

Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center
Student / Parent Handbook
for
Preschool & Kindergarten

2021 – 2022



Belchertown Public Schools

The Belchertown School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability in accordance with applicable laws and regulations.

Section 1 - Introduction

WELCOME

Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center

August 25, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Belchertown Public Schools! The learning community of our Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center is comprised of dedicated teachers, qualified staff, engaged and motivated students, and a community of parents/guardians and citizens who collaborate to provide our youngsters with the best possible educational opportunities. In an effort to continually strengthen the educational foundation of our children, we strive to provide a positive, safe, and age-appropriate learning environment with a viable, seamless, and guaranteed curriculum to maximize each student's potential. This is accomplished via a support system with families and community working together in collaboration.

We are committed to student achievement and individual success for each learner. The students are our primary concern and we take all aspects of their growth and development very seriously. We aspire to provide a quality education for all students while addressing individual needs, strengths, challenges, and unique learning styles so that they may reach their fullest potential. Our early childhood learning environment fosters an appreciation of individuality, diversity, and citizenship. It is our hope that our students will develop a desire to become life-long learners, contributing members of society, and that they will pursue academic excellence as they begin their educational journey with us at Cold Spring School.

This Student/Parent Handbook has been designed to provide you with valuable, helpful, and important information regarding school procedures, practices, and guidelines. More detailed information can be found on the school district's website: www.belchertownps.org. Although the Handbook is meant to be a reference, it is in no way meant to be a substitute for regular and ongoing communication with our staff. Please feel free to call me at 323-0428 if I can be of further assistance, or if you have any additional questions, comments or concerns. I look forward to meeting and working with you and your child during the 2021-2022 school year.

Educationally yours,

Andrea Mastalerz

Director of Early Childhood

Respect ~ Responsibility ~ Relationship ~ Rigor ~ Reflection ~ Resilience

Building a solid foundation for the future!

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During the 2021-2022 school year, The Belchertown Public Schools will follow any new requirements/regulations/recommendations around COVID-19 that may be issued by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and/or the Department of Public Health. All other policies in the normal handbook that are unrelated to the Covid-19 pandemic remain in place. Therefore it is imperative that parents/guardians read the standard handbook, stay informed, and sign the signature page provided.

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Cold Spring School - General Information

BELCHERTOWN SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ms. Heidi Gutekenst, Chair	Dr. Michael Knapp, Member
Ms. Ruby Bansal, Vice-Chair	Dr. Amy Wilson-LaMothe, Member
Ms. Diane Brown, Secretary	

CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Superintendent of Schools	Mr. Brian Cameron
Director of Finance and Operations	TMS Services
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning	Dr. Shawn Fortin
Director of Student Support Services	Ms. Rebecca Kudron
Director of Technology	Mr. Scott Karen
Data Administrator	Mr. Ben Admussen
School Nurse Leader	Mrs. Phyllis DuComb
Director of Buildings & Grounds	Mr. Eric Lebeau
Director of Food Services	Ms. Barrett Grazioso

Administration, Faculty, and Staff

Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center

Mrs. Andrea Mastalerz	Director
Mrs. Louise Tommila	School Year Administrative Assistant
Mrs. Anne Leblond	School Year Administrative Assistant
Ms. Alyssa Vah-Miller	School Nurse – Cold Spring School
Ms. Jenna Evans	Guidance Counselor
	School Psychologist
Mrs. Linda Fuhrmann	Art, Music, Physical Education Teacher
Mrs. Jodie LePage	Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Jessica Desroches	Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Elizabeth Moynihan	Kindergarten Teacher
Mr. Brendan McCarthy	Kindergarten Teacher/Lead Teacher
Mrs. Kathryn King	Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Robin Murphy	Kindergarten Teacher
Mrs. Tiffany Hoar	Kindergarten Head/Teacher
Mrs. Megan Riley	Kindergarten Special Education Teacher
Mrs. Catherine Wesloski	Kindergarten Special Education Teacher
Ms. Mary Wojtowicz	Kindergarten Teacher
Ms. Sharon Ziemian	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (Wojtowicz)
Mrs. Emily Keefe	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (Moynihan)
Mrs. Lori Goulet	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (Murphy)

Ms. Tara Beaulieu	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (King)
Ms. Erica Fisher	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (Desroches)
Ms. Kelly Almeida	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (Hoar)
Ms. Nancy Voyer	Kindergarten Paraprofessional (LePage)
Ms. Carolyn Poirier	Custodian
Mr. Richard Fleurent	Custodian
Ms. Cynthia Mancuso	Food Service
Ms. Holly Osborne	Preschool Teacher/Lead Teacher
Ms. Tammy Thomas	Preschool Teacher
Ms. Laurie Cady	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. Annabelle Chaverri	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. Sarah Lubek	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. Pamela Maiolo	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. Jacqueline O'Neill	Special Education Paraprofessional
Mrs. Marlene Perkins	Special Education Paraprofessional
Mrs. Gail Smith	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. AnnMarie Stratton	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. Gail Vollrath	Special Education Paraprofessional
Ms. Lori Osborne	Occupational Therapist
Ms. Kimberly Sarnacki	Physical Therapist
Mrs. Jennifer Cote	Speech and Language Pathologist
Ms. Terri Connaughton	Speech and Language Pathologist Asst.
Ms. Catherine Collette	ELL

Cold Spring School Council

Andrea Mastalerz, Director, Co-Chairperson
 Catherine Wesloski, Teacher Representative
 Catherine Collette, Parent Representative

Tiffany Hoar, Teacher Representative
 Louise Butler, Community Representative

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS TELEPHONE DIRECTORY

2021-2022 School Year

Central Office 14 Maple St.

Main Number/Superintendent	323-0423
Central Office FAX	323-0448
Business Office	323-0424
Business Office FAX	323-0481
Business Manager	323-0423
Administrative Assistant	323-0423
Dir. of Building & Grounds	323-0423
Building & Grounds FAX	323-0448
Student Support Services Dept.	323-0425
SSSD FAX	323-0427
Assistant Superintendent	323-0423
Central Office Anonymous Report Line	323-0460

Central Office Hours

General Assistance:	8:00 am-4:00 pm
School Business Assistance:	7:30 am-4:00 pm
Special Education Assistance:	7:00 am-3:00 pm

Cold Spring School 57 South Main St.

Main Number	323-0428
Office FAX	323-0493

(follow prompts on automated system)
Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/css>

Swift River Elementary School 57 State St.

Main Number	323-0471
Principal	323-0473
Asst. Principal	323-0476
Guidance	323-0475
School Nurse Leader	323-0471
School Nurse	323-0474
Office FAX	323-0492
Absentee Call-In Line	323-0455

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/swift>

Chestnut Hill Community School 59 State St.

Main Number	323-0437
FAX	323-0459

Automated system:

- 0-Operator
- 3-Nurse
- 4-Guidance
- 6-Music/Band
- 7-Student ABSENTEE LINE

Food Service Director – Ms.Barrett Grazioso (Ext. 390)
For a List of School of Events – SEE WEBSITE
Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org>

Jabish Brook Middle School 62 N. Washington St.

Main Number	323-0433
	323-0434
Office FAX	323-0450
Guidance FAX	323-0464

Automated system:

- 0-Operator
- 1-Student Absentee Line
- 2-Guidance-Mr. Morton
- 3-Guidance-Ms. Parker
- 4-Nurse's Office
- 5-Music/Band
- 6-Kitchen
- Teacher Voicemail-Dial Room #

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/jabish>

Belchertown High School 142 Springfield Rd.

