Drugs: Sale, distribution, or intent to distribute drugs on school property or at a school-sponsored event (mgl, c. 71, s. 37h; see Student Expulsion)

- Possession of Drugs: Possession of drugs or drug paraphernalia on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Being under the influence of drugs constitutes possession (mgl, c. 71, s. 37h; see Student Expulsion)
- Distribution of Alcohol: Sale, distribution, or intent to distribute alcohol on school property or at a school-sponsored event
- Possession of Alcohol: Possession of alcohol on school property or at a school-sponsored event. Being under the influence of alcohol constitutes possession
- Sale of Tobacco: Sale of tobacco products on school property or at school-sponsored events
- Smoking: Smoking or using a tobacco product on school property or at school-sponsored event is prohibited. The use of e-cigarettes is prohibited wherever smoking is prohibited.
E-cigarette: any electronic device composed of a mouthpiece, heating element, battery and/or electronic circuits that provides a vapor or liquid nicotine to the user, or relies on vaporization of solid nicotine or any liquid. This term includes devices whether they are manufactured as e-cigarettes, e-cigars, e-pipes or under any other product name.

SECTION C: HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

- Bullying: Bullying/harassment directed toward any member of the school community and/or retaliation towards any school member involved in any aspect of a bullying/harassment complaint or investigation
- Nondiscrimination Policy Violation
- Sexual Harassment: Sexual harassment (verbal or physical) directed toward any member of the school community

SECTION D: COMPUTER VIOLATIONS/PLAGIARISM

- Acceptable Use Policy Violation
- Forgery: Forgery of a document that is used for any school-related activity
- Honesty and Academic Integrity Violation
- Inappropriate Use of Technology: Inappropriate use of computers, network, and the Internet, including but not limited to: accessing pornography, purchasing or attempting to purchase alcohol, tobacco products, other drugs or illegal substances, drug paraphernalia or weapons; using a proxy bypass to bypass a website

SECTION E: OTHER VIOLATIONS

- Class Cut
- Defiance of any Staff Member
- Electronic Device Policy Violation
- Excessive Tardiness
- Failure to Serve Office Detention

- Failure to Serve Teacher Detention: Classroom teachers may require students to remain after school up to the length of one class period with 24-hour notice.
- Gambling
- Inappropriate Classroom Behavior
- Leaving School Building: Leaving school during the school day without permission or proper authorization
- Obscene, Abusive, Demeaning or Profane Language, Gestures, Actions or Symbols
- Profanity Directed at Staff Member
- Safety/Security Protocol Violation
- Theft: Theft or possession of school/personal property
- Truancy
- Verbal Confrontation

SECTION F: BUS TRANSPORTATION

Student Conduct on School Buses

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents/guardians the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal. To ensure the safety of all students who ride on buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents/guardians of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students Identified as Having Special Needs:

1. All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the Student Handbook. Chapter 71B of the Mass. General Laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an IEP team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) and or a 504 Plan. These provisions also pertain to students for whom the evaluation process has started and are suspected of having special needs but do not yet have an IEP.
2. Students with special needs may be suspended for up to ten (10) days under current state and federal laws and may also be suspended in excess of ten (10) days as fully outlined under M.G.L., Ch. 71B, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, the IDEA. The due process procedures, in addition, will reflect all state and federal laws as they come into effect. The

Team will initiate a Manifestation Determination Team when a student's suspensions reach or exceed 10 consecutive school days or when there is a pattern of non-consecutive suspensions that reach or exceed 10 school days. Convene within ten (10) days of the decision to suspend.

- The Manifestation Determination will review the following points:
 - The misconduct and/or history of misconduct resulting in 10 or more days of suspension
 - Review the student's IEP or 504 plan, recent evaluations and its implementation
 - Discuss teacher observations
 - Seek relevant information from the parent/guardian and the student
 - Discuss and determine if the student's disability caused or had a direct and substantial relationship to the misconduct
 - Was the IEP or 504 implemented? If no, did the district's failure to implement the IEP/504 cause the misconduct?
- If the Manifestation Determination Team finds that the misconduct was NOT a manifestation of the student's disability, the district is then allowed to apply the same disciplinary procedures to that student as those that apply to a student without disabilities. In addition, during the suspension period, the district will continue to provide both services and access to the general education curriculum. Finally, a Functional Behavioral Assessment and a Behavior Intervention Plan maybe recommended.

3. The IDEA allows school personnel to remove a student with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 school days, if that student has brought a weapon to school or a school function or on school grounds, possesses or uses illegal drugs (including prescription drugs which are not prescribed for the student) or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance or what the student says is a controlled substance, while at school or a school function or on school grounds, or inflicts serious bodily injury on a person, including him/herself. The appropriate interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP Team.

4. The IDEA also allows school personnel the option of asking a hearing officer or a court to move children with disabilities to an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 days, if they are substantially likely to injure themselves or others in their current placement.

5. When a special needs student has been suspended for more than ten (10) days in a school year, such that a substantial change in placement is occurring or will occur, relevant members of the IEP Team will meet to conduct a Manifestation Determination Team (see section on this process).

Notification of parent/guardian:

- Parent/guardian must be provided with the written notice of procedural safeguards.
- Except for emergencies provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and in-school suspension authorized by 53.10, a principal will not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, along with an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and an opportunity for the parent to participate in the hearing.
- The principal will 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. The notice will include:
 1. The disciplinary offense;
 2. The basis for the charge;
 3. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
 4. The opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
 5. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
 6. The right to an interpreter, if needed;
 7. If the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing:
 - a. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
 - b. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

Discipline for Students not eligible and students Not yet Found Eligible for Special Education

The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to a child who has been found not eligible for special education services, and a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is "deemed to have knowledge" that the child was eligible for such services before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred. The IDEA provides that a school district is "deemed to have knowledge" if: (1) the child's parent had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child's teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child's parent had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district's director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not "deemed to have knowledge" if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child's parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services. If

the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

Students Identified as Having a Disability and Provided with Section 504 Plans

1. Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in the Student Handbook. A student with a Section 504 plan may be disciplined like any other non-disabled student. However, if the student is going to be suspended for ten (10) or more consecutive days, expelled or suspended for more than (15) cumulative days (and there is a change in placement as a result), then a Manifestation Determination shall be done.

