

**The Merrimac Schools  
at  
Helen R. Donaghue School  
and  
Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School  
Family Handbook  
2021-2022**



Pentucket Regional School District	
<b>Helen R. Donaghue School</b> <b>24 Union Street Extension</b> <b>Merrimac, MA 01860</b> <b>Phone: 978-346-8921 / Fax: 978-346-7839</b>	<b>Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir</b> <b>104 Church Street</b> <b>Merrimac, MA 01860</b> <b>Phone: 978-346-8319 / Fax: 978-346-7844</b>

**Merrimac Schools Website**

The primary purpose of this handbook is to provide families with useful information for quick reference and specific information about the school.

**Parent/guardian and student signatures (APPENDIX F) are required each year indicating this handbook has been reviewed and discussed with students as necessary.**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

## VISION STATEMENT

# Pentucket Regional School District Administration Staff Directory

Dr. Justin Bartholomew 978-363-2280 ext. 120

Mr. Brent Conway 978-363-2280 ext. 127

Mr. Greg Labrecque 978-363-2280 ext. 110

Dr. Michael Jarvis 978-363-2280 ext. 113

Ms. Catherine Page 978-363-2280 ext. 118

Mr. Ken Kelley 978-346-8921 (Donaghue School)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir School)

Mrs. Stephanie Dembro 978-346-8921 (Donaghue School)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir School)

**Additional District staff contact information may be found by visiting the district website at <http://www.prsd.org/staff>.**

# Welcome to the Merrimac Schools

In the following pages, you will find the general rules, regulations, policies and expectations for our school. Please take time to review them with your child(ren) prior to the start of the school year so that we can begin our year with great success. We ask that you sign the last 2 pages and return it to your child's teacher to indicate that you have read the handbook and reviewed it with your child.

The handbook and all major sources of information may be found on the Merrimac Schools website or District website. These websites include student information forms, free and reduced lunch applications and many other important forms, applications, and information parents often need. The most updated policy list can be found on our district website PRSD Policies.

We look forward to working with you over the course of the upcoming year and please do not hesitate to reach out to us if there is anything we can do to help.

## Pentucket Regional School District School Calendar 2021-2022

Please refer to the PRSD District website (<http://www.prsd.org>) for the complete school year calendar.  
Please note that the Early Release Time for the Donaghue is 11:50 AM and for the Sweetsir is 12:00 PM.

AUGUST	
Monday, August 30, 2021	First Day of School
SEPTEMBER	
Friday, September 3, 2021	NO SCHOOL
Monday, September 6, 2021	Labor Day - NO SCHOOL
Friday, September 17, 2021	Early Release - Prof. Dev. Teachers
OCTOBER	
Monday, October 11, 2021	State Holiday - NO SCHOOL
Friday, October 15, 2021	Early Release - Prof. Dev. Teachers
NOVEMBER	
Thursday, November 11, 2021	Veterans Day - NO SCHOOL
Wednesday, November 24, 2021	(3hrs) Early Release - Thanksgiving Break
Thursday, November 25, 2021 through Friday, November 26, 2021	Thanksgiving Break - NO SCHOOL
Tuesday November 30, 2021	(3hrs) Early Release - Parent Teacher Conferences
DECEMBER	
Thursday December 2, 2021	(3hrs) Early Release - Parent Teacher Conferences
Thursday, December 23, 2021	Early Release - School closes for Winter Break
Friday, December 24, 2021 through Friday, December 31, 2021	Winter Break - NO SCHOOL
JANUARY	
Monday, January 3, 2022	School Reopens
Friday, January 14, 2022	(3hrs) Early Release - Prof. Dev. Teachers
Monday, January 17, 2022	Dr. Martin Luther King Day - NO SCHOOL
FEBRUARY	
Friday, February 18, 2022	NO SCHOOL - Prof. Dev. Teachers
Monday, February 21, 2022 through Friday, February 25, 2022	February Break - NO SCHOOL
MARCH	

Friday, March 11, 2022	(3hrs) Early Release - Prof. Dev. Teachers
<b>APRIL</b>	
Friday, April 15, 2022	(3hrs) Early Release - Prof. Dev. Teachers
Monday, April 18, 2022 through Friday, April 22, 2022	Spring Break - NO SCHOOL
<b>MAY</b>	
Friday, May 27, 2022	(3hrs) Early Release - Prof. Dev. Teachers
Monday, May 30, 2022	Memorial Day - NO SCHOOL
<b>JUNE</b>	
Saturday, June 4, 2022	High School Graduation
Friday, June 10, 2022	(3hrs) Early Release - Last day of school - NO snow days
Friday June 17, 2022	(3hrs) Early Release - Last day of school - w/5 snow days
Monday June 20, 2022	Juneteenth Holiday Observed

### **Merrimac School Hours**

#### **Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School (Preschool – Grade 2)**

- **Preschool:**
  - Morning Session 8:40 AM – 11:15 AM
  - Afternoon Session 12:20 PM – 2:55 PM
- **Grades K - 2:**
  - 8:35 AM - 3:00 PM

#### **Helen R. Donaghue School (Grades 3 – 6)**

- **Grades 3-6:**
  - 8:25 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

## Merrimac School Staff Directory

### PRINCIPAL

Mr. Ken Kelley [kenkelley@prsd.org](mailto:kenkelley@prsd.org)  
978-346-8921 (Donaghue Office)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir Office)

### ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL

Ms. Stephanie Dembro [sdembro@prsd.org](mailto:sdembro@prsd.org)  
978-346-8921 (Donaghue Office)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir Office)

### SPECIAL EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Ms. Kathie Sullivan [sullivan@prsd.org](mailto:sullivan@prsd.org)  
978-346-8921 (Donaghue Office)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir Office)

### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Ms. Michelle Hall [mhall@prsd.org](mailto:mhall@prsd.org)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir Office)  
Ms. Cassandra Engel [cengel@prsd.org](mailto:cengel@prsd.org)  
978-346-8921 (Donaghue Office)

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

#### Preschool

Ms. Tracey McCarthy [tmccarthy@prsd.org](mailto:tmccarthy@prsd.org)  
Ms. Mikayla McCarthy [mmccarthy@prsd.org](mailto:mmccarthy@prsd.org)  
Ms. Danielle Benton [dbenton@prsd.org](mailto:dbenton@prsd.org)

#### Kindergarten

Ms. Sarah Headley [sheadley@prsd.org](mailto:sheadley@prsd.org)  
Ms. Molly McDonough [mmcdonough@prsd.org](mailto:mmcdonough@prsd.org)  
Ms. Kathryn Sico [ksico@prsd.org](mailto:ksico@prsd.org)  
Ms. Amanda Terry [aterry@prsd.org](mailto:aterry@prsd.org)

#### Grade 1

Ms. Jody Caproni [caproni@prsd.org](mailto:caproni@prsd.org)  
Ms. Julie Puleo [jpuleo@prsd.org](mailto:jpuleo@prsd.org)  
Ms. Maggie Ruder [mruder@prsd.org](mailto:mruder@prsd.org)

#### Grade 2

Ms. Kate Byrne [kbyrne@prsd.org](mailto:kbyrne@prsd.org)  
Ms. Anna Carbone [acarbonate@prsd.org](mailto:acarbonate@prsd.org)  
Ms. Margaret Grimes [mgrimes@prsd.org](mailto:mgrimes@prsd.org)

#### Grade 3

Ms. Laura Buckley [lbuckley@prsd.org](mailto:lbuckley@prsd.org)  
Ms. Kathy Terceiro [terceiro@prsd.org](mailto:terceiro@prsd.org)  
Ms. Sara Treem [streem@prsd.org](mailto:streem@prsd.org)

#### Grade 4

Ms. Melanie Hitchcock [mhitchcock@prsd.org](mailto:mhitchcock@prsd.org)  
Ms. Windy Pinto [pinto@prsd.org](mailto:pinto@prsd.org)  
Ms. Janelle King [jking@prsd.org](mailto:jking@prsd.org)

#### Grade 5

Ms. Lynette Provencal [lprovencal@prsd.org](mailto:lprovencal@prsd.org)  
Ms. Ann Marie Richards [richards@prsd.org](mailto:richards@prsd.org)  
Ms. Audrey Tarr [tarr@prsd.org](mailto:tarr@prsd.org)

#### Grade 6

Ms. Michelle Palowich [mpalowich@prsd.org](mailto:mpalowich@prsd.org)  
Mr. William Winter [wwinter@prsd.org](mailto:wwinter@prsd.org)

## Merrimac School Staff (continued)

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS**

Ms. Nicole Amalfitano	<a href="mailto:namalfitano@prsd.org">namalfitano@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Julia Doherty	<a href="mailto:jdoherly@prsd.org">jdoherly@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Madison Estes	<a href="mailto:mestes@prsd.org">mestes@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Amy Fletcher	<a href="mailto:afletcher@prsd.org">afletcher@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Hayley Flint	<a href="mailto:hflint@prsd.org">hflint@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Abbie Glynn	<a href="mailto:aglynn@prsd.org">aglynn@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Christine Joyce	<a href="mailto:joyce@prsd.org">joyce@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Elizabeth Kucker	<a href="mailto:ekucker@prsd.org">ekucker@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Alana Mercer	<a href="mailto:amercer@prsd.org">amercer@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Leslie Mitchell	<a href="mailto:lfmitchell@prsd.org">lfmitchell@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Katie Wendt	<a href="mailto:kwendt@prsd.org">kwendt@prsd.org</a>

### **SPECIALISTS**

#### **School Nurse**

Ms. Ann Brady-Lozier  
978-346-8210 (Sweetsir) [abrady-lozier@prsd.org](mailto:abrady-lozier@prsd.org)

Ms. Jessica Cossette  
978-346-8115 (Donaghue) [jcossette@prsd.org](mailto:jcossette@prsd.org)

#### **School Psychologist**

Ms. Amy Brennan  
978-346-8921 (Donaghue Office)  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir Office) [abrennan@prsd.org](mailto:abrennan@prsd.org)

#### **Adjustment Counselor**

Ms. Kelsey Bille  
978-346-8921 (Donaghue Office) [kbille@prsd.org](mailto:kbille@prsd.org)

Ms. Sarah Pond  
978-346-8319 (Sweetsir Office) [spond@prsd.org](mailto:spond@prsd.org)

#### **Title I Teachers**

Ms. Beth Villani [bvillani@prsd.org](mailto:bvillani@prsd.org)

#### **Reading Teachers**

Ms. Jennifer Lacroix [lacroix@prsd.org](mailto:lacroix@prsd.org)  
Ms. Jamie Latham [jlatham@prsd.org](mailto:jlatham@prsd.org)

#### **Speech/Language Path**

Ms. Jennifer Manry [jmanry@prsd.org](mailto:jmanry@prsd.org)  
Ms. Kelley Mello [kmello@prsd.org](mailto:kmello@prsd.org)  
Ms. Jaclyn Scarsella [jscarsella@prsd.org](mailto:jscarsella@prsd.org)

#### **Art**

Ms. Drew Dupre [ddupre@prsd.org](mailto:ddupre@prsd.org)

#### **Music**

Ms. Johanna Dickson [jdickson@prsd.org](mailto:jdickson@prsd.org)

#### **Physical Education**

Ms. Leigh Curtis-Pare [lcurtis-pare@prsd.org](mailto:lcurtis-pare@prsd.org)

#### **Instrumentation/Band**

Ms. Amy Guerriero [aguerriero@prsd.org](mailto:aguerriero@prsd.org)

#### **Library/Media Aide**

Ms. Dawn Ackerman [dackerman@prsd.org](mailto:dackerman@prsd.org)



## Merrimac School Staff (continued)

### PARAPROFESSIONAL SUPPORT

Mr. Adrian Bzenas	<a href="mailto:abzenas@prsd.org">abzenas@prsd.org</a>
Mr. James Buckley	<a href="mailto:jbuckley@prsd.org">jbuckley@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Lisa Candage	<a href="mailto:lcandage@prsd.org">lcandage@prsd.org</a>
Ms. LeeAnne Davis	<a href="mailto:ldavis@prsd.org">ldavis@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Diane Deroian	<a href="mailto:dderoian@prsd.org">dderoian@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Tracy Dewar	<a href="mailto:tdewar@prsd.org">tdewar@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Mary Sue Driscoll	<a href="mailto:mdriscoll@prsd.org">mdriscoll@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Sandra Farrell	<a href="mailto:sfarrell@prsd.org">sfarrell@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Ellen Gregory	<a href="mailto:egregory@prsd.org">egregory@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Colleen Hamel	<a href="mailto:chamel@prsd.org">chamel@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Susan Joslin	<a href="mailto:sjoslin@prsd.org">sjoslin@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Amy LeBlanc	<a href="mailto:aleblanc@prsd.org">aleblanc@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Deb McClelland	<a href="mailto:dmcclelland@prsd.org">dmcclelland@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Brenna McLaughlin	<a href="mailto:bmclaughlin@prsd.org">bmclaughlin@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Julie Meninno	<a href="mailto:jmeninno@prsd.org">jmeninno@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Maria Nogueira	<a href="mailto:mnogueira@prsd.org">mnogueira@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Belinda Power	<a href="mailto:bpower@prsd.org">bpower@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Lauren Prescott	<a href="mailto:lprescott@prsd.org">lprescott@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Suzanne Quattrini	<a href="mailto:squattrini@prsd.org">squattrini@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Amanda Smith	<a href="mailto:asmith@prsd.org">asmith@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Alison Story	<a href="mailto:astory@prsd.org">astory@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Noreen Sullivan	<a href="mailto:nsullivan@prsd.org">nsullivan@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Kellie Thomas	<a href="mailto:kthomas@prsd.org">kthomas@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Kris Twombly	<a href="mailto:ktwombly@prsd.org">ktwombly@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Kelli Vance	<a href="mailto:kvance@prsd.org">kvance@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Stephanie Viola	<a href="mailto:sviola@prsd.org">sviola@prsd.org</a>
Ms. Sheila Wallace	<a href="mailto:swallace@prsd.org">swallace@prsd.org</a>

### ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

<b>Day Custodian</b>	Mr. Clyde Sheppard (Sweetsir)	
	Mr. Steve Tummino (Donaghue)	
<b>Night Custodians</b>	Mr. Abdullah Husson (Donaghue)	
	Mr. Dave Motsis (Sweetsir)	
<b>Kitchen Personnel</b>	Mrs. Linda Vienneau	<a href="mailto:lvienneau@prsd.org">lvienneau@prsd.org</a>
	Lunch Manager (Sweetsir)	
	Mrs. Roxanna Paradis	<a href="mailto:rparadis@prsd.org">rparadis@prsd.org</a>
	Lunch Manager (Donaghue)	

## Other Important Contact Information

### PTO

<b>President</b>	Theresa Nunes	<a href="mailto:president@merrimacpto.org">president@merrimacpto.org</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	Kaitlin Pellerin	<a href="mailto:merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org">merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	Amanda Merrifield	<a href="mailto:merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org">merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org</a>
<b>Vice President</b>	Sara Vendshus	<a href="mailto:merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org">merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	Jaclyn Kelley	<a href="mailto:merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org">merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Pam Burke	<a href="mailto:merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org">merrimacpto@merrimacpto.org</a>

### SCHOOL COUNCIL

Ken Kelley	Principal
Stephanie Dembro	Assistant Principal
Kathleen Terceiro	Teacher
Colleen Liporto	Parent

### Merrimac School Leadership Team:

Ken Kelley  
Stephanie Dembro  
Kathleen Sullivan

### PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

<b>Groveland Members</b>	Emily Dwyer (2023) Richard Hodges, Secretary (2022) Ashley McLaughlin (2024)
<b>Merrimac Members</b>	Wayne Adams (2024) Joanna Blanchard (2022) Chris Markuns, Vice Chairman (2023)
<b>West Newbury Members</b>	Chris Reading (2023) Marie Felzani, Assistant Treasurer (2024) Dena Trotta, Chairwoman (2022)

## **General School Information**

### **SCHOOL ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir School starts at 8:35 AM and dismisses at 3:00 PM. Students can be dropped off or walked up to the building by a parent. **Students are not supervised prior to 8:20 AM so students should not arrive on campus before this time.**

The Helen R. Donaghue School starts at 8:25 AM and dismisses at 2:50 PM. Students can be dropped off or walked up to the building by a parent. **Students are not supervised prior to 8:10 AM so students should not arrive on campus before this time.**

Students arriving after the prescribed starting time are considered tardy and must report to the Main Office before being admitted to the classroom. If you drive your child to school, your cooperation in observing this policy will be most appreciated.

### **School Cancellation/Delay Announcements**

The “Alternate Learning Day”, “No School” and “Delay” announcements will be broadcast on district social media portals as well as Channels 4, 5, 7, FOX25, and NECN. Information will also be posted on Pentucket’s website (prsd.org) by 6:00 A.M. and an automated message system will inform parents via their preferences on the messaging system (phone, text, email, etc...) Parents who wish to change their preferences should contact the main office of their child’s school for each child in their household who attends a Pentucket school.

The Superintendent may delay the opening of school for 1, 1 ½ or 2 hours or cancel school altogether when weather conditions are hazardous during the early morning hours. There will be no AM Preschool with any of these delays. Full day students will be dismissed at the regular time. Parents may use their own discretion in determining whether or not to keep their children home during snowy or extremely cold weather, but it will still be considered an absence.

Parents should make provisions for and with their child for such emergency dismissals. This should include having a neighbor who can meet the bus or that your child should go to in the event of an emergency and the bus drop off is not during the regularly scheduled window.

## **BUSING TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION/ BUS ROUTES**

Route information will be published in the Newburyport Daily News and on the Pentucket School District website, [www.prsd.org](http://www.prsd.org).

### **BUS CHANGES**

Children in grades K-6 will not be allowed to travel on a bus, other than their assigned one, without written notification to the office of a permanent daycare arrangement by the parent. We are not able to accommodate students traveling to a friend's home due to space constraints on the buses. Per the busing rules, students in kindergarten and first grade are required to have someone at the bus stop to meet them. Second graders can be dropped off alone, as long as the parent has given written permission to do so. Third graders and up can be dropped off without someone meeting them. If a parent wants an older student to have someone meet them at the bus stop, then they must submit a written notice of such.

### **BUS SAFETY**

There are four critical times involved for the pupils in bus transportation:

1. the bus stop,
2. boarding the bus,
3. riding the bus and,
4. disembarking.

Parents are advised that it is best if pupils do not use the bus stop as a play area. Once on the bus, supervision is by the bus driver. As common courtesy and for the safety of all, children are expected to behave in an orderly manner. Misbehavior could divert the bus driver's attention and cause an accident. For this reason, regulations pertaining to pupil conduct on buses are fairly strict.

### **BUS REGULATIONS**

These regulations have been established to provide maximum safety and protection for all bus students. Respect for the bus driver will be expected from all students at all times. The driver's instructions shall be followed. Failure to comply can result in disciplinary action. Typically, bus evacuation drills are held in October where students will rehearse with the driver the proper evacuation of the bus in the event of an emergency.

### **COURTESY**

Bus drivers will spend time in September and then periodically throughout the year formally reviewing the bus regulations with the students. Drivers have been trained in productive ways in which to interact with children. Show courtesy to the bus driver and other students at all times.

### **BE WAITING FOR THE BUS 10 MINUTES BEFORE DUE TIME**

While waiting for the bus, students remain at the side of the road. They maintain orderly conduct while waiting for the bus. Students approach the bus only when the bus comes to a complete stop and the door opens. Never run for the bus.

### **THUMBS UP**

Students should wait for the "thumbs up" signal from the bus driver before crossing the street to board the bus.

## **SEATING ON THE BUS**

Students sit on the bus as directed by the bus driver. Students sit no more than three to a seat. Drivers may assign seats. The first two rows on the bus may be reserved for those students who struggle with behaviors. Otherwise, Kindergarten and first grade students sit toward the front of the bus.

## **MOVE IN**

Students sit on the seat so that space is readily available for a second or third student to sit in the seat. Moving in makes it easier for others to quickly see that there's room in the seat. This is also a time saver.