Main Numbers	323-9419
	323-9420
Office	Press 0
Dial by Last Name	Press *
Absentee Call-In Line	Press 1
Nurse	Press 3
Guidance	Press 4
Library	Press 6
Cafeteria	Press 7
Dir. of Athletics	Press 8
Current Events	Press 9

Main Office Fax	323-9406
Guidance	323-9351
Guidance Fax	323-9353
School Nurse	323-9508
Library Fax	323-9356

Web site: <http://www.belchertownps.org/bhs>

School-Site Office Hours

CSS (Early Childhood Center)	7:30 am-4:00 pm SRE
SRE (Elementary School)	7:30 am-4:00 pm
CHCS (Intermediate School)	7:30 am-4:00 pm
JBMS (Middle School)	7:00 am-3:30 pm BHS
BHS (High School)	7:00 am-3:30 pm

Office of Information Technology 7 Berkshire Ave.

Main Number	213-0800/0801
Help Desk	helpdesk@belchertownps.org

IT Office Hours 7:00 am-4:00 pm

First Student Transportation

Main Numbers:	323-8316/323-8317
FAX:	323-8318

Belchertown Public Schools Vision and Mission Statement

VISION STATEMENT

Belchertown students, both individually and collaboratively, will be innovative thinkers, problem solvers and unique, creative contributors to their community and the world.

MISSION STATEMENT

In the pursuit of excellence and the development of life-long learners, it is the mission of Belchertown Public Schools to challenge and engage all students in a respectful, positive learning environment that fosters personal, social and academic growth in order to achieve success in a global society.

Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center Philosophy

Vision Statement

The vision of the Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center is to prepare all students to develop a lifelong love of learning through an interactive and enriching experience based on developmentally appropriate practices. Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center will:

- meet or exceed state and federal standards in all subject areas.
- have guaranteed and viable curriculum, which is aligned with the Common Core and Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.
- focus on high-quality, standards-based, differentiated instructional practices grounded in 21st-century skills.
- provide a safe, supportive and nurturing environment that fosters the development of the whole child emphasizing acceptance, tolerance and respect for all.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center is to ensure that every student meets with success every day. To that end, we pledge to ensure that we have rigorous, standards-based curriculum; developmentally appropriate instruction designed to meet the needs of diverse learners in every Cold Spring School classroom; and access to a safe, child-centered, and stimulating learning environment that fosters respect and civility for all.

Typical Daily Schedule

- 8:30-8:50 - arrival, breakfast, students unpack, complete morning jobs
- 8:50-9:15 - pledge, greeting, morning meeting
- 9:15-9:45 - math
- 9:45-10:05 - bathroom/wash hands, check snacks, snack time
- 10:05-10:35 - whole group reading
- 10:35-11:10 - reading groups
- 11:15-12:35 - lunch & recess
- 12:35-1:05 - handwriting/phonics/Lively Letters/read-alouds/math activities
- 1:15-1:45 - science/social studies/themed activity
- 1:45-2:15 - play centers
- 2:15 - clean up, pack up for the day
- 2:15-2:35 - rest
- 2:35-2:45 - backpacks, prepare for dismissal

Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center Philosophy

Goals

I. CURRICULUM, PLANNING & ASSESSMENT

GOAL: To inform instructional practices by analyzing, determining and implementing viable measurement tools, including district assessments.

II. TEACHING ALL STUDENTS

GOAL: To determine specific academic areas needing improvement and plan targeted learning activities including differentiated instructional practices to meet individual needs (levels of performance) of all students.

III. FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

GOAL: To form new and strengthen existing partnerships with families and within the community to enhance current programs and extend/enrich students' learning experiences.

IV. PROFESSIONAL CULTURE

GOAL: To establish a professional school culture that provides opportunities for educators to be reflective practitioners by sharing students' learning outcomes in a collaborative decision-making process.

BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2021-2022 PARENT CALENDAR

2021

August 17.....BHS New Student Orientation
 August 20.....New Employee Orientation
 August 20.....JBMS Visiting Day
 August 23-24.....Full Day PD
 August 25.....First Day for Students
 August 25, 26, 27.....Kindergarten Screening
 August 30.....Kindergarten & Pre-K Visiting Day
 August 31 & Sept. 1.....Kindergarten Staggered First Day
 August 31.....Pre-K First Day
 September 2.....All Kindergarten Students Report
 September 6.....Labor Day: No School
 October 8.....Early Release: PD
 October 11.....Columbus Day: No school
 October 29.....Grs. 7-12 First Term Grades Close
 November 2.....Full Day PD: No school
 November 10.....Grs. 7-12 First Term Report Cards
 November 11.....Veteran's Day: No school
 November 19.....Grs. 1-6 First Term Grades Close
 November 24-26.....Thanksgiving Recess: No school
 November 30.....Kindergarten Grades Close
 December 3.....Grs. 1-6 First Term Report Cards
 December 7.....K. Progress Reports go Home
 December 23-January 3.....Winter Recess: No school



Open House Schedule:

CSS- September 30, 2021
 SRE- August 24, 2021
 CHCS- September 2, 2021
 JBMS- September 28, 2021
 BHS- September 30, 2021

2022

January 14th.....Early Release: PD
 January 17.....M.L. King Day: No school
 January 21.....Grs. 7-12 Second Term Grades Close
 January 28.....Preschool Progress Reports Go Home
 February 2.....Grs. 7-12 Second Term Report Cards
 February 21-25.....February Recess: No school
 March 11.....Grs. 1-6 Second Term Grades Close
 March 11.....Kindergarten Grades Close
 March 18.....Grs. 1-6 Second Term Report Cards
 March 18.....Early Release: PD
 March 18.....K. Progress Reports go Home
 April 8.....Grs. 7-12 Third Term Grades Close
 April 15.....Good Friday: No school
 April 18-22.....Spring Recess: No school
 April 27.....Grs. 7-12 Third Term Report Cards
 May 27.....Early Release: PD
 May 30.....Memorial Day: No School
 June 2.....BHS-Class of 2022 Graduation
 June 10.....Last Day (No Snow Days)
 June 17.....Last Day (5 Snow Days)
 Grs. 7-12 Fourth Term Grades Close last day of School

AUGUST						
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SEPTEMBER						
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DECEMBER						
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MARCH						
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JANUARY						
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30	31					

APRIL						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Early Release: PD release times
 Gr. 7-12 dismissed at noon
 Gr. K-6 dismissed at 1 pm
 No afternoon Pre-K
 Lunch will be served

Approved by School Committee: 05/11/2021

Sections II - Cold Spring School Guidelines

Arrival Procedures

Arrival

Children who do NOT ride the school bus should NOT arrive before 8:30 AM as there will be no supervision available. Children will enter through the main entrance and walk to their classrooms. For security reasons, we do not allow parents/guardians to walk their children to their classrooms. Teachers are not available during arrival time to conference with parents/guardians. If you need to speak with a teacher, please make an appointment.

See detailed arrival procedures below.

Morning Drop-off Procedures

Increasing bus and car traffic dropping children off in the morning has been a safety concern in front of all of our schools. The vehicle congestion also causes problems for the buses attempting to enter and exit the school driveway. It is hoped that, with the cooperation of everyone involved, the following guidelines will improve the safety of the children and reduce traffic congestion in front of the schools, especially during high traffic hours. When arriving at Cold Spring School, take the first left into the upper parking lot. Follow the arrows around the lot to the end. Proceed to the main entrance.