STUDENT DISCIPLINE REGULATIONS 603 CMR 53.00

Procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than:

- a) possession of a dangerous weapon;
- b) possession of a controlled substance;
- c) assault on a member of the school staff; and
- d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H 1/2.

DEFINITIONS

Expulsion – removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H1/2.

In-School Suspension – 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. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, is not considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, such

suspension will be considered a long-term suspension.

Long-Term Suspension – 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 long-term suspension may be served in school. Except for M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H and 37H 1/2 offenses, no student will be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year.

Short-Term Suspension – removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

Suspension – short-term suspension and long-term suspension unless otherwise stated.

Parent – a student’s father, mother, or legal guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or legal guardian.

Principal – the instructional leader of a public school or for purposes of school disciplinary matters.

Superintendent – the chief executive officer employed by a school committee to administer a school system or designee appointed for purposes of conducting a student disciplinary hearing.

Written Notice – refers to notification made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent; notification to be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student’s home if other than English.

Oral Notice – reasonable efforts to provide oral notice to parents refers to two documented attempts at contact in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

Alternatives to Suspension Under Section 37H 3/4

A principal will exercise discretion in deciding the consequences for a student who has committed a disciplinary offense; consider ways to reengage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried.

Notice of Suspension and Hearing under Section 37H 3/4

Except for emergencies provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and in-school suspension authorized by 53.10, a principal will not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, along with an opportunity for a hearing with the principal on the charge and an opportunity for the parent to participate in the hearing.

The principal will 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. The notice will include:

1. The disciplinary offense;
2. The basis for the charge;
3. The potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
4. The opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
5. The date, time, and location of the hearing;
6. The right to an interpreter, if needed;
7. If the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing:
 - a. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
 - b. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

Emergency Removal under Section 37H 3/4

A student may be temporarily removed from school when the student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal will immediately notify the superintendent in writing and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal will not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal. During the emergency removal period, the principal will:

- Make immediate efforts to orally notify parent/guardian of emergency removal and reason for the need; provide oral and written notification in English, and the home language if other than English or other means of communication where appropriate, to the student and the student's parent. The notice shall set forth in plain language:
 - (a) the disciplinary offense;
 - (b) the basis for the charge;

- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 - 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
 - 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal consistent with requirements for principal's hearings for short term or long-term suspension, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless the principal, student, and parent otherwise agree to an extension of time;
- Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension.
- The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
 - 1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
 - 2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
 - 3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
 - 4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a);
 - 5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language

of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

- 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 calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five 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 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.

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.

Principal's Hearing under Section 37H 3/4

Because the rights of the student are different under short and long-term suspensions, the principal must determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on anticipated consequences for the offense.

Principal Hearing – Short-Term Suspension

When a short-term suspension is being considered:

1. Students will meet with one or more school administrators and witnesses possessing knowledge of the conduct in question to conduct a formal hearing. One or more administrators will inform the student of the allegations or charges against them. One or more administrators will further explain the evidence against the student. The student will be provided with an opportunity to respond to the allegations and to present their version of the event, including mitigating circumstances to a school administrator. 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 appropriate remedies and consequences for the student. The administrator will decide whether to suspend the student based upon the evidence. If a student's presence in the school presents a disruption of the educational process or a danger to themselves or to other students and/or staff, an immediate suspension may be imposed prior to instituting the aforementioned steps and the local police may be notified as well.

2. After completion of due process, the administrator will inform the student and

parents/guardians of the school's decision regarding the proposed suspension both verbally and in writing. The suspension notice will include the duration and reasons for the suspension, and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

3. When a suspension is for less than 10 days, the student and parents/guardians may request a review of the principal's suspension decision by the superintendent of schools within three days of issuance of the suspension notice. The superintendent's review may include a meeting with the student and parents/guardians but will not consist of an evidentiary hearing or the more in-depth due process hearing outlined for long-term suspensions and expulsions. The superintendent will notify the student and parents/guardians in writing of the results of the review. There is no right to further review.

4. 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.

Principal Hearing – Long-Term Suspension

The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing. The principal is responsible to provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances for the principal's consideration. At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension the student's parents/guardians will:

1. Prior to the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents on which the principal may rely in making a determination;
2. To be represented by counsel or a lay person at their own expense;
3. To produce witnesses and to present the student's explanation of the incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
4. To cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. To request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. The principal will advise all parties if an audio recording is requested.

The principal will send the written determination to the student and parent. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination will:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date of the hearing, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Record 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. Notify the student of their opportunity to receive services to make academic progress during the suspension;
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent. Notice will be in and include the following information:
 - a. the appeals process requires the student or parent to file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension subject to an extension of the filing, upon agreement with the superintendent, for up to seven (7) calendar days;
 - b. the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.
 - c. 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 long-term suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Hearing Under Section 37H ¾

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension subject to an extension of the filing, upon agreement with the superintendent, for up to seven (7) calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal or allow it to go forward.

Hearings by the superintendent will occur within three (3) school days of the request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. The superintendent will make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing and will send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The superintendent will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the appropriate consequence. The superintendent will advise all parties that a hearing will be audio-recorded and a copy will be provided to the student or parent upon request. The student will have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).

The superintendent will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal and will not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal. The decision of the superintendent is the final decision.

In-School Suspension under Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$

The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses. The principal will inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charge or explain the circumstances. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which is not to exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year. The principal will notify the parent orally on the day of the in-school suspension decision to inform the parent of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal will also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior as well as strategies for student engagement and responses to the behavior. The meeting will be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, soon thereafter. The principal must document at least two attempts to reach the parent, for the purpose of orally informing the parent.