## **BACK-TO-BACK AND BOTTOM-TO-BOTTOM**

Students are instructed that the safest way to sit in a bus seat is with their back to the back of the seat and their bottom to the bottom of the seat. No other way of sitting on a bus seat is acceptable.

## **BACKPACKS ON LAP**

All student belongings are to be held on his/her lap, as this is the safest place, should the bus come to a sudden stop. The bus driver has the right to make the determination as to whether or not large or sharp objects pose a hazard to others. Other transportation arrangements may have to be made.

## **STAY SEATED**

The procedure means that at all times when the bus is in motion, students remain seated. Students are to change seats only at the direction of the bus driver. Students are also instructed to stay seated until the bus comes to a full stop before leaving the bus. When arriving at school, students stay seated until the seat in front of them is empty.

## **FEET OUT OF AISLES**

The procedure refers to having feet, packages, etc. kept out of the aisle so that the aisle is free for others to safely pass through while loading or unloading, or in an emergency situation.

## **TALK SOFTLY**

Talking on the bus is very acceptable as long as each person talks softly. The less noise on the bus; the more the driver can concentrate on watching the road. Shouting, loud talking, name calling, or abusive language is not permitted.

## **DO NOT THROW ANYTHING**

Students must understand that any object thrown on a bus can have a dangerous effect. Other students may be hurt and/or cause the bus driver to be distracted from watching the road.

## **NO EATING**

We do not eat on a bus because:

- You could choke on the food if the bus stopped quickly.
- Food left on the bus could be sticky or slippery and ruin clothing or cause someone to fall.
- It makes the bus messy.
- There are students who have allergies to whom food could be harmful if opened or left on the bus.

## **WINDOWS AND EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT**

Keep arms, hands, head and objects inside the bus. Students open or close windows only with the bus driver's permission. The emergency door and/or window is to be used as an exit only in an emergency and at the direction of the bus driver.

## **EXITING THE BUS**

Students are instructed to stay seated until the bus comes to a full stop before leaving the bus. When arriving at school, students stay seated until the seat in front of them is empty. When arriving at their afternoon destination, students should walk ten feet in front of the bus and wait for the "thumbs up" before crossing the street.

## **WALK TO AND FROM THE BUS**

For safety's sake, students walk in single file, being careful not to push or shove anyone, when approaching or leaving a bus.

## **PARENTAL AND BUS DRIVER SAFETY CONCERNS**

Parental concerns in regard to issues of bus safety can be expressed by putting concerns in writing to the principal. One form of communication the bus driver may use to communicate their safety concerns is through Bus Incident/Conduct Reports.

## **BUS CONDUCT REPORTS**

1. If, after a **verbal warning** from the bus driver about an inappropriate behavior, the behavior continues or recurs, a student receives a **written bus conduct report**. A copy is forwarded to the Principal/Assistant Principal and the Bus Manager. The student's copy is signed by his/her parent and returned to the school office.
2. Upon receipt of a **second written report**, there will be an automatic suspension for a period of one day from the bus. The bus conduct report will be processed as outlined in #1.
3. A **third report** means automatic suspension from the bus for a period of three days. The bus conduct report will be processed as outlined in #1.
4. A **fourth report** means automatic suspension from the bus for a period of five days. The bus conduct report will be processed as outlined in #1. A meeting with parents and the bus company representative will be necessary before allowing the student to ride the bus again.
5. **Major offenses** such as destroying property, using matches or a lighter, profane language or tampering with the emergency equipment will result in an automatic 3-day suspension for the student. Liability for any bus vandalism shall be assumed by the parent(s) or legal guardian of the student(s) involved.

Repeated misbehavior can result in denial of the privilege of transportation.

DUE TO ALLERGIES, FOOD IS NOT ALLOWED TO BE EATEN ON THE BUS. BALLOONS ARE NOT ALLOWED ON BUSES.

### **Important Information regarding COVID-19**

**The DESE has not provided its official Fall School Reopening Guidance as of this time, Revised 8/10/21. This section will be updated as we are provided with more guidance.**

## **A – Z Parent Resource Guide**

### **ACCIDENT INSURANCE**

Students may participate in insurance plans providing benefits for school accidents. The insurance is offered at a nominal cost, but is entirely voluntary. Complete information on the program is sent home with your child at the beginning of the school year.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY (JE):**

The Pentucket Regional Schools require a high level of participation in engaged learning. Regular class attendance enables students to benefit from classroom discussions, presentations and interactive activities. These shared academic experiences are integral to the learning process and cannot be recreated or replicated.

Massachusetts law (Chapter 76, section 1) requires that a child between the ages of 7 and 16 attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven day sessions or fourteen partial day sessions in any six month period. The school must uphold the law.

It is important that a child be present each day in order to maintain a high level of achievement. Your child's school life is important. Send him/her to school regularly and on time. **A doctor's note will be required if your child has been absent for five or more consecutive days. This does not apply for mandated isolation/quarantine due to Covid-19 symptoms.**

If a student has a high rate of unexcused absenteeism or tardiness, administration will work closely with families to address the issue. The principal may make a referral to the Department of Children and Families or file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the courts for parents who encourage absenteeism. Children who are absent from school because of illness or accident on an extended basis may be eligible for home instruction. The principal and the school nurse are available to work with parent(s)/ guardian(s) to provide this service.

If your student will be absent or tardy, you are expected to notify the school by phone or email prior to the start of school that day. See "Call in Procedures" below for further information.

## **Absence/Tardy Information**

For school coding purposes, absences are broken up into two categories, excused and unexcused. However, the absence holds the same amount of weight when looking at the overall performance of the student.

Arrangements should be made with the classroom teacher to clarify when and how work needs to be completed. It is the responsibility of the student to make up for class work missed during any absence. Teachers do not provide work ahead of time for any upcoming absences. Failure to complete work will negatively impact a student's grade.

Students arriving late to school must report to the main office with a parent and be signed in. A child is considered late for school if he or she is not in the building by the school's prescribed time.

### **Excused absence/tardy includes:**

- Documented illness or injury
- Bereavement/family funeral
- Major religious observances
- Extraordinary family circumstances (excused at the discretion of the principal)
- Legal and court requirements

### **Unexcused absence/tardy is not covered by the aforementioned definition. Examples of an unexcused absence may include, but may not be limited to:**

- Repetitive or chronic absence or tardiness due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional
- Truancy
- Family vacations
- Undocumented absences
- Non-emergency family situations

### **Tardy Consequences:**

- After 5<sup>th</sup> tardy – a letter will be sent home
- After 10<sup>th</sup> tardy – a conference with the parent and student will be scheduled.
- Subsequent tardies beyond the ten (10) tardies, a 51A (Neglect) or CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) may be filed at the discretion of the Principal.

### **Additional Actions:**

The Pentucket Regional School District expects parents [Note – All references to 'parent' mean parent(s) or guardian(s)] and students to make every reasonable effort to have their children attend school every day. The continuity of day-to-day instruction is a critical dynamic to the overall success of each student.

If a pattern of absences develops, the administration, along with the appropriate personnel from the Groveland, Merrimac, or West Newbury Police Department, will consider filing a Child Requiring Assistance complaint with the Essex County Court for truancy.

### **Absence Due to Family Vacations:**



In order to avoid disruption to the educational process, parents are strongly encouraged not to schedule vacation during school days. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process in each subject area in ways that make-up work cannot reverse.

Parents are asked to advise the school of their plans and to inquire about related deadlines for make-up work. Be aware that teachers are not required to make long-range assignments for vacationing students. Students may retake tests missed during their absence from school at the convenience of the teacher. The exception to this may be the MCAS testing administered in grades 3-6. Vacations must not be scheduled during this time (see MCAS Info). If outside the testing window, make-ups cannot be given.

### **Religious Observations:**

Students may be granted excused absences when the school's schedule conflicts with religious holidays. A student may be required to submit written notification simply stating that they are absent for religious observation, not requiring specific information regarding religious affiliation.. A student should not suffer adverse or prejudicial consequences from an excused absence, should be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make up school work missed during the absence, and will not be subject to penalty scholastically or to attendance records due to absences incurred due to religious observances. A sincere attempt will be made to avoid assemblies, assessments, and special school events on religious holidays.

### **Makeup Work**

For general, excused absences, it is the responsibility of the student to make up all missed assignments, tests or quizzes. The student will have as many days missed in order to make up the work. For example, if a student is absent for two (2) days, the student will have two (2) days to make up the required work.

If a student is out of school due to illness, the parent may request work assignments through the teacher. The parent will be responsible for retrieving this material at the close of the school day in the Office and will be responsible for overseeing their son's/daughter's completion of the assignment. If a student is to be absent for an extended period of time due to illness, (fourteen or more consecutive days), the family may be eligible to receive some tutorial services. If you believe your child will have an extended absence, please contact the principal's office.

### **Extracurricular Participation**

Participation in an after-school or evening event will not be allowed for students with an unexcused absence on the day of the event.

### **Attendance Policy – If a student has:**

- Five (5) or more consecutive days absent, parents must obtain a doctor's note and submit it to the school.
- Seven (7) absences, a letter of warning will be issued to parents reminding them of the school's attendance policy and that they will be contacted to schedule a meeting should absences approach 10 days.
- Ten (10) absences, a parent conference may be scheduled to discuss the attendance policy and to develop a proactive attendance plan.
- Fifteen (15) absences (in disregard of the personal attendance plan), an attendance hearing will be held with the parents, administrators, and School Resource Officer.

- Subsequent absences beyond the fifteen (15) absences (in disregard of the personal attendance plan), a 51A (Neglect) or CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) may be filed at the discretion of the Principal.
- Twenty-five (25) absences or more could result in retention.

**LEGAL REF: MGL Chapter 76, Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 16, 16A, and 20**

**Previous Adoption: November 15, 2011**

**New Adoption: May 7, 2019**

## **BALLOONS**

Some students in our schools may have life-threatening latex allergies. In order to provide a safe environment for these students, please do not bring balloons into the school.

## **BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM**

The Sweetsir and Donaghue Schools offer a tuition-based Before and After School Program (BASP). The program provides a variety of age-appropriate activities, supervised free play and time for homework. The program encourages creativity, recreation and learning. The program is held from 6:45 AM - 8:15 AM in the morning at the Donaghue School. Sweetsir students are transported to FNS by bus. The After School Program is held from 3:00 PM - 5:30 PM at the Donaghue School. Sweetsir students are transported to HRD by bus. The program operates on the same schedule as the school calendar. The Before and After School Program (BASP) Handbook is distributed with all registration forms. Please contact LeeAnne Davis, ldavis@prsd.org for enrollment/fee information.

## **BICYCLE RIDERS**

Bicycle riders are to park their bikes in the racks provided upon arrival at school. It is also recommended that children lock their bikes. The school cannot be responsible for bicycles on campus during the day.

## **BRINGING ITEMS TO SCHOOL**

The only time students should bring toys, games, etc. to school is when their teacher instructs them to do so (e.g. show and tell or field trips). The students will assume responsibility for any items brought to school. Items specifically not to be brought to school include trendy gadgets, valuable trading cards, and personal electronic devices of a non-educational value. Such belongings can be lost or broken at school. We would appreciate your help in keeping these items at home.

## **CALL IN PROCEDURES FOR ABSENCE/TARDY**

Parents are required to email or call the school by 8:30AM on the morning their child is going to be absent or tardy. The message should include your name, your student's name, the date, and why the student will not be in school. If we don't hear from you, we will make every attempt to call/email you at home or at work to verify your child's absence.

Donaghue Parents

[DonaghueAttendance@prsd.org](mailto:DonaghueAttendance@prsd.org)

978-346-8921

Sweetsir Parents

[SweetsirAttendance@prsd.org](mailto:SweetsirAttendance@prsd.org)

978-346-8319

## **CELEBRATIONS**

Many parents ask how they can celebrate accomplishments/milestones in school. Some parents wish to send cupcakes or other food treats to school for children to share in the classroom. In keeping with our health, food, and latex allergy guidelines, we ask that parents who want to celebrate in school do so with

things other than food. Examples of alternatives may be: pencils, stickers, bookmarks, guest reader, etc. Invitations for children's birthday parties or other parties held outside of school may not be distributed at school.

## **CELL PHONE/PERSONAL ELECTRONIC GUIDELINES**

Classroom teachers might allow the use of mobile devices (e.g. cell phones, laptops, smart-watches, tablets) during instructional time for instructional purposes only. Outside of designated instructional time, using video or recording features of any kind on a cell phone or electronic mobile device is prohibited at any time in school or on school grounds. For family convenience, children can bring their cell phone to school, but the phone must be kept powered down and stored in their backpack including the time that they are on the bus. Phone calls, texting, and the use of social media sites including but not limited to: Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook is prohibited. If a student is found using a cell phone inside the school or on school grounds without teacher permission, the device will be retrieved by a staff member and kept in the office for parents to retrieve at the end of the day.

## **CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

The Administrator of each school is responsible for the classroom assignments of children and for children transferring into the school during the school year. In making classroom assignments, the principal will consider a number of factors to provide the most efficient and effective classroom program for all children at a given grade level, and for the school in general. These factors include, for example:

- Educational needs of the child
- Placement of special needs and academically able children
- Appropriate instructional groupings
- Appropriate balance of girls and boys
- Social dynamics of the group
- Teacher(s) recommendations
- Class size

## **DISMISSAL**

Dismissal of children during school time is expected only for illness or other emergencies. For the safety and security of your child, please adhere to the following procedure for dismissal times:

- Dismissals before 11:00 a.m. will be marked as an absence.
- If you know that you or someone else will be picking your child up early from school, please write a note to that effect and send it to your child's teacher.
- Whether or not a note is received, you or your designee will be required to sign your child out of school, through the office. No child is dismissed to meet a parent in the parking lot, on a curb, etc. When you come into the school office, we will contact your child over the intercom, or your child may be in the office at the specified time to meet you. You or your designee may be asked to present identification.
- Children will not be dismissed to any individual other than a parent or guardian without the express written permission of the parent or guardian. If there is any question regarding the dismissal to a person other than the parent or guardian, the office may call the parent/guardian for permission to dismiss the child. If there is someone your child should not be dismissed to, please be sure to note that information on the space provided on the Pentucket Regional School District Confidential Emergency Health Information Form and Student Information Form.

- In consideration of all students preparing for dismissal, parents may not dismiss students after 2:35 PM.
- Students who are picked up by an adult at dismissal time will be monitored to ensure that the student is going home with the appropriate adult. Parents and caregivers must fill out a dismissal slip as they come into the main office waiting area regardless of how well the staff knows the child and adult. This slip is handed to the designated staff member at the exit doors of the hallway to ensure who has picked up each child. Any parent who wishes for their child's parent/caregiver to be identified on a daily basis with a photo ID may do so by contacting the main office. These students will be held for dismissal in a different location and will be dismissed at the end of the timeframe to ensure a higher degree of thoroughness.

## **DRESS CODE GUIDELINES**

Students should dress in a neat and hygienic manner. In addition, students should dress appropriately with respect for their own body, the respect and consideration of classmates, and respect for the school they are attending. Dress of an extreme nature will not be allowed. Any form of dress which is considered contrary to good hygiene, distractive or disruptive in appearance, or which is detrimental to the purpose or conduct of the school is not allowed. Any student wearing a questionable outfit or articles of clothing will be referred to the office.

Examples of inappropriate dress for students include but are not limited to:

- Clothing with profanity or language deemed inappropriate for a school setting
- Clothing or footwear that is considered non-hygienic or unsafe
- Clothing that supports/encourages drug or alcohol use
- Hats and hoods (inside of the building)

## **FIRE OR EVACUATION DRILLS**

Fire/evacuation drills, as well as other safety drills are held periodically throughout the school year, well distributed from September to June. The Fire Chief supervises a minimum of four (4) drills per year. This is to ensure proper training of the children in an emergency situation.

## **GIFTS**

Parents/guardians and students wishing to express their appreciation to individual faculty and staff members may do so through a donation to the school library or the classroom. Small handmade gifts, cards, or notes from the student are also appropriate. (Teachers may not accept a gift from an individual parent valued at more than \$50.00.) Room parents/guardians may organize group gifts for faculty and staff during the holiday season and at the end of the school year.

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

*Upon reading the following information, parents must sign the Health acknowledgement form at the end of this handbook and return to the school. See Appendix F- Forms to Sign.*

### **School Nurse**

School Health Services are very well defined by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH). There is a full time Registered Nurse at the Sweetsir School and the Donaghue School. The nurse's primary role is to support learning, and nursing practice is based on reliable and evidence based information. We accomplish this by implementing strategies that promote student and staff health and safety.

Here are a few of the following services that your school nurse provides: illness and injury assessments and interventions (first aid), identification, assessment, planning, intervention and evaluation of student health concerns, pediatric nursing procedures, height, weight, vision, hearing and postural screenings, activities and education to promote health, chronic disease management and education, care plans for students with health conditions, medication administration, crisis team participation, schedule clinics, and maintenance of health records. The school nurses are also members of the special education team and are involved in developmental assessments when requested.

### **Emergency Care**

Emergency care in the school is limited to “FIRST AID”. First aid as defined by the American Red Cross is the immediate and temporary care given in case of accident or sudden illness.

Each child is given a Student Health & Emergency Information form at the time of registration and at the beginning of each school year so that we may update our files. We must have the address and phone number where the parents/guardians can be reached at home and at work and the name of two neighbors or friends who can assume the responsibility for the child’s care if the parents/guardians cannot be reached. The name of the child’s health care provider is also to be on this form. If any of this information changes, the parents/guardians must notify the school immediately. If the parents/guardians are going to be out of town on vacation or will be gone for the day and thus cannot be reached by phone, it is imperative that they have made arrangements for whoever will assume care, should an emergency arise. A sick or injured child cannot be kept in school. Careful planning in advance can prevent a very difficult situation.

### **Health Related Dismissal**

Sometimes it is necessary to dismiss a child due to illness. A child must be fever free for 24 hours without medicine before returning to school. If a child is continuously vomiting, they need to be 24 hours illness free before returning to school. If a student is on an antibiotic (e.g. for Strep, conjunctivitis,...) they need to be treated for 24 hours and fever free before returning to school. If a child returns to school while a rash is still present, a note from a health care provider indicating that it is okay for your child to return to school is also necessary.

A child would be dismissed from school for the following:

- Fever at or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit
- Undiagnosed rash
- Uncontrollable cough
- Headache, earache, or any other persistent pain
- Injury deemed to require professional medical attention
- Fainting or seizure
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea due to illness
- Any suspected communicable disease or condition

**A date-specific note from a healthcare provider is required if your child is absent for five or more consecutive days due to illness.**

### **Medication At School**

The nurse has standing orders from the school physician to administer acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Motrin/Advil), hydrocortisone cream 1%, cough drops, saline eyewash, Tums antacids, and Benadryl. Parents must give permission for these to be dispensed at the start of every school year. Whenever possible, a child's medication should be given at home. The first dose of any new medication should always be given at home. Please contact the school nurse as soon as possible if your child needs to be given medication during school hours.

All paperwork **MUST** be on file before any medication can be administered at school. The nurse needs medication orders from the health care provider and parent/guardian permission to administer the medication. **Please be aware that all medication must be delivered to school by a parent or guardian.** The nurse cannot accept medication given by a student in their lunchbox or backpack. We do not allow the medication to be carried back and forth from school with the student. These protocols are in place for the safety of the children.

Prescription medications must be in their original pharmacy supplied container with the label intact. Ask the pharmacy to provide you with an extra container to keep at school. Only a 30 day supply of prescription medication can be accepted at a time. Parents or guardians may come to school to administer any medication in the Health Office. For prescription medications given for less than 10 days (i.e. an antibiotic), the prescription label on the pharmacy container can suffice as a health care provider's order.

If there is a change in a child's medication, please notify the school nurse immediately. As needed medication (i.e. Epipen, inhaler, etc.) need to have updated parent permission forms and medication orders at the start of every year.

### **Injuries/Physical Disabilities at School**

If your child sustains an injury that requires special accommodations at school (crutches, cast, wheelchair, etc), please contact the school nurse before your child returns. A note from the health care provider explaining the disability and accommodation instructions to be observed during the school day are required for your child to miss PE class due to an injury. A written note from a parent does not excuse a child from PE class. A note from the health care provider is also required once a child is cleared to return to activities after an injury.