1. All vehicles will drop off children within the drop-off zone. Children will exit the vehicle on the passenger side so that they will be safely on the sidewalk.
2. Children may exit the vehicle at any point within the drop-off zone. We need to move vehicles through the drop-off zone as quickly as possible, so that the buses can proceed to the other schools to drop students off in a timely manner.
3. Last-minute details, such as giving children instructions, should be done prior to getting in the vehicle drop-off line.
4. Once your child has exited the vehicle, stay in line and proceed out the drive. Do not attempt to pass the vehicles in front of you as children may be in transit to the sidewalk. Also, please pay attention to the buses as it is illegal to pass a bus when its red lights are flashing. Assigned personnel are on duty to receive your child starting at 8:30 AM.
5. If parents/guardians need to come into the school for any reason, they should not park in the lower loop parking area, or the housing complex next to the school. To keep congestion at a minimum, parents/guardians who need to come into school should park in the upper staff and visitors' parking lot and walk down the sidewalk to the school.

Thank you for your cooperation. These guidelines have worked well in reducing congestion and providing a safer environment for the children.

Attendance

Absences and Excuses

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The District does recognize that parents/guardians of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

At the commencement of each school year, parents/guardians will be sent a notice instructing them to call a designated telephone number to inform the school of the student's absence and the reason for such absence. If the school does not receive a message from the parent/guardian by a designated time, then the school shall call the telephone number or numbers furnished to inquire about the student's absence. Parents/guardians will be contacted within three (3) days of the student's absence if the Parent(s) or Guardian(s) has not contacted the school regarding the absence.

Parent(s) or Guardian(s) will be notified when a student has five or more unexcused absences in a quarter. Unexcused absences may result in parental or guardian contact, further investigation, and appropriate action as determined by building administration. More than eight unexcused absences will be subject to administrative review and possible action.

Family Vacations

Parents/guardians and students are reminded that Massachusetts Law requires compulsory attendance for students. We strongly discourage family vacations when school is in session. In addition to compromising the attendance law, family vacations interrupt the educational process of each course in ways that make-up work cannot reverse. Teachers are not required to give out homework assignments prior to a family vacation.

Absentee Phone-In Policy

In an effort to make our community a safer environment for our children, an absentee phone-in system has been instituted at each of the elementary school buildings. Parents/guardians must call the absentee number line for their child's school and leave the following information: the person calling, child's name, teacher's name, and the reason for the absence.

Any absences not phoned in will be followed up with a phone call placed by our SchoolMessenger automated system to the main contact number listed on the emergency form. Therefore, in order to assure the success of this procedure, emergency notification cards must be accurate and kept up-to-date at all times. This procedure works best with the cooperation of everyone involved. Parents/guardians should contact the school before 8:45 AM to notify us that your child will be absent for that day. The absentee number is listed below:

Cold Spring School Early Childhood Center Absentee Phone In-Line 323-0428 ext. 5

Tardiness and Early Dismissal

Tardiness and Early Dismissals from school impact student learning. Therefore, we ask that students be on time for school and remain at school the entire day. If a student will be late, please call the absentee number

above to report them as tardy. Students who arrive after 8:45 AM will be considered tardy and must report to the office upon arrival. Parents/Guardians must accompany their child to the office to “sign in”. Tardiness due to school delays via school buses will be automatically excused by the front office. Repeated tardiness may result in disciplinary action.

Students who need to be dismissed early, for a variety of legitimate reasons, must present a note signed by a parent or legal guardian indicating the time and reason for the dismissal plus a phone number where the parent or legal guardian may be reached. Please indicate if the student will return to school and approximate time of return. The note must be given to the Main Office prior to the first period in the morning. Only in emergencies will phone calls to dismiss students be accepted: and such dismissals must be followed by a note from the parent/legal guardian. For safety reasons, parents/guardians are expected to pick up their student in the front office at the designated time in order to dismiss the student.

Dismissal Procedures for Cold Spring School

For your child’s safety, please remember to send in a note ahead of time notifying your child’s classroom teacher of the time of dismissal and specifically identify who will be picking up your child. If you need to change your child’s dismissal instructions/procedures anytime during the day, a phone call to the main office (323-0428 ext. 4) should be made and the staff will notify the classroom teacher. Please do not call and leave a voicemail on the classroom phone as messages are not always able to be retrieved and reviewed by teachers prior to dismissal.

Special Education Parent Advisory Council

The Belchertown Parent Advisory Council (BPAC) is a volunteer organization of parents, guardians, teachers and other members of the community concerned with the delivery of appropriate special education services in Belchertown Public Schools. The BPAC meets monthly and all meetings are open to the public. Public notices of meetings are posted within the schools and on the website. Special education parent advisory councils are a requirement of the current Massachusetts Special Education Regulations.

Building Security and Safety Plan

In order to support facility safety and security within the Belchertown School District for all school personnel, students, and visitors, the following district-wide and school-site procedures shall be followed during regular school hours:

1. After all school personnel and students arrive in the morning and are in their classrooms or work areas ready to begin the regular school day; all outer doors must be closed and locked for the duration of the regular school day. Prior to the time when doors are closed and locked, school administrators shall assign available school personnel to areas of the facilities requiring special supervision.
2. After the doors are locked, individuals wishing entry into the school building must enter through the front doors only and immediately proceed to the main office.
3. Individuals must report directly to the school office upon entering the buildings. Individuals may not leave the school offices for other areas of the building without permission, and must sign-in and wear badges (e.g. volunteer badges, visitor badges). Prior to leaving the building, individuals must report back to the main office, return the badges, and sign out.
4. All students arriving late, leaving early, or being taken out and brought back during the school day (e.g. for medical or dental appointments) must report to the main office in the company of parent, guardian or designated person, in order to be signed out/in by the office secretary or other designated individuals. Parents/guardians or other individuals entering the building in order to dismiss or return a student must report to the main office. No one may go directly to a classroom without authorization from the main office and issuance of identification badges.

5. At dismissal time (i.e. at the end of the regular school day), students or other individuals must leave or enter the building through the front doors. Available school personnel shall be assigned to supervise specified areas at dismissal time (e.g. the bus loading area and the student parking lot).
6. Police canine teams shall be used from time-to-time in order to identify controlled substances, explosives and weapons. Searches shall be limited to school lockers and storage spaces, general areas of the buildings and grounds and vehicles parked on school property. The identification of any controlled substances, explosives, and weapons by canines shall be dealt with directly by school administrators prior to involving local police.
7. In order to ensure the safety and security of all school personnel and students, and as deemed necessary by school administrators, hand-held metal detectors shall be utilized to check for weapons. Any weapons so identified shall be dealt with directly by school administrators prior to involving local and State Police. Individuals who refuse to submit to such a screening will be refused entry into the building.
8. Individuals are encouraged to report information which could help keep our schools safe and prevent potential violence. Information should be reported directly to a school administrator.

Although the specific Codes of Conduct and Student Discipline Policies are included in each school's Student/Parent Handbook under Code of Conduct, the Belchertown School District has overall expectations concerning its students' responsibility and accountability as related to safe schools and student conduct. These expectations include, but are not limited to:

1. To attend school and classes with promptness (i.e. according to the published times for the beginning and end of each school day).
2. To respect school facilities (i.e. to use the facilities appropriately, to keep the facilities clean, and to refrain from vandalism) while in attendance during the regular school day and when participating in extracurricular/extended school day activities, events, and programs.
3. To appropriately utilize and care for school textbooks, equipment, materials, uniforms, and supplies and to return assigned/issued textbooks, equipment, materials, uniforms, and supplies upon request.
4. To respect and treat with dignity administrators, faculty, staff, other students, volunteers and visitors.
5. To refrain from interfering with teaching, learning, and the participation by others in school and in school-related activities, programs, and special events.
6. To act as responsible by-standers when witness to acts by others that could lead to the disrespect of school facilities and property or to the bullying and harassment of others.
7. To refrain from personally participating in and encouraging others to participate in any type of physical violence while in attendance during the regular school day (i.e. including at bus stops and while being transported on school buses and vans), and when at or participating in extracurricular/extended school day activities, events, and programs.
8. To refrain from bringing onto school property, to school, on school buses and school vans, and to extra-curricular/extended school day activities, events, and programs, any alcohol, drugs, and weapons.