The principal will send written notice on the day of the in-school suspension 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, if a meeting has not already occurred.

Exclusion from Extracurricular Activities and School-Sponsored Events

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

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

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, or long-term suspension will have the opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, will have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local

requirements, through the school-wide education service plan. The principal will notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. The notice will include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

STUDENT EXPULSION - Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 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 school or school district 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 or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

3) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (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, a principal may, using discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (1) or (2).

4) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of their 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.

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

services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

6) Districts shall report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine-readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

7) Under the regulations promulgated by the Department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H1/2

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal if said principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of 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 counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, 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 a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of 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. 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. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

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

Procedures for Accepting, Investigating, and Resolving Complaints Alleging Discrimination/Harassment; Disciplinary Measures if it Occurred

Discrimination/harassment is unfair or unlawful treatment of a person or group because they are part of a defined group, known as a protected class. Discrimination may include treating a person differently or denying someone access to a program, service, or activity because they are part of a protected class or failing to accommodate a person's disability.

A protected class is a group of people who share common characteristics and are protected from discrimination and harassment by federal, state, or local laws. Protected classes include sex, race, color, religion, creed, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression, gender identity, veteran or military status, and the use of a trained dog guide or service animal.

Filing a complaint about discrimination/ harassment:

If you believe that you or your child has experienced unlawful discrimination or discriminatory harassment at school based on any protected class, you have the right to file a formal complaint. Before filing a complaint, you may wish to discuss your concerns with your child's teacher or with the school counselor. This is often the fastest way to resolve your concerns.

A complaint must be made to the principal in writing, describe what happened, and state why you believe it is discrimination/ harassment. It is also helpful to include what actions you would like the school to take to resolve your complaint. In most cases, complaints must be filed within one year from the date of the event that is the subject matter of the complaint.

When the school district receives your written complaint, the principal will then make sure that the school district conducts a prompt and thorough investigation. You may also agree to resolve your complaint in lieu of an investigation.

The school district must respond to you in writing within 30 calendar days after receiving your complaint, unless you agree on a different date. If exceptional circumstances related to the complaint require an extension of the time limit, the school will notify you in writing about the reasons for the extension and the anticipated response date.

When the school district responds to your complaint, it must include:

1. A summary of the results of the investigation;
2. Whether or not the school district has failed to comply with civil rights requirements related to the complaint;
3. Notice of your right to appeal, including where and to whom the appeal must be filed; and
4. Any corrective measures determined necessary to correct any noncompliance.

If you disagree with the school district's decision, you may appeal to the regional superintendent. You must file a notice of appeal in writing to the superintendent within 10 calendar days after you received the school district's response to your complaint.

The superintendent will schedule a hearing within 20 calendar days after s/he received your appeal, unless you agree on a different timeline. At the hearing, you may bring witnesses or other information related to your appeal.

The superintendent will send you a written decision within 30 calendar days after the district received your notice of appeal.

EDUCATION SERVICE PLAN

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H $\frac{1}{2}$, and 37H $\frac{3}{4}$, the Worthington School District must provide opportunities for students to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her in school suspension, short-term suspension (10 days or less), long-term suspension (10 days or more) or expulsion. Any student who is expelled or long-term suspended from school, for more than ten (10) consecutive days, may select one of the following education service options for the duration of the school suspension:

- Access to tutoring services: Students choosing this option are expected to attend tutoring sessions at a designated public site identified by the school district. The tutoring will be provided by qualified district personnel or contracted providers as assigned by Conwell Public School. The academic work will be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c. 69 §§1D and 1F. Students' tutoring schedule is by appointment and prepared weekly as based upon the availability of qualified tutors, tutoring services may only be available before or after school hours.
- Access to online education: Students choosing this option are enrolled in an online platform and taught by MA licensed teachers in each subject area. Work hours are flexible but students are expected to access online instruction by logging in at least 5 days per week for a minimum of 45 minutes to an hour per subject. Daily attendance is imperative in order to ensure success in the virtual program. The academic work will be

consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c. 69 §§1D and 1F.

Period of Expulsion or Suspension: From: _____ To: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

PLEASE MAKE YOUR SELECTION AND RETURN THIS FORM TO THE PRINCIPAL, WHO
WILL ARRANGE FOR THE SERVICES. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT
_____ AT _____.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

We encourage families to carefully consider the ramifications of sending electronic devices to school with children. These devices, such as games, radios, tape/CD players, iPods, cell phones, beepers, or electronics can often cause distraction and may be confiscated in those cases. Students bringing cell phones to school must ensure that they are turned off during school hours. The school cannot accept responsibility for these devices and we would encourage families to keep these items at home. If it is deemed necessary, school staff may keep these items during the school day. Parents may be asked to retrieve these items from the school office if they become a disruption.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent/Teacher in-takes happen during the first few days of the school year. Parent conferences are held during the first week in November. During the parent conferences your child's progress will be discussed. You are encouraged to make every effort to attend. Additionally, you may request a meeting with your child's teacher at any point throughout the year.

While report cards give valuable information in summary form, they can never take the place of personal contact. Only in a conference can the many aspects of the child's educational development and growth be fully explained and discussed between the people who know the child best -- the parents and the teacher.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to talk with teachers. However, in the interest of not interrupting the children's school day, we ask parents or guardians to call the school to arrange a mutually convenient time to speak with teachers.

REPORT CARDS

Student evaluation reports are sent home three times per year; December, March & June. Parents should look for these evaluations. Specific dates will be published in our electronic newsletter and on the school calendar.

Report cards and parent/teacher conferences are some of the ways that teachers communicate with parents and guardians about students' academic and social growth. If parents have any questions after checking a student's report card, they should contact their child's teacher.