### **Immunizations**

Massachusetts immunization regulations specify minimum immunization requirements for enrollment in school (105 CMR 220.000). These regulations are revised periodically to incorporate any changes in the requirements. The law provides for exclusion of students from school if immunizations are not up to date, but permits exemptions for medical and religious reasons. These exemptions must be updated annually.

Pentucket Regional School District is required to follow the state laws governing immunization (see Chapter 76, Section 15 of Massachusetts General Laws). Children will not be allowed to attend school unless the following requirements are met upon registering:

- Current immunization documentation. Note: If there is a medical exemption to an immunization, a healthcare provider's note must be provided annually. A religious exemption requires a letter signed by a parent/guardian and must be updated annually.
- Copy of current healthcare provider's physical examination of the student.

- A signed release to obtain any outstanding records from the previous school.

Documentation of non-compliance will be referred to the building principal for follow-up.

### **Health Screenings**

Several state mandated health screenings take place each school year. These include height, weight, vision, hearing and postural for scoliosis. These screenings vary according to grade level.

K:	vision and hearing
1st:	vision, hearing, height and weight
2nd:	vision and hearing
3rd:	vision and hearing
4th:	vision, hearing, height and weight
5th:	vision and postural
6th:	postural

In fourth grade, a physical is required by the student's health care provider or by the school health care provider. Please send documentation of a 4<sup>th</sup> grade physical to the school nurse. Follow-up on any negative health findings will be reported to the parent/guardian immediately.

### **HOMEWORK**

A child's education is enhanced when home and school work together in a partnership for learning. Homework is an integral part of the learning process and an important component of the curriculum. Evaluation of school progress includes performance in home assignments as well as in class work. Homework assignments have these important purposes:

- Many learning tasks for practice, reinforcement, and/or enrichment should be done outside of the classroom, providing opportunity for more direct teacher instruction and guidance in class.
- Such assignments help develop initiative, responsibility, and self-direction in students and are an important aspect of the evaluative process.
- "Out-of-class" assignments provide parents with opportunities to see firsthand what is happening in school and to actively participate in their children's learning.

Homework will be assigned on a regular basis, Monday through Thursday evenings, for all students in grades 1 – 6. Following are guidelines of approximate maximum amounts of time for assigned homework at each grade level.

Grade 1.....	10 minutes
Grade 2.....	20 minutes
Grade 3.....	30 minutes
Grade 4.....	40 minutes
Grade 5.....	50 minutes
Grade 6.....	60 minutes

Teachers can adapt these expectations including flipped classroom work, no homework practice and/or basic literacy and math practice nightly.

The content of the homework assignments will vary but generally will include the basic skills in the primary grades and content subjects in the intermediate grades. Both daily assignments and long-range

projects will be included. Self-selected reading, practice of basic math facts and a review of notes, when needed, should be a regular part of daily study. Students in all grades are encouraged to read every night in addition to the homework assignment. This would include being read aloud to and reading to themselves. Research shows that children who are read to on a daily basis perform better in school. Positive attitudes about work and a sense of responsibility begin early when nurtured and valued both at home and at school.

It is important that students, teachers, and parents understand their responsibilities associated with homework. These responsibilities are specified below.

The STUDENT has the responsibility to:

- Have a copy of the assignment and make sure assignments are completed
- Complete assignments neatly and on time
- Note any questions about homework to be asked in class
- Return assignments and books to school when due
- Complete all assigned “make-up” work as soon as possible

The TEACHER has the responsibility to:

- Advise parents and students of his or her classroom homework procedures
- Provide homework that will reinforce, enrich, or give practice related to academic skills
- Give assignments clearly
- Follow up on homework assignments and answer student questions to eliminate confusion or misunderstanding
- Inform parents when a student is not completing assignments

The PARENT has the responsibility to:

- Be knowledgeable of the district and individual classroom homework procedures and expectations
- Provide a quiet place for their child to study
- Make the teacher aware of all questions and concerns related to assignments
- Encourage independence in completion of assignments
- Be available to assist in reinforcement of basic skills

Requests for homework for children not in school must be made by contacting the office by 10:00 AM to allow the teacher time to assemble the assignments and necessary materials and to get them to the office by the end of school. You can pick the assignment up in the office after 2:00 PM and before 3:30 PM. If a friend will be bringing the assignments home instead, please tell the office the child’s name and the name of his/her homeroom teacher.

Students who are absent for several days due to illness should make arrangements with their teacher to complete any missed assignments and to receive any needed extra help.

## **KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION**

Children living in the Town of Merrimac are eligible for Kindergarten if they reach 5 years of age before September 1<sup>st</sup> of the entering year.

Parents are asked to notify the school if they have a child eligible for kindergarten. Kindergarten registration notices will also appear in the local newspapers. Packets of information are available for pick



up in January. A parent orientation program is held each spring. The following information is required for entrance into kindergarten:

- Birth Certificate
- Completed Health Forms
- Verification of Immunization
- Proof of Residency
- Doctor's Physical Report

### **Full Day Kindergarten**

PRSD offers free full day kindergarten at the Sweetsir School. For parents interested in signing up, and for all other inquiries, please contact Michelle Hall at [mhall@prsd.org](mailto:mhall@prsd.org).

### **Kindergarten Screening**

In the spring (April or May), parents of incoming kindergarten students are invited to a Parent Orientation Night for an informational meeting on the kindergarten program and screening process. Shortly after, parents bring their children to school for kindergarten screening. Fine motor, gross motor, language, social, and reading readiness skills are screened to identify children who may need further evaluation and educational intervention. Parents are notified of results before the school year ends. For exact dates please contact the main office.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Each of the elementary schools have a system for handling lost or found articles. Students should report all valuable articles that are lost or found to the Principal's office. To assist in the identification of lost articles, clothing, books, school bags, and lunches, please mark each article with the child's name and grade.

### **MESSAGES**

The school office will take messages for teachers. It is rarely possible for a teacher to come to the phone immediately in response to a call, but a return call will be made as soon as possible. Students will be called to the telephone only for emergency situations.

### **OPEN HOUSE NIGHT**

Teachers will host an open house night for parents each fall. District curriculum objectives and additional school based educational resources will be covered. This is also an opportunity for families to see other aspects of the building, such as Related Arts spaces and hear from additional staff members about other curriculum and/or resources.

### **MCAS**

Students in grades 3-6 will take the MCAS test in both ELA and Math. Students in grade 5 will additionally be tested on the MCAS Science.

The dates for the MCAS testing windows are typically in the spring. See the Merrimac School calendar for more exact dates or feel free to call the main office with any questions regarding testing.

### **PARENT CONFERENCES**

Parents can sign up for conferences during the open house night in the fall.

The following few simple rules will enable the teacher and you to make best use of your conference time:

- Do not bring small children.
- Plan on a 10 minute conference.

If you are unable to make your regularly scheduled conference time, there is always time to meet at a mutually agreed upon time. However, this has to be carefully arranged as a teacher cannot carry on a conference when her class is in session nor can classes be interrupted to schedule conferences.

Parent/Teacher conferences are a time for getting acquainted and informing each other.

<p><b><u>Parents learn about the student's:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Special abilities including academic</li> <li>• Adjustment to school</li> <li>• Relationships with other students</li> <li>• Progress toward interests and goals</li> <li>• Strengths and needs as viewed by the teacher</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Teachers learn about the student's:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaction to school</li> <li>• Responsibility at home</li> <li>• Cooperation at home</li> <li>• Activities and hobbies</li> <li>• Strengths and needs as viewed by the parents.</li> </ul>
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### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)**

The Merrimac School at the Dr. Frederick N. Sweetsir and Helen R. Donaghue Schools has an active PTO.

The objectives of the Merrimac PTO are:

- To promote the welfare of children in the home, school and community.
- To help build a home/school relationship, so that parents and teachers may work cooperatively in the training of their children.
- To develop united efforts between educators and the general public and to secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental and social education.
- To assist the schools financially through a variety of fundraising events within the school year.

The following is a sampling of the PTO sponsored activities:

- Cultural Arts Programs for students
- Monthly School Stores and Bookstores
- Merrimac Goes Back to School Day
- Fall Harvest Festival
- Family Activity Nights
- Teacher Appreciation Luncheon and Breakfast
- Breakfast with Santa
- After School Exploration Programs
- Ice Cream Social
- School Yearbook
- Scholarships

PTO Fundraisers:

- Fall Fundraiser
- Square 1 Art
- Box Tops for Education
- Spring Fundraiser
- Boosterthon
- Food Truck Fridays

More information about the Merrimac PTO can be found on their website: [www.merrimacpto.org](http://www.merrimacpto.org)

## **PRESCHOOL**

The Sweetsir School has an integrated Preschool Program that is available for 3, 4, and 5 year old children. The Preschool offers a nurturing environment and a variety of experiences to help children explore and grow. The program is available mornings (8:40 AM - 11:15 AM) and afternoons (12:20 PM - 2:55 PM) Monday through Friday with 2, 3, and 4 day options. An early childhood teacher and educational support personnel teach each class. Parents/guardians will be kept informed of classroom news and special events through a monthly newsletter. We welcome parent/guardian support and involvement in our program.

## **RECESS**

Recess is a time for students to take a break, to interact socially with one another, and to get some fresh air and exercise. Under ordinary weather conditions, children go outdoors at recess periods. This makes it important for students to come to school with clothing appropriate for the outside weather conditions. This is especially true during the colder months, when warmer clothing is needed. When snow is on the ground, students must wear “the high five” (hat, gloves, jacket, snow pants and boots) to play in the snow. Students may also go outside for a few minutes if it is lightly raining, so they should come to school with suitable clothing when such weather is forecasted. Whenever conditions are extreme, they will remain inside. Individual and small group games are provided and played in the classroom to give the students a break from their studies. **Please do not ask for your child to stay in for recess unless your doctor sees the need and sends a note to the school.**

## **RECORDS & PARENTAL NOTIFICATION REGULATIONS**

The Massachusetts Department of Education has developed regulations regarding handling of student records. A full copy of the Regulations may be seen at the Office of the Superintendent of Schools.

Pertinent features for elementary students and parents follow:

- A student record includes all the information concerning the student which is kept by the school system.
- The eligible student and his/her parent(s) shall have access to the student record. The school must comply with such a request within two days of the request.
- Non-custodial parents must annually submit to the school Principal a written request for student records, including report cards. This request must specify several things relevant to the custody of the student. Non-custodial parents can obtain a copy of the regulations, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 34H, at their child’s school office.
- School administrators, teachers, counselors, and school clerical staff do not need permission to see student records. Exceptions to this include probation officers and people designated by subpoenas as a court order. In these cases, written notice must be given to the student or parent by the school and an entry must be made showing the person and the reason for examining the record.
- In general, no information in a student record shall be disseminated without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. A log shall be kept to record the dissemination of any information in the student record.

The PRSD School Committee has adopted the policy below pertaining to the release of directory information to third parties (JRA): [Policy JRA and JRA-R](#)

Pentucket Regional School District abides by the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Massachusetts laws and regulations in providing access to and confidentiality of student records.

As permitted by these laws, the Pentucket Regional School Committee has designated selected student records to be "directory information." For preschool and elementary school students, the following records have been designated as directory information:

- Name
- Grade
- Classroom assignment
- Individual and group photographs
- Cable broadcasts/videos of typical school events, programs, and projects

Pentucket Regional School District will release the designated directory information to third parties and governmental agencies as required by law without the consent of the parent or eligible student, unless the parent or eligible student provides the principal with written notice that he/she does not wish the school to release such information. The notice must be received annually by a date designated by the principal. Pentucket Regional School District also discloses all student records without the consent of the parent/eligible student to officials of other schools in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. To the extent required by applicable law, the Pentucket Regional School district will provide parents/eligible students with an annual notice of their general rights relative to student records. The Superintendent will determine the content and method of such notice.

LEGAL REF: Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act (FERPA):

20 U.S.C. § 1232ga, 34 CFR §99

Massachusetts Student Records Regulations: 603 C1VIR 23.00, et seq.

Student Records Access for Non-Custodial Parents: General Laws, Chapter 71, §34H

Adopted: September 1, 2009

*If you do not wish the school district to release directory information to third parties as above, please provide the Principal with written notice by September 15<sup>th</sup>*

### **COLLECTION OF PUPIL INFORMATION POLICY (JBR)**

The Pentucket Regional School District will abide by the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPR), 20 U.S.C. section 1232h, which affords parents certain rights regarding the District's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams.

All surveys that will be administered in the Pentucket Regional Schools must have written approval from the Superintendent prior to administration of the survey, regardless of the persons or agency administering the survey or collecting the information.

The Superintendent must receive a copy of, approve, all \*parental notices, from Principals/Assistant Principals or other administrators, pertaining to specific school PPRA notifications of surveys prior to their distribution to parents.

## Regulations

In support of its policy to abide by the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment Act (PPRA), the Pentucket Regional School Committee has developed the following regulations after consultation with parents and school personnel. It is the Pentucket Regional School District Administrators responsibility to comply with and enact the policy and these regulations.

The Pentucket Regional Schools will afford parents (and students who are 18 years old or are emancipated minors under State Law) their rights regarding conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams by adhering to the following:

Written parental consent will be obtained before students take a survey that concerns one or more of the following restricted areas ("protected information survey"):

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family
- Sex behavior or attitudes
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- Critical appraisals or others with whom respondents have close family relationships
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parent
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility

Notice and an opportunity to opt a student out will be provided for:

- Any non-protected information survey
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law, and
- Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.

Parents will be provided with the opportunity to inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

- Protected information surveys of students
- Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes, and
- Instructional material used as part of the education curriculum

The District will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes.

Principal/Assistant Principal (and other administrators) are responsible for implementing these regulations and making arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes.

\*Principal/Assistant Principal will directly notify, such as through US mail or email, parents to provide them with a schedule of activities requiring parental notice and consent of opt-out for the upcoming school year. This notification to parents will occur at the beginning of the school year if the Principal/Administrator has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that

time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification and the opportunity to consent or opt-out.

Adopted: November 15, 2011

### **PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION (IHAMA)**

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

At the beginning of each school year, **or at least thirty (30) days prior to a program**, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). The notice will be provided to parents at least thirty (30) days prior to the start of the program. Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

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

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

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each principal by September 1 of each year.

REF: Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

Legal Ref: M.G.L. 71:28

Adopted: December 7, 2010

### **REPORT CARDS**

Report cards are issued in January and June for children in Preschool and Kindergarten. Both reports reflect the developmental philosophy of our early childhood programming. Children in grades 1 – 6

receive their report cards in December, March and June. Report cards are considered to be one form of communication between home and school. Teachers are available to talk with you regarding your child's progress.

## **RETENTION**

PRSD does not advocate for retention. This process is typically initiated by the parent. However, we consider each parent request seriously and based on individual merit. Retention requests must be submitted to the school principal by February vacation in order to be considered by the team. This team consists of the parent, teacher, school psychologist, principal and other appropriate personnel.

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL**

Massachusetts General Laws, c. 71, s. 59C states that, "The school council shall meet regularly with the Principal/Assistant Principal of the school and shall assist in the identification of the educational needs of the students [...], in the review of the annual school building budget, and in the formulation of a school improvement plan." The council is composed of elected and appointed representatives of the school and community. In addition to the Principal/Assistant Principal, there are three (3) parents, three (3) teachers, and a community representative. The committee is jointly chaired by the principal and an appointed parent.

The school council is an advisory body that works together to provide ideas and opinions to help the principal. In this context, council members assist by:

- Providing information and recommendations relevant to the educational needs of the students
- Reading and discussing the budget with the principal to understand its implications for goals and activities in the school improvement plan
- Participating actively in the process of school analysis and planning that result in the identification of annual goals, activities, outcomes, and resources that will lead to school improvement

## **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

The school cafeteria provides a nutritional lunch for all children. School lunches can be paid for either daily or prepaid for the week/month. Exact amounts are requested. Checks are to be made payable to Pentucket Regional School Lunch Program. Please make sure all envelopes and/or checks have the child's name on it.

Parents may choose to pay online at <https://www.myschoolbucks.com>. The cashier will send notification to parents for overdue accounts home, and prompt payment is expected. Students choosing to bring their own lunches may purchase an additional snack, milk or water in the cafeteria. Information on prices will be distributed the first week of school and posted on the Pentucket School District website, [www.prsd.org](http://www.prsd.org).

The Pentucket Regional School Committee exercises its option for the preparation and sale of meals at school buildings for the pupils and teachers of Pentucket Regional School District at such prices as it deems reasonable (M.G.L. c. 71, section 72). Pentucket Regional School District values each student having the proper daily nutrition needed to successfully engage in rigorous learning.

Annually, the District will issue information to parents about the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (Public Law 111-296), and supporting regulations, to determine eligibility for free or reduced cost meals. Parents may apply for free or reduced cost meals at any time during the school year. Subsequently, parents are encouraged to apply for free or reduced meal benefits in the event that they may be eligible. Pursuant to this federal legislation, foster children are categorically eligible for free meal benefits and an

application is not needed. Those students who are not eligible for free or reduced benefits and who opt to purchase meals will pay the price for meals set by the Pentucket Regional School Committee.

Students who are eligible for free or reduced cost meals may not have a negative account balance. Free meal status allows a child to receive a free meal every day. A la carte items are not part of the USDA program. Reduced cost status allows a child to receive reduced priced meals at the reduced amount determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Nutrition, Health & Safety Programs.

Students who come to school with neither food nor have sufficient funds to purchase a meal will be provided with an Alternative Meal. Alternative meals are part of the regular menu. An example of an Alternative Meal is a Sunbutter (nut-free) and jelly sandwich, fruit, and milk. The cost of the Alternative Meal will be charged to the student's account at the standard lunch rate. It will be reported as a meal to the state and federal school lunch authorities and will be eligible for reimbursement. Parents/Guardians are responsible for payment of these meals to the food service program. A school administrator or designee will meet privately with a middle or high school student to inform him/her about the negative balance in his/her meal account and the substitution of the Alternative Meal for other options. School personnel will not discuss the status of meal accounts with elementary school students.

Parents/Guardians will be notified about the outstanding balance of their child's meal account and will have five school days to make payment to the food service program. Students who have a negative balance in their meal account will only be permitted to purchase a la carte items with cash transactions. When a child's account has a negative balance for more than the allotted five days, students will become ineligible from participation in any co-curricular activities, including sports teams and clubs, until the balance is paid. The District may refer outstanding balances to small claims court for collection. A school administrator or designee will meet privately with a middle or high school student to inform him/her about ineligibility in co-curricular activities, such as sports and clubs.

When students establish a pattern of coming to school without meals or the funds to purchase a meal, their nutritional needs may be compromised. Parents will be notified by the school so that the pattern can be interrupted. Chronic instances of this pattern will be referred to the Department of Children and Families for possible support.

## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

PRSD maintains a comprehensive, searchable, collection of all district policies on the website [PRSD Policies](#). For further reference, Appendix D contains some of the more pertinent policies and laws as they pertain to school operations including: Notice of Non-Discrimination; Network & Internet Use Policy; Drug and Alcohol Abuse (Chapter 71, Section 37H); Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Individuals with Disabilities Act (Section 504); Hazing, Harassment; Reporting Sexual Abuse and Other Criminal Conduct, Regulations Concerning Physical Restraint, Notification of Rights; Title IX, and Notification of Homeless Coordinator.

## **SCHOOL SAFETY/EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING**

Each school has a school safety/emergency response plan that outlines how all individuals in the school community can work together to respond to a potential crisis. The plan also details how school and community resources can be used to create safe environments and to manage responses to acute threats



and incidents of violence. Please note that exterior doors are locked for student and building security. Please use the main entrance, press the call button and sign in at the office when visiting the school.