Care of Textbooks and School Property

Students are responsible for all school property loaned to them, including library books, textbooks, laboratory equipment, athletic uniforms, band uniforms, musical instruments, and the like. The basic requirements include:

- Any student who deliberately marks, damages, loses, or destroys textbooks or library books is liable for the cost of repairs or replacement.
- Any student who fails to return school property that has been issued to them for academics, laboratory equipment, athletics, or the music program is liable for the cost of repairs or replacement.

Any student who willfully damages or destroys any school property is liable for the cost of repairs or replacement including labor and materials.

Code of Conduct

Appropriate classroom, bus, lunch, and recess behavior and interactions are expected from all students at all times at Cold Spring School. Valuable interpersonal and appropriate communication skills are taught continually and in conjunction with our social-emotional character-building program *Bucket Fillers*. These social competency skills are being fostered, defined, and refined during both formal classroom time and casual situation settings. Respect for self, the school facilities/authority, the environment, and one another outlines proper and appropriate school guidelines, rules, and regulations to ensure the safety and dignity of all individuals at all times. Therefore to provide a positive learning environment, all students are expected to behave in a developmentally appropriate way that promotes a safe and secure school climate for everyone involved in the educational process. There are specific behaviors which will not be tolerated and which will lead to disciplinary action. These behaviors include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying, teasing, name-calling, cultural or ethnic slurs,
- Fighting, pushing, shoving
- Vulgar or profane language
- Theft or destruction of property
- Disruption of classes, disruptive behavior
- Possession of a weapon or dangerous item
- Possession of drugs or other controlled substances

Our school adheres to and utilizes when needed the School Committee's policy on suspension and expulsions that is contained in Part III of this book.

The Code of Conduct in the elementary schools emphasizes mutual respect - the respect for ourselves, others and property/environment. The *Bucket Filler* social-emotional character program is used to encourage our students to develop skills that lead to a high level of respect, cooperation, responsibility, empathy for others, and self-regulation Cold Spring School is committed to providing a safe and orderly school environment where students may receive and staff may deliver quality educational services without unnecessary disruption or interference. When inappropriate behaviors occur, students problem-solve in a safe manner to ensure minimal disruption to the learning process. Our staff meets with students to solve problems using the following steps:

1. What is the problem?
2. What are some solutions?
3. For each solution ask:
 - a. Is it safe?
 - b. How might people feel?
 - c. Is it fair?
 - d. Does it work?
4. Choose a solution and use it.
5. Determine if the solution is working and if not, what can be done.
6. What will you do the next time if the same problem or a similar one occurs?

The *Bucket Filler* social-emotional character program provides essential skills for students that will last a lifetime and will serve to support not only these student's behavioral expectations, but strengthen the communities where they reside and the families that support them. Participation in this program promotes language development, teaches pro-social skills, and establishes a framework for more constructive words and actions and less bullying. Additional areas of conduct that may pertain to our school are covered by the District's Code of Conduct and the regulations that are included in the other sections of the Student-Parent Handbook.

Court Orders

It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to inform the School Administration immediately of any special court orders (i.e. restraining, custody, etc.) that must be adhered to due to a court injunction that is in place or occurs during the school year. The safety of your child is very important to us and we want to ensure that the school is following legal guidelines concerning any custody issues.

Dismissal Procedures

Dismissal begins promptly at 2:55 pm. If there are any changes to your child's typical dismissal routine, please remember to send a note to your child's teacher with the time of dismissal and identify who will be picking up your child. Whenever there is a last-minute change in your child's typical dismissal routine, please call the Cold Spring School office at 323-0428 by 2:00 pm and speak with an administrative assistant. When picking up your child, it is imperative that you come into the school's office and sign your child out in the appropriate dismissal book/log. Remember, your child's safety is our primary concern!

Detailed dismissal procedures will be distributed to all families prior to the start of the year.

Emergency Dismissal

An emergency dismissal form is sent home with each child annually. Please make sure you provide a specific place in Belchertown where you have arranged for your child to go in an emergency. Without this critical information your child will be dismissed to his/her **regular** destination. Specific instructions for alternate destinations must be on file with the school.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

Emergency evacuation routes are posted within each classroom and procedures will be reviewed periodically with students. Emergency evacuation drills will also be held periodically. The function of these drills is to create a rapid, safe and organized method of evacuation of the building. All persons present during a drill or actual emergency should follow the established evacuation routes and procedures.

Any visitor or student that is not with his/her class at the time the alarm sounds should leave the building by the closest exit. Students should report to the nearest adult for further instructions. All individuals in the school building at the time are expected to evacuate and move away from the building according to requirements of the Fire and Police Departments.

ALL DRILLS MUST BE CONSIDERED AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY. No one should return to the building until the all clear signal has been given.

Firearms

Any individual, not being a law enforcement officer, and **notwithstanding** any license obtained by them under the provisions of chapter one hundred and forty, who carries on their person a firearm, loaded or unloaded, or other dangerous weapon in any building, on the grounds of any Belchertown School, or at any school related event without the written authorization of the school committee or approved officer in charge of such school, shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one year, or both. Firearm shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged by whatever means.

Any students 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 long-term suspensions and even expulsions from school and the school district by the Principal of grades 9-12, or by the school committee upon a recommendation by the Principal of schools having students below grades 9-12. See each individual school's sanctions for such violations.

Also, 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 a long-term suspension or expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal or by the school committee upon a recommendation by the Principal.

Guidance

One full-time Guidance Counselor serves both Kindergarten and Pre-School. Guidance is defined as helping individuals understand themselves in the light of their abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, strengths and limitations. This process should assist students in the development of their potential; their decisions relating to personal, educational, and vocational matters, and also in becoming capable of mature self-guidance.

The school system's guidance program will be based on this definition and developed from these broad fundamental principles:

1. Individuals are different from one another in their capabilities, aptitudes, interests, needs, goals, desires and values.
2. Conditions may be improved. Equality of educational opportunity will benefit the individual and society.
3. Guidance is a continuous and developmental process. Every experience of the individual influences his performance in some way.
4. Guidance does not propose to program an individual's course of action but rather tries to assist him in arriving at his own satisfactory solutions.

Guidance services will include: educational guidance; testing programs; occupational, career, and higher education assistance and information; study aids; consultation services; and personal developmental guidance as needed. These services will be available to all students.

While some of the problems of the individual may relate to behavior and consequently entail guidance on behavior, student discipline will not be a regular function of guidance personnel.

To ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and homelessness, all counselors:

1. Encourage students to consider programs of study, courses, extracurricular activities, and occupational opportunities on the basis of individual interests, abilities, and skills;
2. Examine testing materials for bias and counteract any found bias when administering tests and interpreting test results;
3. Communicate effectively with limited-English-proficient and disabled students and facilitate their access to all programs and services offered by the district;
4. Provide limited-English-proficient students with the opportunity to receive guidance and counseling in a language they understand;
5. Support students in educational and occupational pursuits that are nontraditional for their gender.

Health Services

The role of the school nurse is to strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children. A school nurse is assigned to each school during school hours. In the event of an accident or illness, emergency care and first aid will be provided until a parent/guardian or parent/guardian-assigned adult is contacted and arrangements are made.