PICTURES

School pictures, both individual and class, are taken each Fall. Pictures are generally taken in early October. Information regarding this process will be sent home prior to this date.

LOST AND FOUND

All unclaimed clothing items are kept in a specific area within the school. It is recommended that name labels be placed on sweaters, jackets, and other items for easier return. Parents are urged to visit the school to claim lost articles. Small items are kept in the office. The school accepts no responsibility for items lost. Several times throughout the year unclaimed clothing is donated.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

School staff often recognize children's birthdays. Please contact your child's teacher if this practice is contrary to your personal beliefs.

Parents are asked to contact their child's teacher if they wish to make arrangements to recognize their child's birthday during the school day. There are many ways to celebrate your child's birthday other than with food! Due to COVID, we are asking that parents refrain from sending in food to celebrate.

Parents are also asked to refrain from having their child distribute party invitations in school unless the invitation has been extended to every student in the classroom. This can be uncomfortable for excluded children.

TESTING

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) provides tests that are administered each spring to students in grades 3 through 8 and grade 10. The tests reflect the curriculum outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. These tests will evaluate the students' ability to think critically and to problem solve. If you would like your own copy of prior questions, please visit the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's website at <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/home.asp>.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

PHYSICAL EXAM & IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

Physical examinations performed by a physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner must be on file with the school nurse upon entering school as a new student, entering preschool, kindergarten, and then again in grade 4. The date the physical exam was done must be within one year prior to the entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry. Students will then be asked for documentation of a physical prior to entering grade 7 and again in grade 10.

Immunizations are required for all students prior to entering school. They are then collected throughout the child's schooling at required intervals by the state. The only exemptions for the

immunization requirement are for religious or medical contraindication purposes and the reason must be provided in writing to the school nurse by the parent/guardian or by the child's physician if it is a medical exemption. This documentation is collected at the beginning of every school year and stays on file in the child's health record. State law does not allow philosophical exemptions for immunizations.

MEDICATION

The nurse manages medication administration and/or the delegation of medication if needed. Parents are reminded to contact the school nurse if their child will need medication during school hours.

- All medication **must** be brought into school by a responsible adult and given directly to the school nurse.
- All medication **must** be in its original prescription labeled bottle or original manufacturer container. Medication will not be accepted any other way.
- All medication will be kept locked in the health office.
- No more than a thirty day supply of medication may be delivered to the health office.
- A physician's written order is **mandatory** for any medication, whether over-the-counter or prescription.

There are two exceptions to having a physician's order:

- Your child may be given medications that are listed on the emergency form you fill out at the beginning of the year with only a parent's consent because there is a standing order in place from the school physician. A list of standing orders is available upon request.
- Your child has been prescribed an antibiotic for ten days or less and you have sent in only the doses needed during school hours in the original prescription bottle with written parent consent. (You may print a copy of the parent consent form from the Nurse's Office section of our website or request one from the health office.)
- A parent consent form **must** be completed and signed **before** a child can receive any medication in school.
- A medication administration plan also needs to be signed by a parent / guardian.

In the interest of safety and potential medication interactions, the school asks parents/guardians to provide the name of any daily medication their child receives on the

student emergency form at the beginning of the year or to contact the nurse directly to ensure confidentiality.

The school also requests that if a child receives any medication for an acute condition or for/during a procedure prior to coming to school the same day that the school nurse be notified before the child is left at school for the day. A physician's note allowing the child to return to school on the same day will be requested regarding any procedure and/or medication given on the same day a child returns to school. If a physician's note is not provided and/or the child is not able to participate safely in the school day the child will be sent home by the school nurse. Please be advised that some medications can alter a child's ability to perform motor skills or participate mindfully in the classroom and in the interest of safety for your child it is important to communicate with the school nurse. For more information see "Guidelines for Medication Administration in School".

The guidelines above follow MDPH (105 CMR 210.000) and exist solely to protect the health and safety of your child. If you have any questions or need to obtain necessary forms for medication administration during school hours, please contact the school nurse at (413) 238-5856.

SCREENINGS

Height/Weight, Vision and Hearing Screenings will be performed by the school nurse following Mass Dept. of Public Health regulations. Families will be notified of abnormal findings. If a follow up screening with a healthcare provider is suggested, we ask for the completed referral report and recommendations to be given to the school nurse to be placed in the child's health record. Parents can request in writing that their child be exempt from screenings and must provide documentation from their private physician that the screening was done. Grades 1 & 4 will also be screened for body mass index (BMI).

Postural Screenings: Grades 5 & 6 will participate in annual scoliosis screenings. You will be informed of any abnormal findings. Parents can request in writing that their child be exempt from postural screenings. You will be notified ahead of time for the date of postural screenings due to the need for female students to wear a tight fitting tank top, sports bra, or bathing suit top in order for the screening to be completed most accurately.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES DURING TIMES OF ILLNESS, INFECTION, OR INJURY

Student with non-emergency illness:

Students should only be in school when they can fully participate in their educational program. Therefore, students with the following should stay at home and/or will be referred home by the school nurse:

- If a student has a fever of 100.0 degrees or higher, the student should stay home until he or she is fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever-controlling medicine.
- A student with a persistent cough, excessive discharge from the nose or eyes, a sore throat, an earache, a severe headache and/or general malaise should stay home until the condition subsides.
- If a student vomits and/or has diarrhea, he or she should be kept home for 24 hours after the last episode of vomiting and/or diarrhea without the use of medication.
- If a student has impetigo, the student must stay home for 24 hours after taking the first dose of medication. The sores should be covered until all lesions have crusted completely.
- If a student has head lice, he or she may return to school after using a physician recommended lice treatment and removal of all nits more than $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch from the scalp. The school nurse must check the student before returning to the classroom.
- If a student has a skin problem such as a rash or an infected sore, please provide a note from the student's doctor to the school nurse stating that the student has been diagnosed and treated by a physician before returning to school.
- If a student has conjunctivitis, (an inflammation of the eye where the white part of the eye becomes pink and there is often itching, drainage, and crust formation on the eyelid during the night), the student should be seen by a doctor for proper diagnosis and may return to school after receiving antibiotic treatment for 24 hours.
- If a student has strep throat, the student may return to school after any fever has resolved for 24 hours and he or she has received the appropriate antibiotic treatment for 12 hours.
- If a student is seen as unable to participate fully in the school day for any reason; the nurse will perform an assessment to determine whether the student should be sent home. In some cases, a note from the physician may be requested.
- All communicable (contagious) diseases (chickenpox, scabies,) must be reported to the school nurse, who will, if the disease is reportable, report it to the local Board of Health. Any student who has had a communicable disease must report to the school nurse before returning to the classroom.
- If a student has an injury requiring any splint, cast, or assistive device, written documentation from a medical providers office is required before a student will be allowed to participate in PE or recess.
- If your child has any Covid-19 symptoms, it is crucial that you keep your child home and contact your child's primary care physician **immediately** for a Covid-19 test. Test results must be sent to the health office for tracking purposes, positive or negative. In the event of a positive test, or a positive case within the school, prompt notification home with next steps will occur.

- Covid-19 Symptoms:
 - Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
 - Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
 - Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
 - New loss of taste or smell
 - Sore throat
 - Headache (when in combination with other symptoms)
 - Muscle aches or body aches
 - Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
 - Fatigue (when in combination with other symptoms)
 - Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) (when in combination with other symptoms)

By following the above guidelines set forth by the MDPH, we strive to provide a healthy environment for everyone in the school community. If your student has a specific chronic condition the school will make every effort possible to work with you and your student.

COVID-19 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Face masks will be required by all students, staff, and visitors regardless of vaccination status while indoors. Masks will not be required outdoors at this time. Please see “Covid-19 Guidelines for Community” document available on the school website for most up to date information.

Please monitor your child for any of the following signs/symptoms related to Covid-19 each morning, before sending them on the bus or dropping them off at school. If staff or students have any one of the symptoms listed below, they should not come to school. They should contact their healthcare provider and after contacting the provider, please contact the school’s COVID-19 contact (Samantha Pease, BSN, RN, NCSN) at (413) 238-5856 and leave a message.

Covid-19 Symptoms:

- Fever (100.0° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache (when in combination with other symptoms)
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea

- Fatigue (when in combination with other symptoms)
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) (when in combination with other symptoms)

If your child has any of the above symptoms, it is crucial that you keep your child home and contact your child's primary care physician **immediately** for a Covid-19 test. Test results must be sent to the health office for tracking purposes, positive or negative. In order to protect the health and safety of all of our students and staff, we are asking that you be diligent with keeping track of your child's health at home and keep them at home if they are not feeling well. In the event of a positive test, or a positive case within the school, prompt notification home with next steps will occur.

Masks and Physical Distancing Policies

Face masks (cloth or disposable) must be worn that fit well to cover the nose and mouth will be required at all times while indoors. Hand hygiene importance will be stressed throughout the school-day and we will have hand hygiene stations readily available for use by all. Social distancing practices (minimum of 3-6 feet distance between persons) is recommended by not required. Students will be given the opportunity for frequent mask breaks throughout the day to ensure comfort. Please work with your children on the importance of proper mask wearing and social distancing protocols prior to their arrival at school. ***Please note: bandanas, neck gaiters, or other "non-mask" face coverings will not be allowed in school due to insufficient data surrounding their effectiveness.**

Hand Sanitizing / Hand Hygiene Protocols

Students, staff, and any visitor entering the building are expected to sanitize their hands upon arrival into the building, before eating, after using the bathroom, and before leaving the building each day. Hand sanitizer stations will be available in the classrooms, outside by the tents, and readily accessible throughout the building. Bathroom and classroom sinks are also available for handwashing with soap and water.

In June 2020, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health deemed that school supplied hand sanitizer is a substance that requires a physician's order. The signed standing order has been obtained from the R.H. Conwell school physician for students of R.H. Conwell. If parents do not wish for their student to use the hand sanitizer provided by the school, please send in an opt-out letter to the nurses office to have on file. Students with this letter will be expected to wash their hands using soap and water throughout the day.

Return to School Guidelines Following Covid-19 Symptoms or Exposure

Please see “Covid-19 Guidelines for Community” document available on the school website for most up to date information.

WELLNESS

Demonstrating commitment to the full development of our students, the Worthington School Committee endorses a Wellness Policy, which defines the goals and the means to further our students’ understanding of the important role that good nutritional choices, and physical activity will have on their lives. Central to this policy statement is the belief that success will be achieved from the combined efforts and encouragement of teachers, administrators, staff, and parents. We recognize wellness is a critical component that enhances a student’s academic performance. The complete “School District Wellness Program” policy is available on the School’s website.

HOMESCHOOLING

Parents and guardians may choose to educate their children at home. School district policy outlines the process. Parents who plan to educate children at home who are between their sixth and sixteenth birthday must inform the Superintendent prior to commencing a home education program. Factors considered by the superintendent and school committee in deciding whether or not to recommend approval of a home education program is:

1. A description of the instructional program to be taught, including subjects, time allocations, instructional aids and educational experiences to be used
2. The academic background, life experiences and/or other qualifications of those who will be instructing the child or children as they relate to the instructional program described in item 1
3. The method of assessment to be used [including a brief explanation of each assessment method including daily logs, journals, progress reports, portfolios or dated work samples, an independent report made by someone acceptable to both the superintendent and the parents, Standardized test results, consultation with the superintendent or appropriate school principal, or any other method agreed to by both superintendent and home educator(s)]
4. Confirmation that the home-education program will provide a minimum of 900 elementary or 990 secondary hours of instruction.