### **SCHOOL TELEPHONE USE**

As the telephone is needed for school business, students may only use the telephone in the case of emergency situations with permission from the office staff or school nurse.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION/ STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES**

Pentucket Regional School District subscribes to a Co-Teaching inclusion philosophy and works to include students with disabilities in the educational and social life of their community schools and classrooms to the extent that inclusion is appropriate for the child. The entire school staff creates special education programs that are individualized to meet the needs of students with disabilities who require a specialized program. These programs are offered to students as per Massachusetts General Laws and the IDEA. As part of our inclusion approach, school staff also work to guide all of the children in building mutual support and appreciation for the diverse gifts and talents of all youngsters.

The special education eligibility process begins with a referral for an evaluation, generally made by the child's teacher or by the parent. Referrals occur when the teacher or parent questions whether or not a child has a disability and is not making effective academic progress in the general education curriculum, and may require specialized instruction. Prior to the special education referral, pre-referral strategies are designed by the Instructional Support Team and implemented within the classroom setting. The success of these strategies is assessed and documented. Very often, these pre-referral activities are successful for the child and specialized instruction is not required.

In cases when a referral is initiated, the student will be evaluated in all areas of suspected disability, and the Team meets to discuss the results. Parents are an integral part of the special education process and important members of the Team. If a child is determined to be eligible for Special Education, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed and implemented by the school.

### **Speech/Language Therapy**

The speech therapy program offers the following services: an assessment of a child's communicative needs; participation of the speech therapist in TEAM meetings to review results and recommendations; and the implementation of instructional services. Communicative needs may include articulation difficulties, language deficiencies (both expressive and receptive), stuttering, and/or voice disorders.

#### **Goals of Program:**

- To provide children with direct, intensive, and individualized speech and language services so as to meet each student's communicative needs.
- To develop each child's receptive and expressive language ability relating to vocabulary, comprehension of language structures, and syntax.
- To improve each child's articulatory ability.
- To communicate regularly with parents of children receiving speech language therapy services regarding progress and carry-over activities.
- To meet regularly with those teachers who have children in the speech language therapy program in order to coordinate activities that will aid in each child's rate of progress.
- To provide consultation of regular classroom teachers for children whose speech and language skills are being monitored.

### **School Adjustment Counselor**

The school adjustment counselor serves as an organizer, a promoter, an educational advisor, a social worker, a teacher, a public speaker, and even a public relations person. This individual displays some of the skills of a psychologist, some of the knowledge of a physician, and some of the techniques of a clinician. The school adjustment counselor operates in the field of guidance and education, as a liaison between the home and school, supporting, supplementing, and/or expanding the need for better adjustment in order to promote optimum learning.

### **School Psychologist**

The school psychologist works with students in terms of their capacity to learn, trying to alleviate distractions, which defeat the development of social-emotional and/or academic growth. Through a highly structured process, the school psychologist with the assistance of parents, teachers, and other concerned parties, attempts to discover a child's needs, assess his/her potentialities, develop skills, establish goals and objectives, formulate plans of action, and proceed to realization.

When an administrator or psychologist determines that a child is in crisis, she/he will contact the parent/guardian. The child will be dismissed to the parent/guardian. The administrator may refer the student for an emergency risk assessment to determine whether or not the child is a danger to himself or to others before allowing the student back into school. The administrator may also request written confirmation from a professional evaluator that the student is not a danger to the health and safety of him/herself and/or others. In situations where a student has been deemed a "student in crisis" for whom a professional evaluation has been requested, prior to the student's return to school, the school will schedule a reentry meeting with the parent/guardian, student and appropriate school personnel. This procedure is established to promote a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.

Please refer to Appendix B for information regarding Discipline of Students with Special Needs.

### **STUDENT SUCCESS TEAM (SST)**

The Student Success Team (SST) formally known as Instructional Support Team (IST), is a function of regular education that enables staff members to meet as a team to address the individual needs of children. Classroom teachers, administrators, and resource personnel/specialists explore program options and instructional modifications within regular programming to help address the student's needs. If needed, testing or a team evaluation may be initiated after consultation with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) and written permission has been received.

### **TITLE I**

Title I has been the largest federal aid program for local schools since 1965. The Pentucket District's Title I program provides supportive instructional services at the Sweetsir and Donaghue Schools. Students are selected using the district's eligibility criteria. These are: test scores, classroom performance, and rating sheets completed by the classroom teacher. Students receive daily reading and reading instruction in the classroom by the classroom teacher. Title I students also receive additional support in a small group setting with the Title I teacher. This instruction supplements the classroom instruction. Informational parent meetings are held several times throughout the year. Parent conferences are also held to keep parents informed of student progress. Parent involvement is an important component of the program, and the Title I teachers provide activities and training sessions for parents to help their child at home.

### **TRANSLATION**

Parents/guardians of a student in the Pentucket Regional School District may receive a copy of this handbook translated into their native language by contacting the office of the Supplemental and Intensive Services, (978) 363-2280, ext. 5.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

School bus route information will be published in the Newburyport Daily News and on the Pentucket School District website, [www.prsd.org](http://www.prsd.org) at the beginning of each school year. Students are expected to be at their bus stops 10 minutes before it is due to arrive. Once a child has been assigned to a bus, there shall be no changing of buses for personal reasons unless approved by the administration.

For further information regarding boarding and departing the bus safely and other busing procedures and safety regulations including busing behavior expectations, and Bus Incident Reports, see Appendix E. It is expected that all students riding the bus adhere to these rules as well as the PRSD Code of Conduct. Repeated misbehavior may result in denial of the privilege of transportation.

## **VISITOR GUIDELINES**

Whenever you visit the school, please make your presence known to the staff in the Main Office. Sign into the Visitor Log located at the Main Office and receive a Visitor badge. All individuals not wearing a Visitor badge will be asked to return to the Main Office, sign in, and obtain one. This policy insures the security of the students and minimizes interruptions in the classroom. Visitors must sign out and return the badge upon leaving the building.

## **VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES**

The Donaghue and Sweetsir Schools are enhanced by a strong volunteer program. The guidelines below help the program function effectively.

- All volunteers and field trip chaperones must have successfully completed a Criminal Records Background Check (CORI). A CORI will be conducted on all volunteers who will have direct and unmonitored contact with students. Applications are available in the Main Office at the Donaghue and Sweetsir Schools and at PRSD Central Business Office at 22 Main St., West Newbury, MA.
- All volunteers must report to the Main Office to sign into the “Visitor/Volunteer” Log and obtain a “Visitor/Volunteer” badge for that day.
- A volunteer is never to be left in sole charge of an individual student or group.
- It is the intention of the volunteer program to provide the faculty and staff of the Donaghue and Sweetsir Schools with constructive support in a mutually agreeable manner.
- Volunteers are mandated to keep all information regarding the students and staff in the school confidential.
- Volunteers should use the adult bathrooms while at school. Please ask school personnel where the nearest adult bathroom is located.
- Volunteers are requested to respect the faculty and staff need for their own preparation time and work space.
- Volunteers are requested to confine their conversations with the faculty and staff to the volunteer issues at hand, rather than personal issues or issues pertaining to their own children.
- Volunteers are expected to inform the teachers if they are unable to meet their commitments. If a volunteer cannot be where he/she is expected, the volunteer should telephone the school office in order to notify the appropriate faculty or staff.

- Please bring up any questions or concerns you have about volunteer issues with the faculty or staff with whom you are working. If a question or concern still exists, please feel free to contact the Principal/Assistant Principal.

## **WALKERS**

Walkers should arrive at school no more than 10 minutes before school begins. Supervision is not provided before such time. During inclement weather, walkers are allowed in the building 10 minutes early. Walkers are not permitted to ride school buses unless approved by the Administration. Each year, children going to and from school can be subjected to various hazards, including coming into contact with strangers who may be undesirable.

The following steps will be taken to prevent this:

- You must check with the office before picking up a child. A child will not be allowed to leave the building with any individual unless the person is properly identified as a parent, guardian or other authorized escort. If someone else asks to pick up a child, the school will call the home in order to make certain that this person is authorized to take the child home.
- Ask all children not to speak to strangers.
- Ask all children not to accept rides from anyone other than a pre-arranged person.
- If a stranger speaks to a child, ask the child to tell the teacher, Principal/Assistant Principal, or parent immediately.

## **WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A CONCERN**

First and foremost, any concerns by students and parents can be sent directly to the Principal/Assistant Principal using the anonymous tip link found on each school's website.

Children are more successful when there is a strong parent-school partnership with on-going two-way communication. Ordinarily, most problems can be resolved by talking with the teacher involved. Send a note in with your child asking that the teacher call you or call the school and leave a message for a particular teacher to call you back. You can then set up an appointment or discuss the problem over the phone. For most problems an answer will be found when discussing the situation with the teacher. If a solution is not found, the next step is to talk with the building administration. They can act as mediators and possibly give new insights to the concern.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**  
**Pentucket Regional School District**  
**Elementary Code of Conduct, Responsibility Agreement and Discipline Procedures**

**DISCIPLINE/CODE OF CONDUCT**

The schoolwide and classroom rules of Pentucket Regional School District Elementary Schools are intended to promote respect and safety. Teachers develop their classroom rules and review the school rules listed under the “School Rules” section during the first few days of school.

In addition, parents/guardians are asked to review the “Pentucket Regional School District- Elementary Code of Conduct & Responsibility Agreement” with their children. This has been designed to clarify our expectations and prevent problems from occurring.

Please note that the “Code of Conduct & Responsibility Agreement” is an outline of our expectations. However, school personnel treats each student experiencing difficulty with the stated expectations on an individual basis. In some situations, discipline issues may be referred to the principal’s office.

**EXPECTED BEHAVIOR - CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESPONSIBILITY AGREEMENT**

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to clarify our expectations so that Pentucket Regional Elementary Schools continue to be a safe and welcoming place to learn. We ask that you review the following examples of expected behavior for our elementary students.

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Pentucket Regional Elementary School Code of Conduct reflects the Core Values of our school. In order to uphold these values and reinforce our school-wide goal of creating a safe and respectful learning environment, the following consequences may be utilized. (Please note that this is not a comprehensive list, nor is it necessarily in order of implementation. School personnel support each student experiencing difficulty with these expectations or the school rules on an individual case. Consequences for more serious behavioral/disciplinary issues will be determined on an individual basis.)

As a member of the Pentucket Regional Elementary School community, I understand the Code of Conduct Agreement. I agree to demonstrate behaviors that reflect these values and expectations throughout the school, on the bus, and during recess.

The following “Code of Conduct” is designed to clarify the behavioral expectations for all students. As part of our ongoing goal to provide a safe and supportive learning environment, as well as prevent any bullying, we ask that you review this with your child. Your signature on the annually updated “Student Verification Form” (in Infinite Campus) indicates that you have discussed the “Code of Conduct” with your child(ren).

**EXPECTED BEHAVIOR BY LOCATION & SITUATION**

***General***

- Be considerate and helpful to each other.
- Respect your property and that of others. Be certain not to chew gum unless approved in a student’s plan.

- Keep your school clean. Keep your things in order; pick up your area every day.
- Obey all school rules; and by your good example, influence the behavior of others.
- Be certain you do not take things that do not belong to you. Be certain you do not sell things at school.
- Walk quietly everywhere in the building.
- Keep our buildings and grounds clean.
- Use polite language at all times.
- If the weather is bad, wait quietly and behave properly in your designated area.
- Pick up papers and throw them in the trash container.

### ***Audience an Assembly Behavior***

- Listen and behave properly with courtesy to other members of the audience and the performers or speakers.
- Applaud to show your approval.
- Remember that the only acceptable response is clapping your hands.

### ***Cafeteria/Lunch***

- Wait quietly in the lunch line.
- Eat in assigned areas only; leave your area clean and neat
- Use good table manners. Be certain not to throw food or take food belonging to others.
- Empty your tray in the designated area.
- Talk quietly with your table partners.
- Walk to your table and trash areas.
- Eat all your food and snacks in the Cafeteria.
- Show respect to the instructional assistants and Cafeteria employees.
- Wait to be dismissed by the instructional assistant.
- Use polite language.

### ***Playground/Recess***

- Play safely in designated areas.
- Use polite language.
- Use good sportsmanship.
- Wait your turn to use equipment. Bring soft handballs only to use on the playground.
- Walk to lines when playground activity is completed.
- Use playground and athletic equipment in the proper areas.
- Label the play items you bring to school.

### ***Indoor Recess***

- Play quiet games at your seat.
- Talk quietly with your friends.

### **Bathroom**

- Respect the privacy of others at all times.
- Respect the personal space of others.
- Any problem noticed should be reported to the closest adult.
- Flush the toilet when done and wash hands using soap and water.

- Dispose of trash and paper towels in trash barrels.

### ***Social Interactions - Preventing bullying***

You can help prevent bullying from happening if you follow this code of behavior.

- Be kind to each other.
- Use only kind words and avoid words that would cause a classmate to feel sad, upset, or ashamed.
- Keep your hands to yourself. Respect boundaries by avoiding any action that could hurt (hit, kick, punch, or pinch) another student. Never touch another student in a way that might hurt them.
- Consider other people's feelings at all times before you speak. Try your best not to hurt others' feelings.
- Be mindful of all words and actions that threaten another student.
- Avoid saying anything that would make another student scared.
- The best way to show kindness is to avoid all actions that tease, taunt, mock, embarrass, or humiliate your classmates.
- If you are being bullied, tell an adult right away.
- If you know another student is being bullied, tell your teacher, principal, parents, or another adult right away.
- Review and follow our anti-bullying policy.
- If you bully another student, you will be disciplined, up to and including a long-term suspension from school.

### ***Online Social Interaction - Preventing Cyber-bullying***

You can help prevent cyberbullying from happening if you follow this code of behavior.

- Refrain from writing anything in an email, text, tweet, Facebook post, or in any other electronic forum that you would not say out loud for everyone to hear. Remember, these written messages are out of your control once you send or post them, and they may continue to exist long after you have deleted your copy.
- Follow the rules above under "bullying" and apply them to electronic communications.
- Remember that only one text, tweet, email, snap post, etc. may be cyber-bullying. We encourage parents and students to read the Pentucket Regional School District Anti-Bullying Policy together to ensure that they both understand the various definitions of cyber-bullying.
- Posting with anonymous names, accounts, or as someone else is harmful to others.
- If you are being cyber-bullied, tell an adult right away.
- If you know another student is being cyber-bullied, tell your teacher, principal, parents, or another adult right away.
- Review and follow our anti-bullying policy.
- If you engage in cyber-bullying, you will be disciplined, up to and including long-term suspension from school.

### ***Care for School Property***

- Take care of your property and that of others.
- Return all items you find to the office.
- Be certain that you treat all parts of the building with care as to avoid defacing property.

- Notify teachers, supervisors, or the Principal when you see someone destroying or defacing property.

### ***Walkers (Where Applicable)***

- Walk only on sidewalks.
- Look both ways before you cross the street.

### ***Bus Students***

- Only authorized students may ride the bus.
- Obey the driver in all matters at all times.
- Be courteous to others while loading, riding, and leaving the bus.
- Bus drivers have the autonomy to enforce the no cell phone policy on their bus if issues persist.
- Arrive at the bus stop on time and wait for the bus on the curb or shoulder of the road.
- Cross highways and streets only in front of the bus. Move away from the front bumper of the bus approximately 10 feet so the bus driver can observe your crossing. Do not run or dash into the street or road without looking both ways even though the bus driver has traffic stopped.
- Avoid trespassing on private property and being noisy.
- Board the bus in an orderly manner only after the bus has come to a full stop and the driver has opened the door.
- Take your seat promptly; and if you must stand, grasp a seat bar firmly.
- Remain seated until the bus comes to a full stop; then leave in an orderly fashion.
- Allow students who are standing to get off first once the bus has come to a full stop.
- Avoid actions that might distract the driver and result in an accident.
- Keep your voice low; be certain there is no shouting, whistling, rough-housing, pushing, fighting, or throwing of objects.
- Be certain not to extend your arms or any other parts of your body out of the bus windows. Never throw any objects.
- Ask the driver's permission before opening the windows.
- Help keep the bus clean and report any damage in the bus to the driver. Be certain not to eat food or chew gum on the bus.
- Keep books and bundles out of the aisles and do not carry heavy objects on the bus that might cause injury to other students. If you carry small animals on the bus for school projects, you are responsible for their containment while going to and from school.
- Ride your assigned bus and do not ask the driver to make unauthorized stops unless written permission is received from your parent and agreement is reached between the Principal and the bus driver.
- Report any violation of these rules to the bus driver, or your teacher.

Failure to follow these rules and expectations will result in consequences for these actions. These consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- Discussion with the teacher to discuss noted behavior
- Visit to the office and completion of a “Student Reflection Sheet”
- A written note of apology
- Loss of recess for only recess related issues



- Telephone call to parent/guardian
- Meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal
- Assigned seating on the bus or in the dining area
- Meeting between student, teacher, and parent(s)
- Meeting between parent(s), teacher, and Principal or Assistant Principal
- Written agreement by student(s) as facilitated by an administrator
- Attending in-school suspension

As noted in the discipline section, the use of verbal and/or written threats and/or gestures and bullying are against the core values of the school and will result in serious consequences. The Principal or Assistant Principal is responsible for determining the appropriate consequence of such instances.

## ***CONSEQUENCES***

### ***Classroom Management of Unexpected Behaviors***

The majority of minor code of conduct violations are handled in the classroom through regular reinforcement of the expected behaviors listed above. When there is repeated violation of the code of conduct, and classroom interventions have not proven to mitigate the unexpected behaviors, the teacher may refer the student or students to the Principal/Assistant Principal for remediation.

### ***Referrals to the Principal's office***

Any fighting, physical contact, unwanted touching, or bullying automatically warrant the Principal's, or Assistant Principal's intervention for any child involved. Teachers may choose to send students to the principal's office for other issues when normal classroom discipline procedures, such as reminders, have not been effective and when the safety or learning of other students is in jeopardy. Para-educators supervising lunch or recess may choose to send students to the office when normal reminders about rules have not been effective. Depending on schedules and other variables, a child sent to the office may or may not actually visit with the principal/assistant principal. If the administrator is not available at the time the child is sent but a discussion is warranted, an appointment will be scheduled as soon as possible. In some cases, a child may visit with the school counselor in addition to speaking with the principal/assistant principal or in lieu of a visit with the principal/assistant principal.

### ***Reflection Sheets***

To help a student to reflect on his/her behavior, its effect on others, and to recognize future alternative choices, a student who is sent to the office will usually be asked to complete a "Reflection Sheet." On this sheet, the child describes the problem, writes about why his/her behavior was a problem, checks off the core value(s) not shown, and writes about how a similar situation might be handled in the future. If appropriate, the student then writes a note of apology. (Very young students sometimes dictate the Reflection Sheet or note to office personnel.) Please see Appendix B for an example of this form.

If an apology to an adult or another child is necessary, the child may also write a separate apology note. Parents/guardians are generally not notified of a minor issue - Parents/guardians will be notified of serious or repeated problems so that a joint solution can be implemented to remediate the situation. In many cases, notification to the home may take place by asking for a parent/guardian signature on the Reflection Sheet, which serves to inform the parent/guardian of an issue and provides an opportunity for additional follow-up at home. In the event of a physical altercation or another serious issue, a phone call to the home

from the Principal/Assistant Principal and/or a request for an appointment will occur. In rare cases, repeated serious violations of the rules, which have not been improved by the above procedures, especially when fighting, physical contact, unwanted touching, or bullying are involved, could result in suspension. This could be an in school or out of school suspension depending on the issue, severity, and frequency of occurrence.

### Guiding Rubric for Discipline/Conduct Referrals

The following is an illustration of possible outcomes for students found in violation of the Pentucket Regional School District's Elementary School Code of Conduct. The Principal and/or Assistant Principal reviews each situation on a case by case basis, considering mitigating facts and circumstances and decisions are not bound by the following rubric. *The majority of minor infractions and unexpected behaviors are addressed through effective, teacher initiated classroom-based interventions.* Student(s) are referred to the Principal/Assistant Principal for repeated minor infractions or for first offence significant infractions.