Under Massachusetts State Law, students entering Belchertown Public Schools must have up-to-date immunizations, evidence of a recent physical examination and a birth certificate. Children whose immunizations are not up-to-date will be excluded. Talk with your school nurse about requirements.

Students in pre-K through grade 12 will be administered over-the-counter medications with written parental or guardian permission. The permission and medications available are listed on the back of the emergency card. Tylenol will only be given after all palliative measures have been tried. If a student requests Tylenol more than three times in a month, a parent/guardian will be notified and requested to seek further medical consultation. Emergency cards **MUST** be filled out before medication is given. **STUDENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO CARRY THEIR OWN MEDICATION TO AND FROM SCHOOL.** A parent/guardian or a responsible adult must bring the prescription to their child's school nurse.

If your child needs to be on medication during school hours, the following criteria must be met:

- A signed permission by the parent/guardian
- A signed medication order by the licensed prescriber
- Medication must be hand-carried to the child's school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by you or a responsible adult

*******DO NOT SEND MEDICATION TO SCHOOL WITH YOUR CHILD*******

- No narcotics will be administered at school.
- Parental or guardian requests for your child to stay inside for recess cannot always be honored due to limited staff. A doctor's note will always be honored.
- For after-school hours, a parent/guardian is responsible for providing medication.
- Children who have had a communicable disease are required to present a physician's slip for re-entry into school. Students being treated for Strep Throat or Conjunctivitis (pink eye) must remain out of school for 24/48 hours AFTER MEDICATION HAS BEGUN. This will prevent re-infection. A physician's slip for re-entry after chickenpox, which is a communicable disease, is required.
- The Belchertown Public Schools have a no-nit policy. Students with live lice or nits will be sent home for treatment and checked by the nurse before re-entry into the class.
- The yearly screening will be done on all four, five, and six grade students as follows: Grade 4 – height and weight, Grades 6-9 – scoliosis.
- Physicals are required for students entering kindergarten, 4th grade, 7th grade, and for athletic participation in high school. Any new student entering the Belchertown Public School system is required to have an up-to-date physical upon entry.
- Weekly fluoride mouth rinse will be offered to students in grades 1 through 6.
- Several students have severe allergies and/or asthma and are allergic to animal dander, fur and feathers. For this reason, animals are not allowed in the classroom.
- Aerosol containers of all types are forbidden in school or on the bus.
- Emergency information cards will be sent home in a health packet at the beginning of the school year. This information is our link to locating a parent/guardian in case of an accident or illness.
- Please fill this card out completely on both sides, noting areas concerning legal custody issues, allergies and medications. Also, please update this information as it becomes necessary.
- Please keep the school nurse informed of any health changes throughout the year. The early detection and correction of health problems and the prevention of illness and disability is the main focus of school nursing.
- We urge you to avail yourself of the protection afforded through school insurance. You will be given information regarding various insurance plans during the first week of school. If you do not have health insurance, please contact your school nurse about Mass Health Insurance for your child.
- The school nurse is on call for any student who becomes ill, has a health-related problem or is injured during the school day. Except in an emergency, any student who wishes to see the nurse should first secure a pass from his/her classroom teacher.
- The school is responsible only for immediate first aid. The School Committee does not pay any medical or hospital bills incurred as a result of an accident to the pupil at school. The parent/guardian is responsible for the payment of such bills.
- In case of an accident, no matter how minor, the student should report that accident to the teacher immediately. In the case of severe accidents or acute illness, emergency care will be given and the parent/guardian will be notified.
- The Department of Public Health has granted trained staff members of Belchertown School System the right to administer prescription medications to students on field trips when a school nurse is not present. Parents/guardians are responsible for providing medications on field trips, after school hours, and on weekends.

Illness and Injury

The focus of school nursing practice is the enhancement of a student's capacity for learning, growing and developing. Students with signs and symptoms of any communicable disease will be sent home. With school inclusion, more medically fragile and chronically ill children are mainstreamed into the classroom. All students are entitled to a healthy and disease-free school environment. Thank you for your cooperation.

All children have recess (unless environmental factors exist). It is important for children to go out to play, socialize, exercise, and have fresh air. If your child needs to stay in for medical reasons, please provide a note from your healthcare provider.

If the school nurse determines that a student is unable to remain in school, a parent/guardian will be contacted to make arrangements for dismissal.

When a student returns to school after surgery, injury, or extended illness over 5 days, a doctor's note is required indicating any restrictions in gym/sports activity, stairs/elevator use, or need for nursing care.

Please keep your child home if the temperature is over 100, has diarrhea or is vomiting.

Medical Testing/Screening

The following documents must be submitted when registering your child for Kindergarten:

- Birth certificate with a raised seal (all students must be 5 years old on or before September 1st)
- Immunization records
- Recent physical examination records
- Home Language Survey (provided by the school)
- Epi-Pen/Food Allergy Form (provided by the school)

School Nurse

Cold Spring School is staffed by one full-time nurse. The role of the school nurse is to strengthen and facilitate the educational process by improving and protecting the health status of children. In the event of an accident or illness, emergency care and first aid will be provided until a parent/guardian or parent/guardian-assigned adult is contacted and arrangements are made. The Cold Spring School nurse can be reached at 323-0428, ext. 6 and the school nurse leader can be reached at 323-0471, ext. 9.

Kindergarten Screening

Kindergarten screening is a requirement of Massachusetts Special Education Regulations, which requires that the screening of all kindergarteners takes place by October 31st of the year they enter school. The screening is not an evaluation. It is a brief series of assessments that provide information about a child's development in relation to the development of other youngsters of the same age.

Kindergarten screening is used to identify young children in need of further diagnostic evaluations to determine if they have special education needs. The screening:

- Is not used to determine if a child is ready for kindergarten.
- Does not determine whether or not a child may attend kindergarten.

- Is not used for placement of a child in a particular group or kindergarten class.

Lost and Found

Lost and found articles are stored in a designated area. If your child has a missing item, please send in a note with a description of the lost item to your child's teacher, or feel free to come to school yourself and ask for the "Lost & Found" area. Unclaimed articles are distributed and donated appropriately during the summer. It is strongly recommended that all clothing, especially boots, snow pants, jackets, lunch/snack bags, etc. be marked with your child's name on an inside area.

Meal Program

The school menu is published in the local newspaper weekly and sent home monthly from school. The menu is also available on the website at www.belchertownps.org. Students in 4th grade and above will use a provided pin number to identify themselves at the point of sale and make purchases in the cafeteria. This is their PowerSchool ID, or library number, and is utilized to access report cards and log in for testing as well. This number should be kept confidential and is not to be shared with other students.

Free meals for all children have been extended to the end of school year 2022. How and where we serve school meals next year depends on DESE guidance, which has not yet been released. Although meals are free for children, parents are still encouraged to submit an application for free or reduced-price meals if you think your household may qualify based on income. Proving eligibility for free or reduced-price meals at school can qualify families for reduced-cost utilities, p-EBT, fuel assistance, and other benefits. 2021-2022 Free and reduced-price meal applications will be available on the district website after July 1.

Students will have the opportunity to eat a home-prepared snack during morning snack time. Milk can be purchased for \$0.50 or parents/guardians may provide a water bottle or a milk or juice box. No glass bottles are allowed.

Registering for a FREE mySchoolBucks Account:

- You will first need your student's pin number assigned to them and sent home via mail.
- Go to the district website at www.belchertownps.org, then click on the quick link for lunch menus, click on the link to mySchoolBucks OR go directly to www.myschoolbucks.com.
- Click REGISTER FOR A FREE ACCOUNT and enter the required information.
- Click FINISH to complete the initial registration process.