English Language Learners (ELL)

Under G.L. c. 71A, Sheltered English Immersion is the method used to provide instruction and support the English language acquisition process for young children in which all classroom

instruction is in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language. English learners will be provided language support services until they are proficient enough in English to participate meaningfully in the district's education program. Some English learners will reach this level of English proficiency within one year, but some will not. Since students acquire proficiency in English at different rates, districts cannot limit to one year the provision of language support services to English learners who are not yet able to participate meaningfully in the district's programs in English, and all reading, writing, and subject matter are taught in English.

Sheltered Immersion (ELL) Under G.L. c. 71A, all textbooks and other instructional materials are to be in English, no subject matter shall be taught in any language other than English, and students learn to read and write solely in English. However, teachers may use an English learner's native language when necessary for clarification purposes. Instruction and curriculum are designed to permit active engagement by ELL students throughout the school day. English learners can bring personal and educational backgrounds and experiences to their classrooms that are different from those students born and educated in the United States. Teachers design instruction to link academic concepts to each student's prior knowledge and experience. Classroom instruction emphasizes English vocabulary by combining the teaching of vocabulary and the teaching of content. Teachers adapt content, including texts, assignments, and assessments. Content is presented in all modalities, including written texts which are within the student's English proficiency level. Testing and informal classroom assessments are also appropriate for each student's English proficiency levels. Regular classroom activities provide opportunities for students to practice and apply new language and content knowledge in English with frequent opportunities for students to demonstrate their mastery of English and content in English.

****NOTE:** Districts with a critically high number of students speaking a language other than English are permitted, through special application, to conduct some grades classrooms or subject matter classes through bilingual education.

Criminal Offense Records Investigation (CORI)

M.G.L. c. 71, § 38R requires all schools to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with students. A CORI must be obtained at least every three years during an individual's term of employment or service. Volunteers are not subject to the fingerprint-based state and national criminal record check required for all school and contractor employees. The law also allows schools to conduct CORI checks on subcontractors or laborers commissioned to do work on school

grounds that may have direct and unmonitored contact with students. This includes school bus or van drivers employed by a transportation company under contract with the district to provide transportation services to students.

Fingerprinting

Volunteers who would like to participate in classroom activities, library, field trips, field days and other activities with the teacher or other school personnel present must complete a CORI check at least once every three years.

Volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, such as activities afterschool, off-site or field trips that will break up into small groups without a teacher present, or transport children in their own personal vehicle to/from said activity, must complete the national fingerprint-based criminal background check in addition to a CORI.

Bus Transportation and Behavior

School personnel are responsible for students while they are being transported on school buses. The same rules and expectations for appropriate student behavior in school remain in effect while students ride the school bus. To ensure the safety of students, the privilege of school bus transportation is subject to withdrawal for any student whose conduct is distracting to the bus driver. The bus driver, in conjunction with the Administration has the responsibility for and has full authority over the conduct of students on the bus. The bus driver will report each infraction by submitting a Bus Conduct Report to the Administration on the same day as the occurrence, if possible. Reported incidents will be reviewed by the Administration and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken. Serious violations will result in the loss of bus privileges. If a student is suspended from riding the bus it is the responsibility of the student and their parent or guardian to provide transportation to and from school.

STUDENT RECORDS

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

The Student Record Regulations adopted by the Board of Education apply to all public elementary and secondary schools in Massachusetts. The regulations are designed to ensure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in carrying out their responsibilities under

state and federal law. The regulations apply to all information kept by a school or school district on a student in a way that the student may be individually identified.

In accordance with federal regulations and for the benefit of parents and students in the school district, protocol is aligned with rights regarding educational records and confidentiality. A student and a parent have the right to inspect and review educational records. (FERPA 99.4).

To request a copy of your child's student records:

1. Contact the school principal and inform him/her that you would like to review your student's educational records. You must give written consent before any personally identifiable information is released about your student to anyone other than the parent/guardian.
2. Allow the school five days to copy and provide the requested information. There may be a fee to cover the copying.

If you feel the educational record is misleading or inaccurate, you can request an amendment to the part of record that is inaccurate in writing with the School Principal:

1. Inform the school principal that you have discovered inaccurate or misleading information and would like it amended or removed.
2. Allow the school district five to 10 working days to decide whether your request is valid.
3. If the school district disagrees with the request, you can file for a hearing with the school district to voice your concerns.
4. If, as a result of the hearing, the school district decides that the information is inaccurate or misleading, the school will amend the record and inform you of the amendment in writing.
5. If, as a result of the hearing, the school district decides the information is accurate and not misleading, they will notify you of the right to place a statement in the record explaining why you feel the information is misleading or incorrect.
6. The school district is obligated to place a copy of your statement in the educational record.

The R.H. Conwell School trains school personnel on the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, M.G.L. c. 71, s. 34H, and 603 CMR 23.00 and on the importance of information privacy and confidentiality.

Student Records: Non-Custodial Parent

As required by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with law and Department of Education regulations. The school district will follow the law and the regulations developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education to standardize the process by which public schools provide student records to parents who do not have physical custody of the students

("non-custodial parents"). As required by M.G.L. c.71, §34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

(a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

1. The parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent, or
2. The parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation, or
3. The parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record.

(b) The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).

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

(d) Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).

(e) The school must delete the electronic and postal address and telephone number of the student and custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

(f) Upon receipt of a court order, which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

Student Records Regulations/FERPA

The Massachusetts Student Records Regulations were created to ensure rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records and to help schools adhere to the law. The rights specified in the regulations are the rights of the student's parents or guardians if the student is under 14 years of age or has not yet entered 9th grade. If the student is between 14 and 17 years of age or has entered the 9th grade, the student can also exercise those rights.