#### Repeated Minor Infractions

Confirmed Behavior	Repeated Minor Verbal / Emotional Offense		Repeated Minor Physical Offense		Repeated Other Minor Offense	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teasing</li> <li>Negative gestures</li> <li>Inappropriate language</li> <li>Excluding Others</li> <li>False Accusations</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poking</li> <li>Shoving</li> <li>Invasion of Personal Space</li> <li>Running on Stairs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dress Code Violation</li> <li>Lying</li> <li>Cheating</li> <li>Disrespectful behavior toward staff</li> </ul>	
Grade	K-2	3-6	K-2	3-6	K-2	3-6
<b>1st Office Referral</b>	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal, Loss of Privileges Call Home	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal, Loss of Privileges Call Home	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal, Loss of Privileges Call Home
<b>2nd Office Referral</b>	Conference with the Principal, Loss of Privilege Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges Call Home	Conference with the Principal, Loss of Privilege Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges Call Home	Conference with the Principal, Loss of Privilege Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges Call Home
<b>3rd Office Referral</b>	Loss of Multiple Privileges Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges 1 after school detention	Loss of Multiple Privileges Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges 1 after school	Loss of Multiple Privileges Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges 1 after school detention

		Parent Conference to develop an intervention plan		detention Parent Conference to develop an intervention plan		Parent Conference to develop an intervention plan
<b>4th Office Referral</b>	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Parent Conference to develop an intervention plan	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Parent Conference to develop an intervention plan	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Parent Conference to develop an intervention plan	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan

### Significant Infractions

Confirmed Behavior	Severe Verbal/Emotional Offense		Severe Physical Offense		Other Severe Offenses	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inciting aggression</li> <li>Ganging up on others</li> <li>Written or Verbal Harassment</li> <li>Making Threats</li> <li>Verbal retaliation</li> <li>Vulgar Language</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persistent physical aggression</li> <li>Fighting</li> <li>Physical aggression with intent to harm</li> <li>Assault</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vandalism</li> <li>Plagiarism</li> <li>Bullying/Cyberbullying</li> <li>Significant, inappropriate use of technology</li> </ul>	
Grade	K-2	3-6	K-2	3-6	K-2	3-6
<b>1st Office Referral</b>	Loss of Privilege  Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal  Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal  Call Home	Loss of Privilege  Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal Call Home	Loss of Privilege  Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal Call Home	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal Call Home
<b>2nd Office Referral</b>	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Call Home	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal  1 after school detention	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Call Home	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal  1 after school detention	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Call Home	Conference with the Principal/ Assistant Principal  1 after school detention

		Parent Conference to develop individual plan to modify behavior		Parent Conference to develop individual plan to modify behavior		Parent Conference to develop individual plan to modify behavior
<b>3rd Office Referral</b>	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Conference to develop individual plan to modify behavior	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Conference to develop individual plan to modify behavior	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Loss of Multiple Privileges  Conference to develop individual plan to modify behavior	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan
<b>4th Office Referral</b>	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Out of School Suspension  Conference with representatives from the student support team to review and modify individual plan	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Out of School Suspension  Conference with representatives from the student support team to review and modify individual plan	In-School Suspension  Conference to review individual plan	Out of School Suspension  Conference with representatives from the student support team to review and modify individual plan

*Attached in the Appendix to this Handbook are the text of M.G.L. c. 71, sections 37H, 37H1/2, and 37H3/4, as well as the relevant text of 603 CMR 53.00. This text should be consulted for specific details about a student's rights and the various applicable procedures.*

The following are disciplinary consequences that may follow from inappropriate behavior in specific contexts. The types of consequences listed are not intended to be all-inclusive. All levels of discipline are available as consequences for any type of misconduct along with interventions for support.

The level of discipline imposed for any particular instance of misconduct is left to the discretion of teachers and administrators. Teachers and administrators may consider the severity of the conduct, the disciplinary record of the student, the nature of the conduct, the reaction of the student, and other factors in imposing discipline.

## DETENTIONS

Keeping a student after school is sometimes a necessary consequence for inappropriate actions. There are two kinds of detention: teacher and school/office;

(1) A teacher detention is given for unacceptable behavior within the classroom. This detention can last up until 30 minutes after school. The individual teacher will determine the procedure to follow for this kind of detention.

(2) A school/office detention is given for disruptive behavior in common areas, on the playground, in the cafeteria, at assemblies, or other school areas outside of the regular classroom. School detention can also be assigned to students who have repeatedly created disturbances in classrooms.

Students and parents will be given 24 hours' notice for both teacher and school detentions. In some cases, detentions will be assigned during a student's 20 minute lunch (not recess) and these detentions do not require 24 hours' advance notice. Teachers and administrators can assign one detention or multiple detentions for a single violation. A student's due process rights are not triggered by the imposition of detentions.

Parents will be responsible for arranging pick-up from the scheduled detention. The following are only examples of behaviors that may result in a student being assigned a detention (this list is not intended to include all behaviors that may result in detention):

- habitual tardiness
- cutting class
- habitual classroom misbehavior
- throwing items (including ice or snow)
- possession or use of electronic equipment between during school hours without teacher approval
- failure to report after school for a teacher detention
- use of profanity and/or obscene language or gestures
- disruptive behavior in and around the school
- possession of toys which disrupt the educational process
- unauthorized use of a cell phone in the school building

Students have no appeal rights with respect to detentions other than those described in this section below:

## **SUSPENSIONS**

**In-School Suspension** is a temporary full day or half day exclusion from the activities of the regular classroom when deemed appropriate by the administrator. School work is obtained for the student and the student completes his or her daily assignment in the main office. All completed assignments are handed back to the respective teachers for grading.

A student who receives an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense is entitled to the following process:

1. The Principal or designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge.

2. The student shall be permitted an opportunity to dispute the charges and to explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident.
3. If the Principal or designee determines that the infractions occurred, the Principal or designee shall inform the student of the length of the in-school suspension (not to exceed 10 days).
4. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the Principal or designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the offense, the reasons for his/her conclusion, and the length of the in-school suspension.
5. The Principal or designee shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the incident and the student as soon as possible.
6. The Principal or designee shall send written notice of the in-school suspension to the student and parent/guardian on the day the suspension is issued.

**Out of School Suspension** is a temporary exclusion from the activities of the regular classroom, accompanied by a temporary exclusion from school when deemed appropriate by the administrator. Under *Goss vs. Lopez*, 419 U.S. 565 (1975), students facing a suspension of ten days or less have interests in their education that qualify them for procedural protections against the unjust deprivation of those interests under the Due Process Clause of the United States Constitution. Students facing a suspension of greater than 10 days have enhanced procedural rights. Massachusetts law authorizes the suspension/removal from school for a maximum of 90 days, with the exception of conduct covered by M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H1/2.

The following are only examples of behaviors that may result in a student being suspended. This list is not intended to include all behaviors that can result in in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, long-term suspension, short-term suspension or, where noted, indefinite suspension:

- Possession, use or distribution of alcohol.
- Defacing lockers, walls, or other objects on school property, both inside and outside the building or grounds, by writing names, messages, or drawing on them or use of graffiti.
- Unauthorized leaving of school grounds.
- Assault (i.e. threatening assault, hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing) against fellow students or other members of the school community.
- Damaging, destroying, or stealing personal or school property or attempting to do so.
- Using or possessing tobacco products or e-cigarettes.
- Possessing combustible materials such as matches or lighters.
- Committing sexual, racial, or any form of harassment or intimidation or retaliation.
- Using abusive, vulgar or profane language.
- Making verbal or physical threats, empty or otherwise.
- Setting off false alarms.
- Defiant behavior towards any school personnel or policy.
- Discharging or attempting to discharge fire safety equipment.
- Fighting.
- Serious misbehavior on a field trip.
- Behavior that endangers others or substantially disrupts the educational process.
- Behavior that encourages another student to substantially disrupt the educational process.
- Possession of or use of firecrackers, fireworks or stink bombs.
- Persistent or excessive truancy and/or tardiness to class and class cutting.
- Habitual misbehavior that has not been resolved after the assignment of school detentions.

- Bullying, bullying participant, including bystander and/or retaliator.
- Cyber-bullying, cyber-bullying participant, including bystander and/or retaliator (remember, a single electronic communication (email, text, post, etc.) may constitute cyberbullying if it is sent to or may be viewed by more than one person).
- Harassment, harassment participant, including bystander and/or retaliator.
- Hazing, violence, extortion or the threat of hazing, violence or extortion directed towards another student or school personnel, including bystander and/or retaliator.
- Failure to report acts of bullying, cyber-bullying, or hazing, to adults at school.
- Assaulting educational personnel (see M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 in Appendix)(note: this behavior may result in an indefinite suspension or one longer than 90 days).
- Being charged with a felony (see M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 in Appendix)(note: this behavior may result in an indefinite suspension or one longer than 90 days).
- Possessing a dangerous weapon including but not limited to a knife or a gun (see M.G.L. c. 71, §37H in Appendix)(note: this behavior may result in an indefinite suspension or one longer than 90 days).
- Possessing a controlled substance as defined in M.G.L. c. 94C including but not limited to illegal drugs and prescription medication (see M.G.L. c. 71, §37H in Appendix)(note: this behavior may result in an indefinite suspension or one longer than 90 days).

In addition to any of these infractions, any breaches of Federal law, Massachusetts State law, or bylaws of the respective town of each school (Groveland, Merrimac, and West Newbury), may be handled in cooperation with the local police department and may result in suspension or expulsion where authorized by law (see M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 in Appendix).

Consistent with its Memorandum of Understanding, the Pentucket Regional School District, West Newbury, Merrimac, and Groveland Police Departments, and the Essex County District Attorney's Office agree to coordinate their response to violent, delinquent, or criminal acts by students and to alcohol and other drug use, which occur on school premises or at school-related events.

### **Alternatives to Suspension under 37H ¾ (603 CMR 53.05)**

Principals/Assistant Principals should be judicious in determining whether suspension is the appropriate consequence for §37H¾ offenses. More importantly, research has shown that suspending students from school for non-violent offenses, and particularly suspending them repeatedly, has limited effectiveness in improving their behavior and performance, and causes the students to fall behind academically. School leaders in Massachusetts and across the U.S. have found that by improving school climate through positive behavioral interventions, supports, and strategies, including restorative practices and conflict resolution, they not only reduce suspensions but also promote greater school safety, discipline, and academic success.

For these reasons, the statute directs Principals/Assistant Principals to exercise their discretion, consider ways to re-engage the student, and "avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried." For example, exclusion from extracurricular activities or attendance at a school-sponsored event instead of removal from the classroom or school may have a greater impact on changing a student's behavior. Exclusion from such extracurricular activities is not considered suspension because participation is a privilege.

The Department encourages schools and districts to adopt evidence-based strategies and programs to

address the behavioral and social-emotional issues that give rise to student misconduct. The Department is building a resource bank of school practices and models that can improve school climate and reduce student misconduct and the perceived need to remove students from the school or classroom.

## PROCEDURES

### ***Suspension Terminology:***

Short Term Suspension is a suspension of ten days or less that takes place, the school owes a student: notice, explanation and a meeting/hearing.

Notice of the Charge is that the principal or designee shall provide written notice to the parent/guardian, offering an opportunity to meet and to discuss the violation as charged, prior to the suspension taking place.

The student shall meet with the Principal or designee regarding the alleged offense. The Principal or designee shall make a good faith effort to include the student's parent/guardian in this meeting. The parent/guardian, if present, shall have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and may offer additional information or mitigating facts.

Explanation of the Evidence: At the meeting, the student shall be told the basis of the accusation, the nature of the disciplinary offense, and any other pertinent information. The student, and his/her parent/guardian, if present, shall have the opportunity to present additional information and to offer mitigating facts. However, the student will not have the opportunity to secure counsel, to confront and cross-examine witnesses or to call his/her own witness to verify his/her version of the incident. The Principal or designee, at his/her sole discretion, may permit the student to question his/her accuser or present his/her own witnesses.

Written Determination is the Principal or designee issuing a written determination of the suspension to both the student and the parent/guardian, including the key facts and conclusions reached, and length and effective date of the suspension, and a date of return to school, and the opportunity to make up assignments and other needed school work.

Appeal of Short-Term Suspensions (10 days or less): If the suspension was imposed by the Assistant Principal, the student may appeal the suspension in writing to the Principal. The appeal must be made within one (1) school day of the student's receipt of the notice of the suspension. An appeal of a suspension does not stay the discipline, but may result only in the expunging of a student's record. There is no right of appeal beyond the Principal. Additionally, there is no right of appeal if the Principal, rather than the Assistant Principal, imposes the suspension.

Applicability to Students with Disabilities: This provision shall apply to students with disabilities who are suspended for ten (10) or fewer cumulative days in one academic year. Suspensions of students with disabilities exceeding ten (10) cumulative days in one academic year shall be governed by applicable state and federal law.

Long Term Suspension is a suspension of more than ten days (cumulatively within a school year or consecutively) and up to ninety days have the right to a more formal process.



These rights include the following in addition to those described for short-term suspensions:

- to review the student's own record and any documents on which the principal may rely, in making his/her decision regarding suspension;
- to be represented by counsel (at the student's expense);
- to present the student's own explanation of the alleged incident;
- to produce witnesses on his/her own behalf;
- to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school or district;
- to request a recording of the meeting;
- notice of the student's opportunities to make academic progress during suspension, with information about the school's education service plan; and
- notice of the right to appeal the suspension, with instructions about the process for doing so.

Appeal of Long-Term Suspension (more than 10 days): If a student receiving a long-term suspension (more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than ten 10 school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year) wishes to appeal that decision to the Superintendent, he/she must do so in writing no later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The student or parent/guardian may request an extension of up to 7 calendar days to submit this request for an appeal. The Superintendent or designee shall hold a hearing within 3 school days of receiving the student's request for an appeal. The student or parent/guardian may request an extension of up to 7 calendar days for this hearing to be held. The Superintendent or designee must include the parent/guardian in this hearing, or else must show a good faith effort to include him/her. At the hearing, the student has the same rights afforded him/her at the principal's meeting prior to issuing the long-term suspension. The Superintendent or designee will arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within 5 calendar days of the hearing, either upholding or lessening the suspension. This will be the school district's final decision on the matter.

Emergency Removal of a student is within the Principal's authority when, in his/her judgment, the student's continued presence poses a danger to persons or property and there is no adequate alternative to alleviate that danger. However, the Principal or designee shall do the following:

- Make adequate provisions for the student's safety and transportation before removing him/her from school on an emergency basis.
- Make immediate reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for it.
- Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian.
- Provide an opportunity for a hearing before the principal, with the parent/guardian in attendance, within two school days of the emergency removal (unless the parties agree to an extension of time).
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and a written notice of the hearing no later than the following school day.

Students serving suspensions (other than an in-school suspension) are not allowed to be in school or on school property at any time during the period of suspension and are not allowed to attend any school-sponsored activities. When the period of suspension includes a weekend or vacation period, the student is ineligible to participate in or attend any activities throughout the entire period. Students who do not fulfill outstanding disciplinary obligations by the last day of school will be resumed at the start of the next school year. A student serving a suspension will be required to complete these obligations at the

beginning of the next school year. If a school-sponsored activity begins prior to the start of the school year, that time will be included as part of the suspension.

Applicability of Suspension Policy to Students with Disabilities shall apply to students with disabilities who are suspended for ten (10) or fewer cumulative days in one academic year. Suspensions of students with disabilities exceeding ten (10) cumulative days in one academic year shall be governed by applicable state and federal law.

## **EXPULSIONS AND INDEFINITE SUSPENSIONS**

Expulsion/ Indefinite Suspension is a permanent removal from school. Indefinite suspension is a removal from school for an indefinite period. These consequences may be imposed for a narrow range of conduct, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, sections H and H1/2. This law provides the Principal the authority to expel a student who is found on school premises or at a school-sponsored event, including athletic games and field trips, possessing a dangerous weapon, or possessing a controlled substance, or who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at a school-sponsored or school-related event, including athletic games and field trips.

Expulsion proceedings pursuant to this section shall be in accordance with the statutory language, which may be found in the Appendices to this Handbook. M.G.L., c. 71.

Section 37H1/2 provides the Principal the authority to indefinitely suspend a student who is charged criminally with a felony and to expel a student who is convicted or admits guilt in court with respect to a felony or felony delinquency. Expulsion and indefinite suspension proceedings pursuant to this section shall be in accordance with the statutory language, which may be found in the Appendices to this Handbook.

A student facing expulsion procedures has the following procedural rights:

1. Written notice in the student's/home's primary language that a hearing will be held to determine whether or not to impose an expulsion. Notice shall include the following:
  - a) The date/time/place of the hearing;
  - b) A description of the nature of the allegation and the evidence supporting the allegation against the student;
  - c) A list of witnesses who will appear on behalf of the school
  - d) A summary of the procedures to be followed and the rights afforded to the student at the hearing;
  - e) Notice of the right to an Alternate Education Plan if the student has an Individualized Education Plan;
  - f) The telephone number of the Principal;
2. The right to be represented by a lawyer or advocate (at the student's expense);
3. Adequate time to prepare for the hearing;
4. Access to documented evidence prior to the hearing;
5. The right to request that witnesses attend the hearing, and to question them (unless the student's interest in cross-examining witnesses is outweighed by the need to protect witnesses from possible retaliation);
6. The right to have the hearing transcribed;
7. The right to have the hearing translated into the student's or his parents' or guardians' primary language and;

8. A reasonably prompt written decision including specific grounds for the decision, the process for appeal, and the right of the student to access alternative educational services.

***Expulsion Terminology:***

A student may appeal an indefinite suspension imposed by the Principal pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H1/2 (felony convictions, etc.) in writing to the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension.

Appeal of Expulsion. A student may appeal expulsion imposed by the Principal pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H1/2 (felony convictions, etc.) in writing to the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the receipt of the written decision of the Principal to expel. A student may appeal expulsion imposed by the Principal pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 37H (possession of dangerous weapon, controlled substances, assault of staff, etc.) in writing to the Superintendent within ten (10) days of the receipt of the written decision of the Principal to expel.

Applicability of Expulsion Policy to Students with Disabilities. To the extent that the application of the foregoing policy to students with disabilities conflicts with state or federal laws, such law(s) shall prevail. Academic Progress of Suspended/Expelled Students. Any student who is serving a suspension or expulsion shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal. Pentucket Regional School District will establish and publish an education service plan specifying alternative educational services which will be made available.

Students who have been suspended or expelled from school shall not be eligible to participate in any school functions for the duration of such disciplinary action. Students who are suspended or expelled and return to school grounds or school sponsored events may be suspended an additional day and may be referred to the police or other proper authorities for trespassing. The period of suspension ends as of the beginning of the school day on which the student returns to school.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are afforded certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below. For students who are eligible for special education, the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) must indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or whether the code should be modified due to the student's disability.

In general, students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs, just as any other student can be, for up to ten (10) school days per year. However, when an eligible student is excluded from his/her program for more than ten school days in the school year, the student's Special Education Team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan. In many instances, the student's IEP or 504 Team also may be required to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability. If the Team determines the behavior was not related to a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that the district must continue to provide the student with educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion. However, if the Team determines that the behavior was a manifestation of the disability, the student generally may not be excluded from the current educational placement (except as otherwise provided under state or federal law) unless the parent(s) and District otherwise agree or by court order.

In the event, a student possesses, uses, sells or solicits a controlled substance or possesses a weapon at school or a school function, a school may place a student in an interim alternative education setting for up to 45 school days. Hearing officers may also order the placement of a student in an appropriate interim setting for up to 45 days upon determination that the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

When a parent disagrees with the Team's "manifestation determination" or with a decision regarding placement, the parent has the right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. Additional information regarding the procedural protections for special education students can be obtained from accessing the Special Education Procedural Manual located in the office of each building.