Adding Students to Your Account:

- Once you are logged into your new account, click MY HOUSEHOLD from the left-side navigation bar.
- Click LOOK UP YOUR STUDENTS.
- Select your child's school from the drop-down box.
- Enter your child's first name.
- Enter your child's last name.
- Enter your child's student ID number.
- Click FIND STUDENT.

- Click ADD STUDENT.
- Click FINISH or click ADD ANOTHER STUDENT to repeat the process for additional children.

Making a Deposit:

- From the My Household page, click MAKE A PAYMENT.
- Enter the deposit amount for each student/staff account, then click ADD TO BASKET.
- Review the amount(s) you have entered and click CHECK OUT NOW. If you need to adjust an amount click CONTINUE SHOPPING.
- Enter your payment information and click CONTINUE.
- If paying with a credit or debit card, enter the three or four-digit Verification Code that appears on your card, then click CONTINUE.
- Review your order and make sure all deposits are correct, then click PLACE ORDER.
- Click PRINT ORDER to generate a receipt of your transaction in a new window. We recommend that you keep a copy for records.
- Click FINISH to complete the transaction.

Parties

School-wide classroom parties are scheduled prior to the December holiday vacation and on Valentine's Day. The individual classroom teachers will adhere to the school district's wellness policy and decide upon additional activities. Please check with the teacher in advance if your child wishes to share a special type of celebration. For more information in regards to the school district's policy on celebrations/parties, please refer to the full text of the Wellness Policy on our website: www.belchertownps.org under the District tab, District Policy Manual, then search for policy ADF.

Also, just a friendly reminder that if party invitations are distributed in the classroom mailboxes, every child in the classroom needs to receive one: otherwise, please find an alternative way to give the invitation to your child's friends. We are continually trying to respect and foster the social development of our students and promote positive interactions in our classrooms.

Class lists and related information cannot be distributed to parents/guardians due to the implementation of our new security regulations and student record regulations promulgated by the Massachusetts Department of Education.

Placement of Students

In May, all teachers along with the Guidance Department begin the process of student placement for the following year. Placement of students is a very involved and complex process as many factors must be taken into consideration, such as, but not limited to:

- teacher input,
- special needs consideration,
- class size (both pupil and building considerations),
- placement of new students,
- parental/guardian input/teaching and learning styles, and heterogeneous classes

Constructing "well-balanced" classrooms that are diverse, stimulating, and educationally sound helps to

foster an enriched learning environment for all children. We appreciate the fact that each child brings his/her own unique talents and interests to the classroom. Please know we will make a concerted effort to provide a good placement for your child while developing well-balanced and diverse classrooms. Parents and guardians wishing to provide additional input are requested to adhere to the guidelines as stated in this handbook. All parents/guardians will receive a letter that gives them an opportunity to provide pertinent information within a given time frame. Parental or guardian input must be submitted in writing, within the timelines given, to either the Guidance Office or Director's Office at Cold Spring School. Any parental or guardian input should allow for placement flexibility while being informative. Please do not name a specific teacher for your child. Confidential concerns should be addressed to the Guidance Office. Please remember that final placement decisions rest with the placement team as they have all the information necessary to make a good placement for your child for the upcoming year. There will be a hold on student placement changes until September 30, 2021. This gives the students, teachers, and staff a chance to settle in, develop relationships, and establish routines before determining if the placements are successful.

Progress Reports/Report Cards

Kindergarten students are on a trimester marking system and receive progress reports three times per year with the final report card on the last day of school.

Pre-school students will receive a progress report two times per year, in January and June. Parent/Guardian/Teacher conferences are scheduled for the week of January 24th-28th.

The first progress report cards will be issued December 7, 2021, parent/guardian-teacher conferences are scheduled for the week of November 15th- 19th. At the elementary level, report cards are only one indicator of growth and achievement. Each grade level report card strives to reflect the appropriate developmental stages pertinent to the age level of the students. Supplementary progress reports may be sent home between each report card period on an individual basis as determined by the classroom teacher. They are usually given to those students who are experiencing difficulty with a particular subject or behavior. You are encouraged to consult with the teacher as necessary. Please contact your child's school to make arrangements to meet with the teacher(s).

Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO)

The Belchertown Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) believes that working together makes a difference in our schools. The PTO strives to help the home, school, and community work together to provide the best possible learning environment for our youngest children. It is believed that this partnership will improve and enrich the children's education. Please consider joining the PTO and support this important partnership to help Belchertown's children be their best. Our mission is to offer family programs, support teachers and school improvement goals, while effectively involving parents/guardians.

To become involved with the PTO, call Cold Spring School for the name and number of the president. Also, look for membership forms sent home with your child(ren) in September.

BE A MEMBER OF THE PTO BECAUSE WORKING TOGETHER DOES MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Publicity

Video, media, and voice publicity

It is the practice of the Belchertown School District to give permission for school personnel and the media (e.g., cable television, newspapers, commercial television, radio, and the world wide web) to develop and present in classrooms, in the hallways, on web sites, to the public, print, pictures, and voice-related to school programs and students for the purposes of public relations and the dissemination of non-confidential information (i.e., news stories). The Belchertown School District gives such permission without the prior individual approval of parents and guardians.

Students at the schools are occasionally photographed and/or videotaped by local newspapers and/or television stations while participating in school-wide and/or classroom events. If you do not wish for your child's name to be released, or to be photographed, and/or videotaped on such occasions, or for any reason, please inform the Principal at the individual school your child is attending, in writing, prior to September 15th of the school year. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to notify the school in writing, prior to September 15th, if there are any concerns and or restrictions regarding the publicity of their child's picture, name, voice, or representation in the newspaper, television, radio, or videotape for teacher/student evaluation purposes. If we do not receive written documentation to the contrary, then we will assume that the school has your permission.

Special Needs/Referrals

The parent/guardian of a Belchertown resident who is between the ages of 2.5 years and 22 years old may contact the school guidance office or Student Support Services for concerns and/or evaluations related to a known or suspected disability. Areas of concern may be: academic skills, behavior, social skills, fine motor skills, gross motor skills, speech and/or language skills, and/or emotional health.

Toy Guidelines

Please do not send students to school with toys that may be lost, stolen, and/or broken. Many children are upset when their toys are lost or when trading of toys occurs. The best way to avoid this is to keep all toys at home.

Visitors and Volunteers

The School Committee encourages parents/guardians and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in the promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals.

Visits by parents/guardians to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the School District's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental and guardian requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we request that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff

members of the impending visits.

3. For security purposes, it is requested that all visitors report to the main office upon entering and leaving the building to sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times along with picking up a visitor's badge to wear while in the building. The staff is encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
4. Under ordinary circumstances, classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival, the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.

When parents/guardians wish to schedule classroom visitations, they should contact the Principal for permission. Since younger children distract the attention of both the visitor and the class, parents/guardians are strongly urged to make arrangements for them.

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

All visitors who might be unaccompanied by another adult in the school and volunteers in schools are subject to a C.O.R.I. (Criminal Record Offender Information) check. Please see this handbook's section on *C.O.R.I. Requirements* and the Belchertown Policy Manual; Sections ADDA, ADDA-R, ADDA-E-1, and ADDA-E-2 for more information.

C.O.R.I. Requirements

It shall be the policy of Belchertown Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) from the criminal history systems board of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accept any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain C.O.R.I. data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their activities.

Section III

Selected School Committee Policies

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ACAB - SEXUAL HARASSMENT

All persons associated with the Belchertown Public Schools including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff and students are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

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

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

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a person's employment or educational development.