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

*Family Policy Compliance Office. U. S. Department of Education 600 Independence Avenue,
SW Washington, DC 20202-4605*

Safety, Security and Violence

The district is committed to maintaining an orderly educational environment, and to using administrative procedures that keep schools and offices free from disruption and prevent unauthorized persons from entering school property. The purpose of this policy is to promote mutual respect, civility and orderly conduct among employees, students, parents and the public. It is not intended to deprive any person of their right to freedom of expression, but only to maintain a safe and harassment-free workplace and learning environment for students and staff. In seeking to have its employees be seen as positive role models for children and youth in our communities, the district seeks public cooperation in encouraging positive communication, and discouraging volatile, hostile or aggressive actions by anyone.

- Any individual who disrupts, or threatens to disrupt school or office operations, threatens the health or safety of students or staff, willfully causes property damage, uses loud or offensive language which could provoke a violent reaction from others, or who has otherwise established a continued pattern of unauthorized entry on school property, will be directed to leave school property promptly by the school Principal or designee.
- If any member of the public uses obscenities or speaks in a demanding, loud, insulting or demeaning manner, the Administrator or employee to whom the remarks are directed will calmly and politely ask the speaker to communicate in a civil manner. If the abusing party does not correct the behavior, the employee will verbally notify the offending person that their meeting, conference, discussion or phone conversation is terminated, and if on school property, the offending person will be directed to leave the premises.
- If an individual directed to leave under the above conditions does not do so promptly, the Principal or designee shall inform the offending party that charges may be filed for violating Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 272, Section 40, Disturbance of School or Public Meeting, and that law enforcement officials will be notified.
- When violence is directed against employees, or theft against property, employees will promptly report the occurrence to their Principal or designee and complete an Incident Report.

- When any attack, assault or threat is made against employees or their supervisors on school property or at school-sponsored activities, an Incident Report must be completed and filed with law enforcement officials.
- When it is determined that a member of the public has, or is likely to violate these provisions, the employee will immediately notify their supervisor and file an Incident Report. If possible, the offending party should be given a copy of this policy at the time of the occurrence.
- Application of this policy and reporting procedure is also encouraged in any situation or circumstance where it is observed that laws are knowingly being violated in the school.

BULLYING

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or faculty members of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property.
2. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for the target
4. Infringes on the rights of the target at school or
5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber bullying shall also include:

- The creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying as written above.
- The distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses the definition of bullying as written above.

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

Retaliation is defined as any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment by a current student or former student under the age of 21 directed against a person in response to an action that person has taken or knowledge that the person has reliable information about bullying.

Prohibition of Bullying, Cyber bullying and Retaliation Acts of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation are prohibited:

- On school grounds, 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
- At a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on their rights at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The School Committee expects administrators and supervisors to make clear to students and staff the bullying will not be tolerated. The Principal or their designee will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment, including bullying, and will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment, including bullying. The range of disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation may include but are not limited to suspension and or expulsion and termination for employees. Disciplinary actions shall be based on the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action fine of not more than \$500.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment by a student directed against any student, staff or other individual for reporting or filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, for cooperating in an investigation under the district's Policy, or for taking action consistent with the policy.

School Community Member is defined as any student, district or school employee, school committee member, independent contractor, school volunteer, parent or legal guardian of a

student, or a visitor on school premises or at a school-related or school-sponsored function or activity.

Faculty Member 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.

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

1. Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions or decisions regarding student evaluation or participation in school programs or activities (quid pro quo sexual harassment); or,
2. Such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or school performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment (hostile environment sexual harassment).

Sexual harassment may occur student-to-student, adult to student, student to adult, adult-to-adult, male to female, female to male, female-to-female, and/or male-to-male.

Target is a school community member against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Policy scope:

Any form of bullying, harassment, cyber bullying, and/or cyber-harassment is prohibited, whether in the classroom, on school premises, immediately adjacent to school premises, traveling to or from school, or at school-sponsored events, whether or not held on school premises.

"Traveling to or from school" includes on a school bus or other school related vehicle, at official school bus stops, and walking to or from school within a reasonable time before or after school hours.

Bullying or harassment, including cyber bullying and/or cyber-harassment, that is not conducted at locations noted above are covered by this policy if the incident results, or could result, in a substantial disruption of the school learning environment for one or more individuals and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of the school.

Reporting and Investigations:

Each member of the school community is responsible for reporting any observations of bullying or harassment, or credible information that such an act has taken place.

Reports of bullying or harassment incidents, including cyber bullying and/or cyber-harassment, occurring outside the scope (see above) of the school/district will be investigated to determine if the incident(s) resulted in a potential or actual disruption of the school learning environment for one or more individuals and/or the orderly day-to-day operations of the school.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) of both targets and alleged perpetrators of bullying or harassment incidents, including cyber bullying and/or cyber-harassment, will be notified of such incidents within a timeframe that will be set per the district's procedures. Results of investigations of incidents will be communicated to parent(s)/guardian(s) of both targets and alleged perpetrators within a timeframe that will be set per the district's procedures, and also within the restrictions of the Federal Educations Rights and Privacy Act. If additional time is required to conduct the investigation, this will be communicated to the parent(s)/guardian(s) and no more than two such extensions shall be permitted under this policy.

District Procedures:

The Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, will define the guidelines and procedures to implement this policy in the district's "Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention Plan and Procedures". The written plan and procedures developed by the Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, to enforce this policy shall comply with applicable laws, including without limitation the Federal Educations Rights and Privacy Act, as amended.

The plan shall provide for the school appropriate procedures for reporting and investigating incidents of bullying and/or harassment. Specific staff positions responsible for receiving and following up on reports will be identified in these procedures. The procedures will include a standard reporting form that may be used by any school community member for all incidents and types of bullying and/or harassment. The purpose of the reporting form is to trigger an investigation, which protects the safety of the target, bystanders, and/or concerned family/community members. The plan will also specify procedures, in conjunction with the district's memorandum of understanding with the Worthington Police Department, for notifying local law enforcement where criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator. Within the requirements of FERPA, the guidelines and procedures to implement the Bullying and Harassment Policy shall include a specific amount of time within which parents will be informed of a complaint and a specific amount of time for investigations to be completed.