**Appendix**

**Bullying Prevention  
and  
Intervention Plan**



*Updated April 2018*

**Pentucket Regional School District**

**Pentucket Regional School District**  
**Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan**

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## PREFACE

The Pentucket Regional School District (PRSD) expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences. The District is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is integral to the District's comprehensive plan to promote learning and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

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

- causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of her to himself or herself or of damage to his or property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

It is recognized that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment or teasing. The PRSD Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan ensures specific steps are taken to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

Unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities is unacceptable. All reports and complaints of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are investigated promptly and action is taken to end bullying behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. This important work is supported by the Pentucket school community, curriculum, instructional practices, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent/guardian involvement.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("Plan") is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying. The District's staff is committed to working with students, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. Each building Principal is primarily responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan in his/her building, except when a reported bullying incident involves the Principal or the Assistant Principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

## **I. LEADERSHIP – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

The District Leadership Team includes: the Superintendent, School Principals, Special Education Director, Technology Director and Business Administrator.

Public involvement in the plan: As required by M.G.L. c. 71, S 37O, members of the Pentucket Regional School District Leadership Team began meeting in July 2010 to develop a comprehensive Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The Team consisted of building administrators from the elementary, middle and high schools. Further input was provided by members of the District Leadership Team, faculty members, school guidance counselors, school council members and members of the local police departments. An open meeting held on December 16, 2010 to gather input, as well as to address questions/concerns, from members of the school community and the community at large allowed an opportunity for the public to be informed of the plan and suggest improvements. This Plan will be presented to the Pentucket Regional School Committee for approval every two years. Stakeholders are involved in the process for refining the Plan. Currently, open meetings with stakeholders were planned for Spring 2018 as well as an opportunity to give feedback via email was established.

### **A. Assessing needs and resources:**

The district leadership team, with input from families and staff, will:

Assess the adequacy of current program (e.g. conflict resolution, social responsibility, developmental guidance)	(Completed in Spring 2018)
Review current policies and procedures	(Completed in Spring 2018)
Review available data on bullying and behavior incidents	(Conducted at monthly Administrative Data Team Meetings starting in 2017-2018)
Assess available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health	(Review will be on-going)

Based on findings, the district will:

Revise or develop new policies and procedures	(Completed in Spring 2018 based on input from stakeholders)
Establish partnerships with community agencies and law enforcement	(As Needed)
Set priorities for possible incorporation into school improvement plans	(As needed)



**B. Needs assessments:**

The district will collect information relevant to school climate and safety	(On-going)
The District's student information management system (MMS) may be useful for collecting and analyzing building –specific data on incidents of bullying behaviors, identifying vulnerable populations, and “hot spots” in school buildings, on school grounds, and on school buses.	(Collected for review at monthly Administrative Data Team Meetings starting in academic year 2017-2018)
Information about school climate and safety is useful in identifying patterns of behaviors and areas of concern, and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula, and in-school support services.	(On-going)

**C. Planning and oversight:**

Building Principals are responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

Receiving reports on bullying and conducting initial investigation	(On-going)
Collecting and analyzing school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes	(Collected for review at monthly Administrative Data Team Meetings starting in the academic year 2017-2018).

District Leadership is responsible for the following tasks under the Plan:

Creating processes for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and student aggressors	(On-going)
Planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law	(Annually and on-going)
Planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and student aggressors	(On-going)
Choosing and implementing the curricula that the schools will use	(Review to begin 2018-2019 academic year)
Developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them	(Annually and on-going)
Amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct to, among other things, make clear that bullying of students by	(Annually and on-going)

school staff or other students will not be tolerated	
Leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials	(Annually and on-going)
Reviewing and updating the Plan, as required by MGL 71 S37O	(Every 2 years-June 2020)

## II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The District will provide ongoing professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals. Training about this Plan is not required to be provided to outside organizations not directly related to the Pentucket Regional School District. This includes those groups and individuals that may use our facilities for their activities such as recreational athletics, outside arts organizations, and other outside vendors renting or using our fields or school building space.

### A. Annual staff training on the Plan:

The District will provide professional development for all staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, and paraprofessionals. (Annually)

### B. Professional development:

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

- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- Developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential (i.e. social status, job status, individual perception, fear of retribution) that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying.
- Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying;
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

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

### Additional relevant areas for professional development may include:

- Promoting and modeling the use of respectful language
- Fostering an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference
- Building relationships and communicating with families

- Constructively managing classroom behaviors
- Using positive behavioral intervention strategies
- Applying constructive disciplinary practices
- Teaching students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others
- Engaging students in school or classroom planning and decision-making
- Maintaining a safe and caring classroom for all students
- Engaging staff and those responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan to distinguish between acceptable managerial behaviors and designed to correct misconduct. Instill accountability in the school setting, etc. and bullying behaviors.
- Integrating kindness and mindfulness into the school-wide culture
- Vertical alignment of these skills to facilitate the transition from elementary to middle school and middle school to high school
- Integrating social competency and digital citizenship into the curriculum
- Building teachers' capacity to enhance each student's strengths for the purpose of building student self esteem and confidence.

#### **C. Written notice to staff:**

The district will provide all faculty and staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties, and bullying of students by school staff, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct. Faculty and staff will be required to "sign off" on required training to document their participation. (Annually)

### **III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES**

#### **A. Identifying resources:**

The Pentucket Schools have access to the following staff that is qualified to provide counseling and other services for targets, student aggressors, and their families: nurses, school psychologists, guidance / adjustment counselors and/or social workers.

#### **B. Counseling and other services:**

Counseling and support services are available for all students. Students experiencing conflict or other sources of undue stress may need support, including regular monitoring and intervention. Parents can access support for their children by contacting the school Principal.

The staff listed above assists in the development of safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, supporting social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors.

PRSD services and programs include:

- Access to school guidance services, school psychologist and Special Education Services
- Assistance for student returning from hospitalization or who have school avoidance issues
- Child Study Teams / Instructional Support Teams
- Outreach to Community Resources
- Functional Behavioral Assessments and behavior modification plans
- Social pragmatics instruction and courses for students with exceptionalities
- Curriculum and instructional practices that teach pro-social skills and conflict resolution at the elementary level (e.g. Second Step and Responsive Classroom)
- Social skills groups with Counselors

- Advisory programs
- Health/Wellness programs for the Middle and High School Levels
- School climate and safety monitoring and evaluation

### **C. Students with disabilities:**

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, s.3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. Parents and guardians will be given a copy of the district anti-bullying policy at annual meetings. In addition, if reports of bullying are made at IEP meetings, they will be communicated immediately to the building Principal or his/her designee for appropriate action in accordance with this plan.

### **D. Referral to outside services:**

The Pentucket School District will support students and families accessing outside services when needed. Parents are encouraged to work directly with school counselors and the school Principal for support when seeking access to outside services.

## **IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES**

***Note: The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education published guidelines for implementing social and emotional learning curricula. Please visit <http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/#9> to access current resources for parents and educators.***

### **A. Specific bullying prevention approaches:**

Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches;

- Using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- Empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- Helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyber-bullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- Emphasizing cyber-safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- Enhancing students' skills for developing empathy, impulse control, problem solving, anger management, and engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communication;
- Engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference; and
- Developing student understanding that all members of the school community, including themselves are responsible for understanding and following through on this plan

At the start of each school year, students will be informed about the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. An assembly or class meeting may be useful in accomplishing this objective.

Schools may engage students to create messages and visual reminders that can be displayed around the school which support kindness and "upstanding" behaviors.

## **B. General teaching approaches/interventions that support bullying prevention efforts:**

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

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students, among others.
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- Using positive behavioral supports;
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- Model, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- Ensuring students are familiar with lunch/recess supervisors and aides
- Using the Internet safely; and
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

There are a number of interventions that schools within our district are using to engage students to create a sense of belonging and community and that encourage thoughtful and kind behavior.

Some examples include:

- Advisory Groups
- Positive Behavior Plans (Random Acts of Kindness, etc.)
- Community Service Initiatives
- Morning Meetings
- Incident Management Teams
- Crisis/Safety Teams
- Student Support Teams
- Lunch Groups
- After School Clubs and Activities
- Familiarizing students with lunch/recess supervisors and aides
- Use of common curriculum models

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

### **A. Reporting incidents of bullying or retaliation:**

Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the Principal or designee or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community, and may include, but are not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a voicemail box, a dedicated mailing address, and an

email address. The form is available in the most prevalent languages or origin of students and parents/guardians in the district.

Anonymous reports can be made at any school, by calling the Superintendent (978-363-2280), or by mailing a report to the Superintendent or school committee's attention (22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985).

Anonymous reporting of complaints limits the ability of the school to fully investigate issues when all parties are not disclosed. In order to clarify any stated issues, it is important to be able to have conversations with all of the parties involved. When the names of parties under investigation are omitted or not allowed to be disclosed, this weakens the overall process and at times would mean that there would be no possible way to complete an investigation. Anonymous reporting from bystanders is encouraged as long as the participants are able to be identified. Therefore, it would be possible to follow-up with an investigation.

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report; however, the building principal receiving the report will be required to document the incident using this form.

At the beginning of each school year the school or district will:

- Provide a copy of the Incident Reporting Form to students, parents and/or guardians;
- Make the form available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations as determined by the Principal or designee; and
- Post it on the school's website.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the Principal or designee, and the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

Faculty, staff, and parents will be required to sign a statement indicating that they have received and read the district's policies and procedures. The schools will keep a record of these signed statements.

**Reporting by staff:**

A staff member will report immediately to the Principal or designee or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may possibly be bullying or retaliation. It is the responsibility of the staff member to intervene in the behavioral incident consistent with district policies and procedures, and then report it to the principal or designee. Any PRSD staff member who observes or is aware of behavior that could be bullying or retaliation is required to make a report within one school day.

**Reporting by students:**

Students, who believe that they are the target of a bully, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are encouraged to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report bullying.

Students may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the Principal or designee, or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor.

### **Reporting by parents or guardians, and others**

The district expects parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student, to report it to the Principal or designee, or to the Superintendent or designee when the Principal or Assistant Principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee when the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Reports may be made anonymously at any school, by calling the Superintendent (978-363-2280), or by mailing a report to the Superintendent or school committee's attention (22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985).

Any report of bullying or retaliation requires the school to conduct an initial investigation. Every report will be documented and investigated. Because of the school's responsibility to prevent bullying and intervene when incidents of hurtful behavior or bullying occur, it is advisable to file a report even if it isn't a complaint. Any parties involved (alleged target(s) and alleged aggressor(s)) will be notified within 3 days of receipt of the report that an investigation is currently being conducted. The investigation will continue until completion. The timeline will be conducted expediently and will depend on the investigation details and the number of parties or witnesses involved. Parties will be informed of the investigative finding in a manner that is consistent with federal and state law. In the event that finding of bullying or retaliation is made, the target(s) shall also be notified, to the extent permitted under federal and state law, of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation..

Students, parents or guardians, and others who want to report an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student will be able to access a PDF version of our Reporting Form on the district website ([www.prsd.org](http://www.prsd.org)), a hard copy of the Reporting Form will be included in school handbooks, can be accessed on school / District websites, and will be available in school and District offices.

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

### **Safety**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the Principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety will include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target and/or altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target if possible. The Principal or designee may take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. An example of a safety plan is included at the end of this plan.

The Principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting students who have reported bullying or retaliation, students who have witnessed bullying or retaliation, students who provide information during an investigation or students who have reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

### **C. Obligation to notify others:**

#### **Notice to parents or guardians:**

Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the Principal or designee will promptly, ideally before the end of the school day, notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the Principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations 603 CMR 49.00.

The Principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and aggressor of the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, action taken to prevent further acts of bullying and retaliation. All notices to parents will comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

#### **Notice to another school or district:**

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

#### **Notice to law enforcement**

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the Principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the Principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the Principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In making this determination that criminal charges may be pursued against the student aggressor, the Principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the local police officer, and other individuals the Principal or designee deems appropriate.

### **D. Investigation:**

The Principal or designee will promptly investigate all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information now, including the nature of the allegations(s) and the ages of the students involved.

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

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent



practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The Principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

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

### **Determinations:**

The Principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the Principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The Principal or designee will:

- Determine what remedial action is required, if any, and
- Determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Depending upon the circumstances, the Principal or designee may choose to consult with the student's teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development or counseling support.

The Principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation. If bullying or retaliation is found, the action being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation will be communicated to the parents of the aggressor. All notices to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the Principal or designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. If bullying or retaliation is found, the parents of the target will be informed of the school's plan to monitor the situation and to help ensure the safety of their child.

### **E. Responses to bullying:**

#### **Teaching appropriate behavior through skills-building**

Upon the Principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior to the aggressor. M.G.L.c.71, 370 (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the Principal or designee may consider include:

- Offering individual or group skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum;
- Providing relevant education activities for individual students or groups of students in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; or
- Making a referral for an evaluation

**Taking disciplinary action:**

If the Principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the Principal or designee, including the nature of the incident, the age of the students(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and the school's or district's code of conduct as found in each school's Student Handbook which is signed-off annually by families. Depending on the nature and severity of the bullying, students may face a range of possible consequences including but not limited to one or more of the following; verbal warning, written warning, reprimand, detention, short term or long term suspension, expulsion. This list is not necessarily intended as a linear progression of disciplinary actions.

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be consulted in conjunction with state laws and regulations regarding student discipline.

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

**Promoting safety for the target and others:**

The Principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. Possible strategies may include but are not limited to:

- Increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur;
- Adjust transportation arrangements;
- Change schedule;
- Teach skills that will increase the child's resiliency; and
- Notify relevant faculty and staff to alert them to the need for increased vigilance

**Follow-up:**

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

## **VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES**

**Parent education and resources:**

Strong partnerships between home and school will increase the capacity to support and promote pro-social behavior among students, and prevent and respond to bullying situations. The district will collaborate with organizations to provide supplemental learning opportunities related to issues pertinent to issues related to bullying. Among these are:

- Parent Teacher Organizations
- Special Education Parent Advisory Councils
- Pentucket Education Foundation
- School Councils
- Pentucket Athletic Association
- Pentucket Arts Foundation
- Police Departments
- The Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
- Department of Children and Families

**Notification requirements:**

Each year the school or district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the District's Bullying Prevention & Intervention Plan. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyber-bullying and online safety. The school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet Safety Policy. All notices and information made available to the parents or guardians will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website (prsd.org).

**VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION**

The law requires each Plan to include a statement prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying, and retaliation. The statement must be included in the Plan and included in the student code of conduct, the student handbook, and the staff handbook. The following statement is incorporated directly from M.G.L. c. 71, 37O (b), and describes the law's requirements for prohibition of bullying. It may be tailored to meet the specific priorities of the school or district.

**Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:**

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

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying is also prohibited. As stated in M.G.L. c.71, 37O, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school staff to do any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

For additional information, contact the superintendent of schools (978) 363-2280 / 22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985.

**VIII. DEFINITIONS**

*Several of the following definitions are copies directly from M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, as noted below. Schools or districts may add specific language to these definitions to clarify them, but may not alter their meaning or scope.*

- **Aggressor** is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student
- **Bullying**, as defined M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:
  - causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
  - Places the target in reasonable fear of her to himself or herself or of damage to his or property;
  - Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;

- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

A working definition that may be more developmentally appropriate for use with students is, “Bullying is unfair and one-sided. It happens when someone keeps hurting, frightening, threatening, or leaving someone out on purpose.”

- **Cyberbullying** is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, 37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.
- **Hazing** is any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include, but is not limited to, whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any student or person, or which subjects any student or person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of basic necessities, (i.e. sleep, food) or extended isolation.
- **Hostile environment**, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, 37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education.
- **Retaliation** is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.
- **School Staff** includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.
- **Target** is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

## IX. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws and regulations, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, gender identity, national origin, or sexual orientation. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person’s membership in a legally protected category (i.e.: special education, homeless students, 504 status, court involved students, students without citizenship or others as listed above) under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H1/2, or 37H3/4, collective bargaining agreements, other applicable laws, or local school or district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

This Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be posted on the Pentucket Regional School District website [www.prsd.org](http://www.prsd.org).

**REFERENCES:** MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

**LEGAL REFERENCES:**

Title VII, Section 703 Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended

Federal regulation 74696 issued by EEO Commission

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 603 CMR

26.00 MGL 71:37O MGL 265:43, 43A MGL 268: 13B MGL 269: 14A

**CROSS REFERENCES:**

AC, Nondiscrimination

ACAB, Harassment

JICFA Prohibition of Hazing

JK Student Discipline Policy

Student Handbooks

## Appendix A

### PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BULLYING AWARENESS FORM

Dear Parents/Guardians:

The State of Massachusetts has developed a new zero tolerance policy on bullying and cyberbullying. The following link to resources on bullying prevention for parents is being posted in collaboration with the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center at Bridgewater State College.

<http://www.doe.mass.edu/bullying/>

All parents/guardians are encouraged to become familiar with the information and policies regarding bullying and cyberbullying to ensure that you and your children are aware of the laws.

In addition, the PRSD has posted its Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan on the school district's website: [www.prsd.org](http://www.prsd.org)

Please sign below and return the form to your child's homeroom teacher, indicating that the Pentucket Regional School District has made you aware of the anti-bullying law and available resources.

#### Bullying and Cyberbullying Parent Sign-Off Form

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ HR Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Name Printed: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

### PLEDGE TO STOP BULLYING

This contract will be a record of your commitment to reduce bullying in your school. Read each item carefully then choose whether you want to sign this pledge. If you decide that you want to help stop bullying, print your name on the line below, and sign the bottom of the sheet in the space provided. By doing so, you are making a promise to your peers and to your school community. We congratulate you for your brave and important decision!

I, \_\_\_\_\_, wish to reduce bullying in my school. I agree to:  
(Print Your Name Here)

1. Do my best to treat ALL my peers with respect and dignity.
2. Don't isolate, threaten, or harm my peers, or hurtfully tease, exclude, insult, or mock them.
3. Try to prevent or discourage my peers from humiliating, threatening, isolating, or harming others.
4. Try to assist any student who is being mistreated for the simple reason that it is wrong to be unkind to another human being.
5. If I am comfortable doing so, inform my parent/guardian, teacher, or school administrator when I learn about or see hurtful behavior.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Your Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Today's Date)

## Appendix C

### PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filling the Report: \_\_\_\_\_

Anonymous reports can be made at any school, by calling the Superintendent (978-363-2280), or by mailing a report to the Superintendent or school committee's attention (22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985). (Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

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

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

Your contact information/telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

4. If student, state your school: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

5. If state member, state your school or work site: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. Information about the incident:

Name of Target (of behavior): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date(s) of Incidents(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Time When Incidents(s) Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Incidents(s)(Be as specific as possible): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_ Staff \_\_\_\_ Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_ Staff \_\_\_\_ Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student \_\_\_\_ Staff \_\_\_\_ Other  
\_\_\_\_\_



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

---

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

Signature of Person Filling Out this Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**I. INVESTIGATION**

1. Investigators(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Position(s): \_\_\_\_\_

2. Interviews:

\_\_\_ Interviewed aggressor Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Interview target Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Interviewed witness Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor: \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

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

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

Summary of Investigation:

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

---

**II. CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION**

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation: \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No

\_\_\_ Bullying \_\_\_ Incident documented as \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Retaliation \_\_\_ Discipline referral only \_\_\_\_\_

2. Contacts:

\_\_\_ Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Superintendent Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Law Enforcement Date: \_\_\_\_\_ By \_\_\_\_\_

3. Action Taken:

\_\_\_ Think About It / Written Reflection      \_\_\_ Letter of Apology to Target  
\_\_\_ Loss of Privileges (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Detention (specify duration) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_ Suspension   \_\_\_ Community Service   \_\_\_ Education   \_\_\_ Other

4. Describe Safety Planning: \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up with Target: schedule for: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial/Date when complete \_\_\_\_\_

Follow-up with Aggressor: scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_ Initial/Date when complete \_\_\_\_\_

Report forward to Principal: Date \_\_\_\_\_  
(if principal was not the investigator)

Report forwarded to Superintendent: Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature and Title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### PENTUCKET REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

**PRMS Student Safety Plan for Harassment, Intimidation and/or Bullying**  
**This plan will go into effect immediately upon receipt of a Bullying Report.**



(Insert Picture Above)

Student's Name:

Primary Contact:

Teachers:

Support Staff:

Grade Level:

Plan Start Date:

**School/Staff:**

Any and all staff members who work with student or students involved will be notified of this Safety Plan. This may include, but is not limited to, administration, xxx's teachers, support staff, bus drivers, before/after school program staff, trainers, coaches, recess and cafeteria monitors.