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such individual.

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or educational performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.

The Grievance Officer:

Assistant Superintendent
Belchertown Public Schools
14 Maple St.
P.O. Box 841
Belchertown, MA 01007
(413) 323-0423, ext. 117

Complaint Procedure:

Any member of the school community who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to the grievance officer. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.

The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:

The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts, and may interview any witnesses.

The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain his/her response to the complaint. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.

On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation he/she may: Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.

Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or his/her designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.

After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or designee, Belchertown Public Schools, 14 Maple St., P.O. Box 841, Belchertown, MA 01007, may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.

The grievance officer, upon request, will provide the charging party with government agencies that handle sexual harassment matters.

LEGAL REFS.: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act of 1964 as amended 45
Federal Regulation 74676 issued by EEO Commission
Education Amendments of 1972,
20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq. (Title IX)
Board of Education 603 CMR [26:00](#)

School Committee Approved Revision: August 25, 2015
School Committee Approved Revision: April 11, 2017

ADDA - CORI REQUIREMENT

It shall be the policy of the Belchertown Public Schools to obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) from the criminal history systems board of prospective employee(s) or volunteer(s) of the school department including any individual who regularly provides school related transportation to children, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, prior to hiring the employee(s) or to accepting any person as a volunteer. State law requires that school districts obtain C.O.R.I. data for employees of taxicab companies that have contracted with the schools to provide transportation to pupils.

The Superintendent, Principal, or their certified designees shall periodically, but not less than every three years, obtain all available Criminal Offender Record Information from the criminal history systems board on all employees, individuals who regularly provide school related transportation to children, including taxicab company employees, and volunteers who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, during their term of employment or volunteer service.

The Superintendent, Principal or their certified designees may also have access to Criminal Offender Record Information for any subcontractor or laborer who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children, and shall notify them of this requirement and comply with the appropriate provisions of this policy.

Pursuant to a Department of Education C.O.R.I. Law Advisory dated February 17, 2003, "'Direct and unmonitored contact with children' means contact with a child when no other C.O.R.I. cleared employee of the school or district is present. A person having only the potential for incidental unsupervised contact with children in commonly used areas of the school grounds, such as hallways, shall not be considered to have the potential for direct and unmonitored contact with children. These excluded areas do not include bathrooms and other isolated areas (not commonly utilized and separated by sight or sound from other staff) that are accessible to students."

In accordance with state law, all current and prospective employees, volunteers, and persons regularly providing school related transportation to children of the school district shall sign a request form authorizing receipt by the district of all available C.O.R.I. data from the criminal history systems board. In the event that a current employee has questions concerning the signing of the request form, he/she may meet with the Principal or Superintendent; however, failure to sign the C.O.R.I. request form may result in a referral to local counsel for appropriate action. Completed request forms must be kept in secure files. The School Committee, Superintendent, Principals or their designees certified to obtain information under this policy, shall prohibit the dissemination of school information for any purpose other than to further the protection of school children.

C.O.R.I. is not subject to the public records law and must be kept in a secure location, separate from personnel files and may be retained for not more than three years. C.O.R.I. may be shared with the individual to whom it pertains, upon his or her request, and in the event of an inaccurate report the individual should contact the criminal history systems board.

Access to C.O.R.I material must be restricted to those individuals certified to receive such information. In the case of prospective employees or volunteers, C.O.R.I material should be obtained only where the Superintendent has determined that the applicant is qualified and may forthwith be recommended for employment or volunteer duties.

The hiring authority, subject to applicable law, reserves the exclusive right concerning any employment decision made pursuant to Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002. The employer may consider the following factors when reviewing C.O.R.I.: the type and nature of the offense; the date of the offense and whether the individual has been subsequently arrested, as well as any other factors the employer deems relevant. Unless otherwise provided by law, a criminal record will not automatically disqualify an applicant. Rather, determinations of suitability based on C.O.R.I. checks will be made consistent with this policy and any applicable law or regulations.

If a criminal record is received from the Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB), the Superintendent will closely compare the record provided by CHSB with the information on the C.O.R.I. request form and any other identifying information provided by the applicant, to ensure the record relates to the applicant.

If the district is inclined to make an adverse decision based on the results of the C.O.R.I. check, the applicant will be notified immediately. The applicant shall be provided with a copy of the criminal record and the district's C.O.R.I. policy, advised of the part(s) of the record that make the individual unsuitable for the position or license, and given an opportunity to dispute the accuracy and relevance of the C.O.R.I. record.

The Superintendent shall ensure that on the application for employment and/or volunteer form there shall be a statement that as a condition of employment or volunteer service the school district is required by law to obtain Criminal Offender Record Information for any employee, individual who regularly provides school related transportation, or volunteer who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. Current employees, persons regularly providing school related transportation, and volunteers shall also be informed in writing by the Superintendent prior to the periodic obtaining of their Criminal Offender Record Information.

The Superintendent shall amend employment applications to include questions concerning criminal records (see attachment) which the Massachusetts Commission against Discrimination has determined may be legally asked of prospective employees. Any employment application which seeks information concerning prior arrests or convictions of the applicant shall include the following statement: "An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' with respect to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests, criminal court appearances or convictions. An applicant for employment with a sealed record on file with the commissioner of probation may answer 'no record' to an inquiry herein relative to prior arrests or criminal court appearances. In addition, any applicant for employment may answer 'no record' with respect to any inquiry relative to prior arrests, court appearances and adjudications in all cases of delinquency or as a child in need of service which did not result in a complaint transferred to the superior court for criminal prosecution."

Records sealed pursuant to law shall not operate to disqualify a person in any examination, appointment or application for public service on behalf of the Commonwealth or any political subdivision thereof.

The Superintendent shall revise contracts with special education schools and other providers to require a signed statement that the provider has met all the legal requirements of the state where it is located relative to criminal background checks for employees and others having direct and unmonitored contact with children.

As soon as possible after the district obtains the certification from the criminal history systems board to receive C.O.R.I. data, the Superintendent shall obtain such data for any person then providing volunteer service, as a condition of continued service.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L.71:38R, 151B, 276, §.100A, St.2002, c.385
MCAD Regulations and D.O.E. Advisory on C.O.R.I. Law (Feb 17, 2003)
803 CMR 3.05 (Chapter 149 of the Acts of 2004)

CROSS REFS: ADDA-R, C.O.R.I. Requirements
ADDA-E-1, Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record
ADDA-E-2, C.O.R.I. Requirements

School Committee Approved: April 11, 2017

ADDA-E-1 - INFORMATION CONCERNING THE PROCESS IN CORRECTING A CRIMINAL RECORD

If you have undergone a background check by an agency that has received a criminal record from the CHSB, you may ask the agency to provide you with a copy of the criminal record. You may also request a copy of your adult criminal record from the Criminal History Systems Board, 200 Arlington Street, Suite 2200, Chelsea, MA 02150 by calling (617) 660-4640 or go to www.mass.gov/chsb/cori/cori_forms.html#pers.

The CHSB charges \$25.00 fee to provide an individual with a copy of his/her criminal record. You may complete an affidavit of indigency and request that the CHSB waive the fee.

Upon receipt, review the record. If you need assistance in interpreting the entries or dispositions, please review the disposition code and "how to read a BOP" on the CHSB's website www.mass.gov/chsb/cori/cori_bop.html. The CHSB does not offer "walkin" service but you may call our Legal Division at (617) 660-4760 for assistance or the CORI Unit of the Office of the Commissioner of Probation at (617) 727-5300.