Additionally, the plan will include procedures for communicating with parent/guardians, including dissemination of prevention information; a professional development plan for all

staff; and instruction for students at all school levels in social-emotional learning and violence prevention.

Consequences:

Consequences and appropriate remedial action for students or faculty members who commit acts of bullying and/or harassment may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including suspension or expulsion as outlined in the schools' Codes of Conduct.

Retaliation or threats of retaliation in any form designed to intimidate the target of bullying and/or harassment, those who are witnesses to such behavior or those who are investigating such behavior will be subject to discipline as outlined in each school's student Code of Conduct and the Faculty Handbook.

Acts of bullying or harassment allegedly committed by adult members (including teachers, administrators, staff members, other school personnel, parents/guardians, community partners, or other visitors to the school) of the school community will be reported to school administrators and/or the Superintendent's office, for investigation and consequences, in accordance with applicable procedures, including appropriate legal actions.

Retaliation or threats of retaliation by adult members (including teachers, administrators, staff members, other school personnel, parents/guardians, community partners, or other visitors to the school) of the NPS community in any form designed to intimidate the victim of bullying or harassment, those who are witnesses or those investigating an incident of bullying or harassment, will be subject to additional consequences, in accordance with appropriate procedures.

Oversight and Accountability:

The "Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan" will be reviewed and revised by the district administrative team every two years and such revisions will subsequently be presented to the School Committee.

The Superintendent, and/or his/her designee, will report on the total number of complaints, investigations, verified acts and any trends of bullying, harassment, cyber bullying and/or cyber-harassment district-wide at least annually to the School Committee.

Other Legal Remedies:

Any school community member may also pursue legal remedies or other avenues of recourse, including, but not limited to, filing a complaint with:

Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa>, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700.

The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR)
Reporting Responsibilities

Everyone in the school community is responsible for immediately (the first opportunity and no later than within 24 hours) reporting incidents of harassing, bullying and/or retaliation, by anyone, in any form, that are directed at or witnessed by them at school or at a school-sponsored event. Failure to report such incidents or failure to cooperate with an investigation of such an incident will result in disciplinary action. Further, it is the responsibility of all faculty, staff, and students to intervene verbally in any incident when it is possible for them to safely do so.

When to report:

- if you are a target or victim
- if you are a witness
- if you see insulting or demeaning graffiti or other visual displays
- if you have other reasons to believe that there may have been a possible incident or incidents involving harassment, bullying or retaliation.

To Whom to Report:

School Nurse: Samantha Pease; Administrative Assistant: Lisa Ouellet;
Principal/Superintendent: Gretchen Morse-Dobosz.

Any harassing behavior that involves adult to student or student to adult must be referred to Gretchen Morse-Dobosz, R.H. Conwell Elementary School Principal/Superintendent at 413--238-5856. All reported incidents of harassing behavior will be investigated. In the event a violation of this policy is established, R.H. Conwell will take reasonable steps to stop the violation and prevent its recurrence. These steps may include actions against those whom have been determined to be in violation.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT IN A PUBLICLY FUNDED PROGRAM

1. The district has developed and implemented staff training at least annually on the use of physical restraint consistent with regulatory requirements. Such training occurs within the first month of each school year and, for employees hired after the school year begins, within a month of their employment.
2. At the beginning of each school year, each school identifies staff authorized to serve as school-wide resources to help ensure the proper administration of physical restraint. Staff so identified have completed in-depth training in the use of physical restraint consistent with 603 CMR 46.03(3) and (4).

3. The R.H. Conwell Elementary School administers physical restraint on students only when needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm. The district implements restraint procedures consistent with Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regulations in order to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint.
 4. R.H. Conwell has developed written procedures regarding appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention. Such procedures are annually reviewed and provided to school staff and made available to parents of enrolled students.
 5. R.H. Conwell has developed and implemented reporting requirements and procedures for administrators, parents and the Department consistent with the regulations.
 6. R.H. Conwell has developed and implemented any applicable individual waiver procedures consistent with the regulations and amendments of July 2015.
- M.G.L. c. 71, s. 37G; 603 CMR 46.0

GENDER IDENTITY

An Act Relative to Gender Identity (Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011),¹ which became effective on July 1, 2012, amended several Massachusetts statutes prohibiting discrimination on the basis of specified categories, to include discrimination on the basis of gender identity. Among the statutes amended is G.L. c. 76, § 5, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity against students who enroll in or attend the public schools. G.L. c. 76, §5 now reads as follows:

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

WEAPONS

[MGL c.269, s.10](#) prohibits carrying of a “firearm” on school grounds. For the purposes of this paragraph, “firearm” shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged.

Whoever, not being a law enforcement officer and notwithstanding any license obtained by the person pursuant to chapter 140, carries on the person a firearm, loaded or unloaded, or other dangerous weapon in any building or on the grounds of any elementary or secondary

school, college or university without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of the elementary or secondary school, college or university shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or by imprisonment for not more than 2 years or both. A law enforcement officer may arrest without a warrant and detain a person found carrying a firearm in violation of this paragraph.

Any officer in charge of an elementary or secondary school, college or university or any faculty member or administrative officer of an elementary or secondary school, college or university that fails to report a violation of this paragraph shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and punished by a fine of not more than \$500.

R.H. Conwell Elementary Handbook

Dear Parents,

We require you to go over this handbook with your son(s) or daughter(s). This handbook contains valuable information that anyone associated with this school should be familiar with.

I have received and read my copy of the R.H. Conwell Elementary School handbook.

Child's Name: _____ Grade _____

Child's Name: _____ Grade _____

Child's Name: _____ Grade _____

Child's Name: _____ Grade _____

Parent 1 Printed Name: _____

Parent 1 Signature: _____

Parent 2 Printed Name: _____

Parent 2 Signature: _____

Child(ren) Signature: _____

Child(ren) Signature: _____

Child(ren) Signature: _____

Child(ren) Signature: _____