Any school staff member who witnesses or is otherwise made aware of any harassing or intimidating behavior directed toward xxx will intervene immediately and will report such behavior to school administration.

This Plan is confidential, but should be placed in substitute folders.

The school will report any harassing, intimidating or bullying behavior (that is reported) to xxx's parents as soon as possible.

School administration will meet with the aggressor and his or her parents/guardian in order to review expectations moving forward.

\_\_\_\_\_ will be designated as xxx's primary point of contact (trusted adult) on staff.

**Student:**

Xxx agrees not to have contact of any kind with the aggressor in school while this Plan is in effect. Xxx agrees to not have contact with the aggressor outside of school (including via phone i.e. calling, texting, social media) as well.

Should xxx feel unsafe at any time or feel that the Stay-Away Agreement is not being followed, he/she will notify his/her parents, designated trusted adult, teacher, or other staff person immediately.

**Parents/Family:**

Parents and other family members agree to monitor and support the student with this Safety Plan and contact school if the problem persists.

Parents are welcome to contact the school at any time to check on the effectiveness of the Plan.

Should there be any further incidents of teasing/harassment/intimidation directed toward xxx, school administration will notify parents immediately and initiate a Bullying Investigation as appropriate.

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date:

Completed / Modified / Extended:

## MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW AND OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

### **DRUG, ALCOHOL, OR TOBACCO ABUSE POLICY**

The Merrimac Schools have established policies and procedures and work to promote a school environment free from the use of drugs, alcohol or tobacco.

The PRSD School Committee has approved SUBSTANCE USE Procedures below:

#### **I. Introduction**

##### **Role of school:**

Substance use and abuse is one of society's most pervasive problems and it increasingly affects children and adolescents. Any pattern of use affects each user's community, family, peer relationships, and academic performance.

We have established a course of action involving members of the teaching staff, counseling department, and administration, whose primary goal is to maintain a positive and safe learning environment.

##### **Voluntary admission of a substance abuse problem:**

The school will strongly support any student who comes forth to voluntarily seek help for a substance abuse problem. The program coordinator will assist the student in accessing treatment programs, arrange for access to community resources when necessary, and provide support and information for Parents/guardians.

While it should be noted that no disciplinary action will be taken in the case of a student asking for help in overcoming a substance problem, the standard policies and procedures outlined will be followed for any substance use following this admission. A student may not voluntarily admit to use as a means to circumvent the disciplinary procedures. An admission and request for assistance must precede a disciplinary investigation.

##### **Role of parents:**

Pentucket expects that parents/guardians want to know of the school's concern and, furthermore, expects the cooperation of the family in overcoming a suspected problem. Therefore, when school personnel suspect that a problem with substance use exists for a student, it is the school's policy to notify parents/guardians of this concern.

When needed, a member of the staff will also make recommendations to the student and his or her family regarding treatment programs and to provide information for parents/guardians.

In all cases, parents/guardians will be fully apprised of the situation throughout the intervention and disciplinary process. The school will assure that the principles of due process are observed at every stage.

## II. Policies

### Items included in these policies:

The table below defines the items included in this policy:

Illegal Drugs	Any controlled substance not legally obtained, and prescribed drugs not being used in the prescribed dosage or for the prescribed purpose, including drugs prescribed legally, but for someone other than the student. The term further refers to other substances (e.g. mail- order stimulants or pills, nitrous oxide, glue) that are used for something other than their intended purpose.
Paraphernalia	Paraphernalia associated with substance abuse (e.g. tobacco rolling papers, rolling machines, pipes, "roach" clips) will be viewed by as evidence of a student's intention to use illegal drugs and will be dealt with as a suspected substance use problem
Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications	To ensure the safe use of medication by students, ALL [exception for inhaler and diabetes treatment] medication is to be kept in the Health Center and dispensed under a nurse's direction. Students are not to have prescription or non- prescription medication such as No-Doz, Nyquil, diet pills, laxatives, or any products containing Ephedra or Creatine in their personal possession. Possession, use, or distribution of such medications by a student is viewed as a serious health and safety concern by the school.
Household cleaning solutions	The misuse of common household cleaning solutions or air fresheners creates a clear and present danger to the health and safety of students. Therefore, in accordance with our substance policies, any student found to be misusing such items will be in violation of our substance abuse policies.

### Prohibited actions at school:

The following actions are strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action:

- Student use of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, and/or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- Student possession of illegal drugs, narcotics, alcohol and/or drug paraphernalia on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- Being under the influence of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, or at school-sponsored or school-related functions.
- Student sale, distribution, or attempted sale or distribution of illegal drugs, narcotics, and/or alcohol on school property, on school buses, at school bus stops, or at school sponsored or school-related functions.

### Knowingly being in the presence of illegal substances:

A student who is present where he/she knows illegal substances are being used will be deemed at risk for substance use. Therefore, a student caught knowingly in the presence of substance use will be referred to the Principal or Assistant Principal and the situation may be treated as a first offense in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

**Possession, sale, or distribution of illegal substances and police involvement:**

Students found in possession of, selling or distributing illegal drugs, narcotics, or drug paraphernalia while on school property, on a school bus, or while attending school-sponsored or school-sanctioned functions will be reported to the police and disciplined according to the Code of Conduct.

**Suspicion of substance use or abuse:**

In cases where there is suspicion, but no irrefutable evidence of drug or alcohol use, the school reserves the right to take certain actions on behalf of the suspected student(s). Such actions may include any or all of the following: intervention by faculty members known to be close to the student(s), interview by a counselor, participation in a counseling program, etc.

**III. Procedures****Investigation process:**

When a student is believed to have violated the district's substance abuse policy, the following events will occur:

Stage	What happens
1	The student will be referred to the Principal or the Assistant Principal.
2	The administrator may contact the school nurse concerning the case. If the nurse or other medical professional determines that physical symptoms may be present after speaking with the student and evaluating the symptoms, the nurse or other medical professional will make recommendations to the referring administrator.
3	The Principal or Assistant Principal will, if reasonably possible, notify the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).
4	The Principal or Assistant Principal will inform the student, in the presence of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) if reasonably possible, of the conduct prohibited in which the Principal or Assistant Principal believes the student has engaged.
5	The student will have the opportunity to respond to the Principal or Assistant Principal.
6	After considering the information, if the Principal or Assistant Principal believes a violation has occurred, the Principal or Assistant Principal may suspend the student in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The offense may be reported to local police authorities.
7	Following the meeting with the Principal or Assistant Principal, the student will be released from school, and as a general rule, will be released only into the care and custody of his/her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) or other responsible adults designated by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

8	The student will serve his or her suspension or other consequences as determined by the Principal or Assistant Principal.
9	Prior to the student's return to school, and as a condition of his/her return to school, the parent(s) and/or legal guardian(s) and the student must meet with the Principal or Assistant Principal and/or other staff.

**Parental involvement:**

Should the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) fail to cooperate with the school authorities at any point in this process, the school authorities may find it necessary to pursue a CHINS or file a report with the Department of Children and Families (i.e 51A Report).

**Consequences for violating policy:**

Any student determined to be in violation of Pentucket's substance abuse policy will be required to take the following steps. Offense status remains in effect for 12 months from the date of the infraction.

- The student will serve an in-house suspension for 1-10 consecutive school days. During this time, the student:
  - Will not be able to participate in the regular day-to-day routine, including classes, athletics or other extra-curricular activities. Note: At the discretion of the Principal or Assistant Principal, a student may be suspended from athletics and other student activities for up to 45 days. The factors used to determine this will include whether this is a first time or repeat offense and whether there is an agreed upon parental/student treatment plan.
  - Will be assigned community service at the school.
  - Will be required to make up missed class work in a structured study hall. Any sleeping or outright refusal to work throughout the day will result in make-up of that day by extension of the suspension period.
- During the in-house suspension, the student may volunteer for a work detail. This could involve cleaning, grounds maintenance, or other work around the school community. Work details are voluntary. No student will be mandated to do a work detail.
- Upon the student's return from suspension, he/she will be required to complete an interview with a Pentucket school counselor. The purpose of this initial interview will be to determine the level of potential involvement with substances and to provide the family with recommendations as to any further need for intervention.

IF the initial assessment...	THEN the student will be ...
Does not indicate substance dependence	Monitored by school personnel as needed.
Indicates substance dependence Indicates behavior that is a high risk	Referred to a substance abuse counselor for additional assessment and follow up.



**Repeat offenses:**

The policy and process listed above apply to all violations of this policy.

If a student violates this policy more than once, the school may also require the student and parents to agree to a treatment plan. The school may also monitor the student for up to 18 months to ensure that this plan is successful.

**IV. Additional information for athletes:****MIAA Chemical Health Rule: Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs**

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

The MIAA Rule will be in effect during the school day and at all extra-curricular and school sponsored activities. School is considered to be any location where a school sponsored activity is taking place. The prescribed penalties, listed below, will commence for the "out-of-school" student-athlete at the start of his/her athletic season.

**In season athletes:****The Minimum Penalties are:**

- **First Violation:** When the Principal or Assistant Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next 2 consecutive interscholastic events, or 2 weeks of a season in which the student is a participant whichever encompasses the greater number of contests. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation.
- **Second and Subsequent Violations:** The student shall lose eligibility for the next 12 consecutive athletic events or 12 consecutive weeks, whichever encompasses the greater number of contests in which the student is a participant.

**Out of season athletes:**

For out-of-season athletes, Pentucket School District will use its own policy as described above.

**NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS**

In accordance with state and federal regulations, the Pentucket Regional School District offers the following explanation of two important pieces of legislation affecting public schools. Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, a federal law, prohibits discrimination in schools on the basis of sex. Chapter 76 of the General Laws for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, prohibits discrimination in the schools on the basis of race, color, sex, religion or national origin. These laws are somewhat different in scope and coverage and are therefore explained separately below.

## **Language Access Implementation Plan**

### **Purpose**

Pentucket Regional School District is committed to providing meaningful access to individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP) via the delivery of language services and resources. The Pentucket Regional School District Language Access Implementation Plan helps manage the roles and responsibilities of staff members with respect to overcoming barriers for individuals with limited English proficiency (LEP). This document outlines how Pentucket Regional School District defines language assistance tasks, deadlines and priorities, assigned responsibilities, and the allocation of resources necessary to meet or exceed compliance with language access requirements.

Language Access Procedures specify for staff members the steps to follow to provide language services, gather data, and deliver services to LEP individuals. These procedures are published in handbooks, on District and school websites, and in school offices.

### **Procedure**

#### **Primary Contact Person for LEP Service:**

**Dr. Michael Jarvis – 978-363-2280 – [mjarvis@prsd.org](mailto:mjarvis@prsd.org)**

#### **Director of Supplemental and Intensive Services**

Pentucket Regional School District takes reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to programs and activities by LEP persons. A balance of the following four factors are used in the District's assessment:

1. The number or proportion of LEP persons eligible to be served or likely to be encountered by the program;
2. The frequency with which LEP individuals come in contact with the program;
3. The nature and importance of the program, activity, or service provided by the program to people's lives; and,
4. The resources available to the District and costs.

The intent is to find a balance that ensures meaningful access by LEP persons to critical series while not imposing undue burdens.

Individuals who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English can be limited English proficient, or "LEP". These individuals may be entitled to language assistance with respect to a particular type of service.

An individual's primary language will be identified and documented utilizing one or more of the following methods:

1. Self-identification by the LEP individual or identification by a companion
2. Use of "I Speak" Language Identification Cards

**Interpretation** refers to the process of orally rendering communication from one language into another, while **translation** refers to the same process in written language. Interpretation involves the immediate communication of meaning from one language (the source language) into another (the target language). From the standpoint of the user, a successful interpretation is one that faithfully and accurately conveys the meaning of the source language orally, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source

message, without omissions, additions or embellishments on the part of the interpreter. An interpreter conveys meaning orally, while a translator conveys meaning from written text to written text. As a result, interpretation requires skills different from those needed for translation.

Vital documents are translated into the non-English language of each regularly encountered LEP group eligible to be served or likely to be affected by the program or activity. A document will be considered vital if it contains information that is critical for obtaining federal services and/or benefits, or is required by law. Vital documents include, for example: applications, consent and complaint forms; notices of rights and disciplinary action; notices advising LEP persons of the availability of free language assistance; written tests that do not assess English language competency, but rather competency for a particular license, job, or skill for which English competency is not required; and letters or notices that require a response. Non-vital information includes documents that are not critical to access such benefits and services. Advertisements of federal agency tours and copies of testimony presented to Congress that are available for information purposes would be considered non-vital information.

Vital documents must be translated when a significant number or percentage of the population eligible to be served, or likely to be directly affected by the program/activity, needs services or information in a language other than English to communicate effectively. For many larger documents, translation of vital information contained within the document will suffice and the documents need not be translated in their entirety.

Though meaningful access to a program requires an awareness of the program's existence, it would be impossible, from a practical and cost-based perspective, to translate every piece of outreach material into every language. Title VI does not require it. Nevertheless, because in some circumstances lack of awareness of the existence of a particular program may effectively deny LEP individuals meaningful access, Pentucket Regional School District will continually assess the needs of eligible service populations in order to determine whether certain critical outreach materials should be translated into other languages.

### Feedback

Pentucket Regional School District is committed to continuous improvement and welcomes feedback from LEP individuals. Individuals may submit feedback to School Principals, the Superintendent of Schools or directly to the Director of Supplemental and Intensive Services. In this way, Pentucket Regional School District supports a feedback process that is transparent and accessible to LEP persons. Any LEP individual is welcome to provide feedback to communicate his or her comments or suggestions regarding the failure to provide language access or any other agency criticism. All feedback will be forwarded to the Director of Supplemental and Intensive Services for purposes of maintaining a record of feedback received and any resolution based on LEP individual's comments or suggestions.

## **HARASSMENT**

### **Policy ACAB**

Harassment of students by other students, employees, vendors and other 3<sup>rd</sup> parties will not be tolerated in the Pentucket Regional School District. The alleged harassment must involve conduct that occurred within the school's own program or activity, such as whether the harassment occurred at a location or under circumstances where the school owned, or substantially controlled the premises, exercised oversight, supervision or discipline over the location or participants, or funded, sponsored, promoted or endorsed the event where the alleged harassment occurred, against a person in the United States. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of the School District, school buses, or attending or engaging in school sponsored activities.

Harassment prohibited by the District includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or disability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion pursuant to disciplinary codes. Employees who have been found to violate this policy will be subject to discipline up to and including termination of employment, subject to contractual disciplinary obligations.

**Employee-to-Student Harassment** means conduct of a written, verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student.

**Student-to-Student Harassment** means conduct of a written, verbal, or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students, when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

- Written, verbal, or physical (including texting, blogging, or other technological methods) harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

By law, what constitutes harassment is determined from the perspective of a reasonable person with the characteristic on which the harassment is based. Individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by others.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment through designation of Title IX Coordinator or building based employees, who may include principals or their designees. The superintendent will recommend, in consultation with the principals, opportunities to the designated recipients for appropriate training.

**Sexual harassment** is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity it also includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes conduct by an employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, often called quid pro quo harassment and, sexual assault as the Federal Clery Act defines that crime. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstance).

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment, depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances—whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating an environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, to male, female, or gender non-conforming students or employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

Because the District takes allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of harassment including sexual harassment, and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting an environment that is free of harassment including sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of harassment or sexual harassment.

Retaliation against a complainant, because they have filed a harassment or sexual harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment or sexual harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. A student or employee who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including student suspension and expulsion or employee termination.

The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

#### NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The regulations require a school district to respond when the district has actual notice of sexual harassment. School districts have actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstances). Schools are required to investigate every formal complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment.

The regulation highlights the importance of supportive measures designed to preserve or restore access to the school's education program or activity, with or without a formal complaint. Where there has been a finding of responsibility, the regulation would require remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity.

#### DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Due process protections include the following:

1. A presumption of innocence throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
2. A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
3. Application of a preponderance of evidence standard;
4. The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through cross examination at a live hearing, if offered by the district, subject to "rape shield" protections;
5. Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence;
6. Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
7. Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where schools offer appeals;
8. Upon filing a formal complaint the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools, a hearing is optional at the election of the district, but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other's credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying the preponderance of the evidence standard. As long as the process is voluntary for all parties, after

being fully informed and written consent is provided by both parties, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

The District may establish an informal investigation process that may, upon the request of the complainant, be followed by a formal process.

The Superintendent in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator shall designate the principal of each school in the district, or their designee (or some other appropriate employee(s)) as the initial entity to receive the sexual harassment complaint. Also, in a matter of sexual harassment, the district shall require that the Title IX Coordinator be informed, as soon as possible, of the filing of the complaint. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting the prohibited conduct to someone other than those above designated complaint recipients. The investigating officer may receive the complaint orally or in writing, and the investigation shall be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and in compliance with applicable law. The investigation will be prompt, thorough, and impartial, and will include, at least, a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. Also, the alleged harasser will be interviewed. When the investigation is completed, the complaint recipient will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

#### RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Schools must create and maintain records documenting every Title IX sexual harassment complaint. This could include mediation, restorative justice, or other models of alternative dispute resolution. Schools must keep records regarding the school's response to every report of sexual harassment of which it becomes aware even if no formal complaint was filed, including documentation of supportive matters offered and implemented for the complainant.

This policy, or a summary thereof that contain the essential policy elements shall be distributed by the Pentucket Regional School District to its students and employees and each parent or guardian shall sign that they have received and understand the policy.

PRSD Title IX Coordinator: Mr. Brent Conway, Asst. Superintendent  
Contact: 978-363-2280

Please note that the following entities have specified time limits for filing a claim.

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

- The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 601  
Boston, MA 02108.  
Phone: 617-994-6000.
- Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education)  
5 Post Office Square, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02109.  
Phone: 617-289-0111.
- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission,  
John F. Kennedy Bldg.  
475 Government Center  
Boston, MA 02203.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A  
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972  
BESE 603 CMR 26:00  
34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)  
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)  
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

**Note: A summary of the attached Policy, as adopted, must be sent to parents/guardians, students, employees, unions, and prospective employees of the school district including Title IX Coordinator(s), investigator(s) and the decision-maker. The above referenced employees must attend training sessions on the implementation of the Policy.**

SOURCE: MASC July 2020

### **ACAB-R: Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**

The following grievance procedures apply to all complaints made by students or staff of sexual harassment, sexual assault or sexual violence under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and in accordance with School Committee Policy ACAB.

#### **Reporting of Sexual Harassment Complaints**

##### **How to Report a Complaint of Sexual Harassment**

Students and employees who believe they have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment should notify the District's designated Title IX Coordinator, Mr. Brent Conway, Asst. Superintendent at 978-363-2280. If the complaint concerns allegations against the Title IX Coordinator, then the complaint should be filed with the Superintendent or designee.

Employees who witness sexual harassment or have a reasonable belief that it is occurring, are required to report it immediately to the Title IX Coordinator.

Reports of sexual harassment may also be made by employees to their direct supervisor and by students to a teacher, counselor, school nurse or building administrator, who shall immediately bring such report to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator.

The complaint may be filed by the alleged victim or any other party. Any person filing a complaint is encouraged to do so within a short time after the occurrence giving rise to the complaint, to assure a prompt investigation and fair resolution.

##### **Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints**

All complaints shall be processed in a fair, expeditious and confidential manner. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the complaint response, including implementation of supportive measures and the grievance/appeal process. In doing so, the Title IX Coordinator may delegate certain duties to a designee. Complaints can be investigated by a building administrator, district-level staff member, or the Title IX Coordinator. The decision-maker must be a separate individual from the



investigator. The Title IX Coordinator (or designee), investigator and decision maker shall not have a conflict of interest or bias. All Title IX personnel shall receive appropriate training in accordance with Section VIII below.

### **Supportive Measures and Filing of a Formal Complaint**

#### **Supportive Measures**

Once a report of sexual harassment has been received, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will promptly contact the alleged victim (the “Complainant”) to discuss the availability of supportive measures and consider the Complainant’s wishes with respect to supportive measures. The District must investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint. The District must inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint, and explain to the Complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. Supportive measures shall also be offered to the Respondent as necessary to ensure continued and equal access to the education program and/or activity during any investigation.

“Supportive measures” are individualized services reasonably available that are nonpunitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures must be offered to both the Complainant and the Respondent, and may include, but not be limited to” no contact orders, change of class schedules, modifications of assignments/work, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other appropriate measures.

In addition to the above supportive measures, the District, in its discretion, may consider the emergency removal of a student in accordance with applicable student discipline regulations. The District may place an employee on paid administrative leave during the course of an investigation of sexual harassment allegations against said employee as determined appropriate and consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

#### **Filing a Formal Complaint**

A formal complaint may be filed in writing by the Complainant or presented verbally and put into writing and signed by the Title IX Coordinator or designee. The District will respect the wishes of the Complainant with respect to whether the District investigates a report of sexual harassment, unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the Complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

#### **Contents of a Formal Complaint**

A formal complaint is signed by a Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator or designee alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the District. A formal complaint may be

filed with the Title IX Coordinator or designee in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information set forth herein.

The District must investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint. If the allegations in the formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as set forth under Title IX, or did not occur in the District's education program or activity, the District must dismiss such allegations for the purposes of Title IX, but may still address the allegations in any manner that the District deems appropriate consistent with its policies, procedures and code of conduct, including but not limited to its anti-bullying policies and plan

### **Informal or Formal Resolution of Complaint**

The District must offer the Complainant a formal resolution process and may offer an informal resolution process. If the District does not provide the option of informal resolution, the formal resolution process shall be followed.

### **Informal Resolution Process**

If the District elects to offer an informal resolution process, such process shall be offered and implemented at the election of the Complainant and only after receipt of voluntary, informed, written consent of both the Complainant and the Respondent. The Complainant may elect informal resolution of a complaint at any time prior to a final determination by the decision maker. This may include conciliation and/or mediation by an individual trained to conduct such processes. At any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, either party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the formal complaint grievance process.

The District shall not offer an informal resolution process when a student alleges sexual harassment by staff.

### **Formal Resolution Process**

The formal complaint process will comply with the grievance procedures outlined below.

### **Grievance Procedure**

In accordance with Title IX and its supporting regulations, the District shall implement the following process when investigating formal complaints of sexual harassment:

The Complainant and Respondent will be treated equally throughout the investigation process and be provided with written notice of the allegation (including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview), the grievance process, the range of possible remedies the District may provide a Complainant and disciplinary sanctions the District might impose on a respondent, following determinations of responsibility. Both parties have the right to have a representative/advisor participate in the process on their behalf.

Any interim supportive measures, as appropriate, will be offered to both parties.

The investigator will conduct an objective evaluation of all available evidence. This shall include an interview of both the Complainant and the Respondent, during which each party shall have a full opportunity to state their case through the presentation of witnesses and other evidence. Witnesses and other persons relevant to the complaint, if any, may also be interviewed. Please note that, during the investigation, rape shield protections apply to the Complainant and Complainants may generally not be asked about their prior sexual behavior.

During the investigation process, the parties shall not be prohibited from discussing the complaint or collecting evidence.

The investigation shall be completed in a reasonable time frame within thirty (30) school days except for good cause. Good cause may include, but not limited to, unavailability of a party, concurrent pending law enforcement investigation, or need for interpreter or accommodation of any party or witnesses' disability.

During the investigation, there is a presumption that the Respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

The investigator will make findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

The investigator will not request or solicit information from any party or witness that constitutes disclosure of information that is protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the holder of the privilege voluntarily waives the privilege.

Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, and at least ten (10) calendar days prior to completion of the investigation, the Complainant and Respondent will both be provided a copy of the investigation report and an opportunity to submit any additional information they would like considered by the investigator before their report is finalized. Both parties shall be provided the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

Once the investigation has been completed, the investigator will submit their investigation report, with recommendations with regard to responsive measures, to the decision maker. The Complainant and Respondent shall also be advised, in writing, of the investigator's findings and recommendations.

The decision maker will review the investigation report and hold a disciplinary hearing with the Respondent, in accordance with applicable procedures (for student or employee).

The decision maker will advise both parties of the final determination and any related remedial/responsive measures in a manner that complies with applicable laws regarding student confidentiality and appeal rights. The Respondent will be notified of any disciplinary action and other remedial measures, if the complaint is substantiated. Notice of such final determination will be made in writing and sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

### **Disciplinary Action**

If a complaint is substantiated, the District will act promptly to eliminate the behavior and will refer the matter to the proper supervisor or administrator for appropriate responsive measures, including but not limited to disciplinary action and restoring a sense of safety for the Complainant. For students, discipline will be imposed consistent with the Code of Conduct and Massachusetts Student Discipline Law.

Discipline of employees will be consistent with collective bargaining procedures, if applicable, and may include disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Responsive measures will also include any steps necessary to prevent the recurrence of any discrimination and/or harassment and will include corrective action aimed at eliminating any discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, as appropriate.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

Retaliation in any form against any person because of or related to a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, or because of or related to cooperation with an investigation of a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, is unlawful and prohibited. Retaliation is also prohibited against any individual that participates or chooses not to participate in the grievance process.

If retaliation occurs, it could be considered grounds for discipline, up to and including suspension and/or discharge for employee(s), and appropriate disciplinary action for students.

### **Appeal Procedure**

Both parties have the right to appeal the decision maker's determination to the Superintendent or designee. Any appeal should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the final determination.

The Superintendent or designee in reviewing the appeal may consider the following factors

- Was there any procedural irregularity with the investigation process?
- Is there any new evidence not reasonably available at the time of the investigation?
- Did the Title IX investigator have a conflict of interest?

The decision of the appeal process is final and is not subject to further review by the School Committee.

### **Training Requirements**

All Title IX personnel including Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process shall receive training as required by Title IX and its supporting regulations. All training materials shall be made available to the public for inspection upon request.

## **DISCRIMINATION LAW**

### **CHAPTER 76, section 5**

Chapter 76 is referred to as “An Act to Prohibit Discrimination in the Public Schools”. The law reads as follows:

No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

This law makes it clear that all aspects of public school education must be fully open and available to members of both sexes and of minority groups. The regulations address five areas of school policy:

1. School admission
2. Admissions to courses of study
3. Guidance
4. Extra-curricular, and
5. Athletic activities

## **REGULATIONS CONCERNING PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

It is the policy of the Pentucket Regional School District to provide a safe, productive workplace and educational environment for its employees and students, while ensuring that every student in the Pentucket Regional School District is free from unreasonable use of physical restraint. It is the policy that physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or have been deemed inappropriate and with extreme caution. As part of a comprehensive approach to safety, all schools have physical restraint procedures in place which are consistent with 603 CMR 46.00. Qualified trained school personnel carry out specific procedures and parents/guardians are notified as outlined in the Pentucket’s physical restraint procedures.

## **REPORTING SEXUAL ABUSE AND OTHER CRIMINAL CONDUCT**

General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A, makes administrators, teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors and other school staff members mandated reporters for purposes of reporting child abuse and neglect to the Department of Social Services (DCF). Under M.G.L. c. 119, Section 51A, a school staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that a student under the age of 18 years is suffering physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or neglect, by a parent, guardian, school staff member, or other caretaker, must immediately report the abuse or neglect either directly to the DCF or to the person designated by the school to accept those reports, who, in turn, must promptly report the abuse to the DCF.

## **NOTIFICATION OF HOMELESS COORDINATOR**

The Pentucket Regional School District, in accordance with NCLB: Title X, Par C, Sec 722 (g)(6) identifies Brent Conway as the Homeless Coordinator for the Pentucket School District. He can be reached at 22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985 or by telephone at (978) 363-2280 ext. 113.

## **HAZING**

The Pentucket Regional School District prohibits hazing of any kind. Every incident deemed to be hazing by the administration would incur a disciplinary consequence appropriate to the action. The Pentucket Regional School District strives to maintain a safe and positive environment for students and staff. Hazing activities of any type are inconsistent with the philosophy and educational goals of the district and are prohibited.

No Pentucket Regional School District employee, student, coach, sponsor, volunteer, chaperone, person, organization or group shall plan, initiate, direct, encourage, assist, or engage in hazing or improper initiation activity.

Hazing or improper initiation on school property or in any place under the permanent or temporary control of the School District, whether on public or private property, or while being transported to or from school by the School District, or at school, or during any school sponsored organization, activities, or games, or by any student group, team or organization which is recognized by or permitted to use the facilities of the School District, by or toward any other student of the Pentucket Regional School District is prohibited.

MGL Chapter 269, Section 17 defines hazing as “any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation” (See full text in page devoted to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 266. Crimes Against Public Peace.)

Students who have been subjected to hazing shall promptly report such incidents to the school Principal or his/her designee and, according to the referenced law, to the police. If the hazing occurs off school property, it shall be reported immediately to the Pentucket Regional School District employee, sponsor, coach, volunteer, or chaperone in charge. In the case where this reporting is verbal, subsequent written reporting may be required. The school administration will immediately investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written and will appropriately discipline any student and/or employee who engages in hazing. Disciplinary action may include suspension or expulsion of the offending student(s) from the organization and/or school or suspension or discharge of the offending employee.

## **CRIMES AGAINST PUBLIC PEACE**

### **Chapter 269: Section 17. Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined.**

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

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

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

***Chapter 269: Section 18. Failure to report hazing.***

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

**REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973**

**INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (SECTION 504)**

It is the practice of the Pentucket Regional School District to provide a free and appropriate public education to each handicapped student within its jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the handicap.

It is the intent of the Pentucket Regional School District to ensure that students who are handicapped within the definition of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are identified, evaluated and provided with appropriate educational services. Students may be handicapped under this policy even though they do not require services pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-04) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Special Education Act known as Chapter 766.

Due process rights of handicapped students and their parents under Section 504 will be enforced. Each school has a designated school-based Coordinator of Section 504. Mr. Michael Jarvis is Coordinator of Section 504 activities for the Pentucket Regional School District. He can be reached at (978) 363-2280, Ext. 113.

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE (CHAPTER 71, SECTION 37H)**

It is the legal, moral and social responsibility of the Pentucket Regional School District to establish policies and procedures, and encourage administrative action that will promote a school environment that is safe and free from the use, sale or transfer of drugs or alcohol.

The Educational Reform Act of 1993 makes clear that certain serious violations relating to illegal drug involvement, possession of dangerous weapons, or assaults on faculty can result in expulsion from school. Moreover, Section 37H, Chapter 71, of the Massachusetts General Laws, calls for student handbooks to make clear the consequences a student may face with regard to these serious disciplinary infractions. These are outlined elsewhere in this handbook.

**DIGITAL USE POLICY**

Purpose: The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, Pentucket Regional School District (PRSD) provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment. Availability The Superintendent, or his/her designee, shall implement, monitor, and

evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes. All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using digital devices, whether personal or school owned, as well as use of the school district network, is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege. The Superintendent, or his/her designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media.
- Users shall give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

These procedures shall be reviewed annually by district administration together with students and teachers and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology. SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REF: MGL Section 10, Chapter 66, Section 1 (Public Records law); Computer Fraud & Abuse Act cfaa 18 u.s.c. § 1030; Electronic Communications Privacy Act (ECPA) CROSS REF: PRSD Student Handbooks; PRSD Policy IJNDBA SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY, PRSD Policy IJNDB -R DIGITAL USE POLICY RULES & REGULATIONS FOR PRSD STAFF, STUDENTS AND GUEST NETWORK USERS; PRSD Grade Level Responsible Use of Technology Agreements ADOPTED: May 19, 2020 (Formerly PRSD Acceptable Technology Use Policy)

## **NETWORK & INTERNET USE POLICY**

The Pentucket Regional School District will provide access for employees and students to the district's LANs and future WAN, including access to external networks (the Internet) for limited educational purposes. Educational purposes will be defined as classroom activities, career and professional development, and teacher supervised activities of an educational nature. Access to the district's LAN and WAN will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff in upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. The WAN and Internet will also be utilized to provide information to the community, including parents, governmental agencies, and businesses.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the District's network for instructional and administrative purposes. Access to the LANs, WAN, and the Internet will be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes and in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures. All users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of those regulations and procedures and shall agree annually, in writing, to comply with the regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of the Pentucket Regional School District. Violation of the law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the School District.

## **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: NOTIFICATION OF ANTI-DISCRIMINATION**

The Pentucket Regional School District, in accordance with Chapter 76, Section 5 of the Massachusetts General Law guarantees every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he/she actually resides. 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 course of study of such a public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Coordinator for Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and M.G.L. Ch. 76, S.5 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971) is Assistant Superintendent, Brent Conway, 22 Main Street, West Newbury, MA 01985. (telephone number 978-363-2280).

Inquiries regarding the application of the non-discrimination policy of the Pentucket Regional School District may be referred to Pentucket Regional School District's Coordinator as stated above or Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Stephanie Monroe, 330 C Street, SW, Washington D.C. 20202, telephone 800-421-3481, or the Director of Program Quality Assurance, Massachusetts Department of Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148, telephone (781) 338-3700. A Notice of Non-Discrimination will be posted in each school building. Such Notice will contain the names and telephone numbers of persons within the Pentucket Regional School District who are responsible for receiving and investigating complaints of discrimination and shall be reviewed at least annually to ensure that the information is current.

### **STUDENT ASSIGNMENT TO SCHOOLS**

Subject to the guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, the superintendent may suspend or revise the assignment of students to schools, including the assignment of new students for such a period as the emergency declaration is in force.

During the Covid-19 pandemic emergency when class size and social distancing is of the utmost importance, the Superintendent can assign a new student (to the District) to another elementary school within the District to accommodate social distancing and cohort size. Transportation for said child/children will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

CROSS REF: JBCA SCHOOL ENROLLMENT RESIDENCY

Adopted: September 1, 2020

### **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

There is an interagency Memorandum of Understanding between the Pentucket School District, the Police Department of West Newbury, the Essex County District Attorney's Office, the Department of Children and Families, the department of Youth Services and the Haverhill and Newburyport Juvenile Court Probation Services. This document recognizes the formal working relationships agreed upon by the participating agencies to provide a safe and violence free educational setting.

Cases involving possession of weapons, illegal possession or use of drugs, assault, false fire alarms, hazing, or other criminal acts will be reported to the West Newbury Police.

### **MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAWS CHAPTER 71, SECTION 37H AND 37 ½ H REGARDING STUDENT DISCIPLINE**

Section 37H. The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures ensuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of other student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

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

Section 37H1/2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

1. Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such 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 or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

## **POLICY M MASK REGULATIONS AND PROTOCOLS FOR STUDENTS, STAFF & ALL BUILDING PERSONNEL**

The Pentucket Regional School District is committed to providing a safe environment as schools reopen

during the COVID-19 pandemic. According to public health experts, one of the best ways to stop the spread of coronavirus and to keep members of our school community safe is the use of face masks. Therefore, in accordance with guidance from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), the Department of elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH), the following requirements are in place until further notice.

A face covering that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed. Students may only remove their masks, when instructed to do so by a teacher or school administrator, during a designated “Mask Break” or when instructed to do so during lunch.

Face coverings can be disposable or reusable and will need to:

- fully cover the nose and mouth and secure under the chin,
- be made with at least 2 layers of breathable material,
- fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face,
- and be secured with ties or ear loops.

Based on guidance from health authorities neck gaiters, open-chin triangle bandanas, and face-coverings containing valves, mesh material, or holes of any kind will not be considered appropriate face coverings.

**In addition, per DESE guidance, face shields are not to be worn as a substitute for a face mask, unless a student or staff member meets the requirements for such as stated below, or has received prior approval of the Superintendent or her/his designee.** A student’s face mask is to be provided by the student’s family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face coverings. However, the district will supply disposable face coverings for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the Superintendent (or her/his designee), the school nurse and the local Board of Health. Additionally, face shields or physical barriers will be considered only on a case by case basis.

If students are in violation of this policy, the building principal will consult with the parent/guardians to determine whether an exception is appropriate, or the student may be removed from the school building for in-person learning until such time as they can comply with the requirement or the requirement is lifted.

Violations of this policy by staff will be handled in the same manner as other violations of School Committee policy.

Visitors in violation of this policy will be denied entry to the school/district facility.

This policy will remain in place until rescinded by the School Committee.

LEGAL REF: Commonwealth of Massachusetts, COVID-19 Order No. 31 -  
<https://www.mass.gov/doc/may-1-2020-masks-and-face-coverings/download>

REFS: Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Considerations for Wearing Masks -  
<http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncovprevent-getting-sick/cloth-face-cover-guidance.html>

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - Reopening Guidelines -  
<http://www.doe.mass.edu/covid19/>

Commonwealth of Massachusetts - Mask Up MA! - <https://www.mass.gov/news/mask-up-ma>

### M Policies

**Pentucket Regional School District  
School Year 2021 - 2022**

*Please review the following important information:*

**THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE SCHOOL  
FOR EACH STUDENT IN YOUR FAMILY**

**PLEASE RETURN BY SEPTEMBER 17, 2021**

**DIGITAL USE POLICY**

**USER AGREEMENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN AN ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM**

This user agreement must be renewed each academic year. A separate User Agreement must be on file for each student in a family.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Homeroom Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Pentucket Regional School District Digital Use Policy [IJNDB](#) and Digital Use Policy Rules and Regulations [IJNDB-R](#) and agree to abide by its provisions. I understand that violation of these provisions may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to suspension or revocation of privileges, suspension or expulsion from school, termination of employment, and criminal prosecution.

User Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I have read the Pentucket Regional School District Use Policy IJNDB and Rules and Regulations IJNDB-R. In consideration for the privilege of using the District's system/network, and in consideration for having access to the public networks, I hereby release the District, its operators, and institutions with which they are affiliated from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the system/network, including, without limitation, the type of damage identified in the Pentucket Regional School District Use Policy IJNDB-R.

To exercise your options, please initial the following statements, which express your desires in regards to your child's use and access to the District's network and the Internet.

\_\_\_\_\_ In addition to Internet access under the direct supervision of a teacher for classroom instruction, I give permission for my child to have guided access to the Internet through the district's system/network.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not give permission for my child to have access to the Internet beyond access under the direct supervision of a teacher for classroom instruction.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pentucket Regional School District**

*Please review the following important information:*

**THIS FORMS MUST BE RETURNED TO THE SCHOOL  
FOR EACH STUDENT IN YOUR FAMILY  
PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM BY September 17, 2021  
PUBLICATIONS RELEASE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

At times we are asked to release student information to the media and other such organizations. These requests include interviews, photographs, our web page and/or video recording of students involved in a number of classroom activities as well as any of the other enrichment activities that are offered here at the school. Occasionally, interested parties may visit classrooms while in session and request permission to talk with students about educational experiences. It is our desire to respect the wishes of parents and students in keeping certain pieces of information private.

\_\_\_\_ My child may not be photographed/interviewed for the newspaper or other print publications.

\_\_\_\_ My child may not be included in a classroom, school or PRSD district web page.

\_\_\_\_ My child may not be photographed for the school yearbook.

If you should have any other issues/concerns regarding the release of information, photos, videos, and/or our web page within the normal context of the day- to-day operations of our school, we ask that you communicate those concerns to the Principal in writing by September 16, 2021.

**PLEASE SIGN TO INDICATE YOU HAVE REVIEWED THE PUBLICATIONS RELEASE**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

Students and parents should be aware of the rules and regulations that govern the Pentucket Regional Schools. To ensure that all individuals are aware of these guidelines, and to understand that you will be accountable for all rules governing our schools, we ask that families review the school handbook together.

**PLEASE SIGN TO INDICATE YOU HAVE REVIEWED THE CALENDAR/HANDBOOK**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**HEALTH FORM ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

**PLEASE SIGN TO INDICATE YOU HAVE PROVIDED THE SCHOOL WITH CURRENT  
HEALTH INFORMATION & REVIEWED THE HEALTH SERVICES SECTION**

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_