If you believe that a case is opened on your record that should be marked closed, you may contact the Office of the Commissioner of Probation CORI Unit at (617) 727-5300 for assistance, or you may go to the Probation Department at the court where the charges were brought and request that the case(s) be updated.

If you believe that a disposition is incorrect, contact the Chief Probation Officer at the court where the charges were brought or the CORI Unit at the Office of the Commissioner of Probation and report that the court incorrectly entered a disposition on your criminal record.

If you believe that someone has stolen or improperly used your identity and were arraigned on criminal charges under your name, you may contact the Office of the Commissioner of Probation CORI Unit or the Chief Probation Officer in the court where the charges were brought. For a listing of courthouses and telephone numbers, please see www.mass.gov/chsb/cori/cori_codes_court.html

In some situations of identity theft, you may need to contact the CHSB to arrange to have a fingerprint analysis conducted.

If there is a warrant currently outstanding against you, you need to appear at the court and ask that the warrant be recalled. You cannot do this over the telephone.

If you believe that an employer, volunteer agency, housing agency or municipality has been provided with a criminal record that does not pertain to you, the agency should contact the CORI Unit for assistance at (617) 660-4640.

ADDA-E-2 - C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

Employers may ask the following series of questions:

1. Have you been convicted of a felony? Yes or no?
2. Have you been convicted of a misdemeanor within the past five years (other than a first conviction for any of the following misdemeanors: drunkenness, simple assault, speeding, minor traffic violations, affray or disturbance of the peace)? Yes or no?
3. Have you completed a period of incarceration within the past five years for any misdemeanor (other than a first conviction for any of the following misdemeanors: drunkenness, simple assault, speeding, minor traffic violations, affray or disturbance of the peace)? Yes or no?
4. If the answer to question number 3 above is “yes” please state whether you were convicted more than five years ago for any offense (other than a first conviction for any of the following misdemeanors: drunkenness, simple assault, speeding, minor traffic violations, affray or disturbance of the peace)? Yes or no?

Some employers are authorized to request, receive, view and/or hold criminal offender record information pursuant to state or federal law.

Any inquiry into the criminal record of an applicant must also contain language pursuant to M.G.L. c. [276, § 100A](#).

It is unlawful for an employer to make any inquiry of an applicant or employee regarding:

1. An arrest, detention or disposition regarding any violation of law in which no conviction resulted.
2. First convictions for the misdemeanors of drunkenness, simple assault, speeding, minor traffic violations, affrays or disturbance of the peace. For the purposes of 804 CMR 3.02 minor traffic violations include any moving traffic violation other than reckless driving, driving to endanger and motor vehicle homicide.
3. Any conviction of a misdemeanor where the date of the conviction or the completion of any period of incarceration resulting therefrom, which ever date is later, occurred five or more years prior to the date of such inquiry, unless such person has been convicted of any offense within five years immediately preceding the date of the inquiry.

No person shall be held under any provision of any law to be guilty of perjury or of otherwise giving false statement by reason of his failure to recite or acknowledge such information as he has a right to withhold by 804 CMR 3.02.

ADDA-R - C.O.R.I. REQUIREMENTS

Applicants challenging the accuracy of the policy shall be provided a copy of the Criminal History Systems Board's (CHSB) Information Concerning the Process in Correcting a Criminal Record. If the CORI record provided does not exactly match the identification information provided by the applicant, the Superintendent will make a determination based on a comparison of the CORI record and documents provided by the applicant. The Superintendent may contact the CHSB and request a detailed search consistent with CHSB policy.

If the Superintendent reasonably believes the record belongs to the applicant and is accurate, based on the information as provided in district policy, then the determination of suitability for the position or license will be made. Unless otherwise provided by law, factors considered in determining suitability may include, but not be limited to the following:

- (a) Relevance of the crime to the position sought;
- (b) The nature of the work to be performed;
- (c) Time since the conviction;
- (d) Age of the candidate at the time of the offense;
- (e) Seriousness and specific circumstances of the offense;
- (f) The number of offenses;
- (g) Whether the applicant has pending charges;
- (h) Any relevant evidence of rehabilitation or lack thereof;
- (i) Any other relevant information, including information submitted by the candidate or requested by the hiring authority

The Superintendent will notify the applicant of the decision and the basis of the decision in a timely manner.

ADF - WELLNESS POLICY

The Belchertown Public Schools are committed to providing school environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. With the passing of the Healthy Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010, and Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools (105 CMR 225), the goal is to ensure Belchertown Public Schools offer students food and beverage choices that will enhance learning, contribute to their healthy growth and development, and cultivate lifelong healthy eating behaviors. The intent of this policy is to outline the district's on-going commitment in support of wellness in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and other school-based activities that promote health and wellness. Using passed School Nutrition Bill 2010, and recommendations by the Massachusetts Departments of Education and the Department of Public Health, it is the policy of the Belchertown School District that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades Pre-K through 12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold a la carte or competitive foods served at school will meet the nutrition standards for competitive foods and beverages in public schools, 105 CMR 225.00, found on the Massachusetts A list. The list is found at www.johnstalkerinstitute.org
- The Food Service Director will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, all schools in our district will participate in available federal school meal programs.
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.

TO ACHIEVE THESE POLICY GOALS:

I. Healthy and Safer Schools Committee

The School Committee will establish a Healthy and Safer Schools subcommittee to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The Healthy and Safer Schools Committee will provide oversight for the multifaceted plan that this policy addresses: curriculum, school activities, food service, and guidelines for teachers, staff, and parents. The membership of this committee shall include at least one: parent, student, School Committee member, Pre-K guidance counselor, 7 through 12 guidance counselor, school administrator from each school in the district, community member, as well as the School Resource Officer the School Nurse Leader, and the Director of Food Service. The Healthy and Safer Schools Committee will also serve as a resource to school sites for implementing those policies.

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch Program will ensure that all foods including competitive foods or beverages sold or provided to students during the school day meet State and Federal food requirements:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;

- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;
- offer low-fat (1 %) and fat-free milk
- all foods shall be trans-fat free;
- make nutritional information available;
- prohibit fryolators in preparation of competitive foods;
- no food or beverage shall contain artificial sweeteners.

Schools should engage students and parents, through surveys and meetings, in selecting foods sold through the school meal programs in order to identify new, healthful, and appealing food choices. In addition, schools should share information about the nutritional content of meals with parents and students. All nutritional information for the school menu is found on the district web site. Promotion of healthy foods will be a priority.

Free and Reduced-Priced Meals

The Belchertown Public Schools will continue to make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals.

Meal Times and Scheduling Recommendations

Schools:

- will provide students with at least 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, e.g., lunch should be scheduled during the mid-day portion of the schedule according to the school site;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will schedule lunch periods to allow daily recess periods (in elementary schools);
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks.

Qualifications of School Food Services Staff

The Food Service Director will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food services program, we will provide continuing professional development for the Food Service Director and staff. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for the Food Service staff according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages

Schools should discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually

Belchertown Public Schools will adhere to 105 CMR 225.00, Nutrition Standards, for competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of official school day.

All foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte lines, vending machines, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through educational programs for students after the school day, will meet the Massachusetts A List for competitive foods. Fresh fruit and non-fried vegetables may be offered for sale.

(A) Beverages

(1) Juice

- (a) All juice shall be made of 100% fruit or vegetable juice, with no added sugar and may or may not be diluted with water or carbonated water.

- (b) Servings of juice shall be no more than 8 ounces.
- (2) Milk and Milk Substitutes
 - (a) All milk and milk substitutes, which include alternative milk beverages such as lactose-free and soy milk, shall be fat free or low fat (1% or less).
 - (b) All milk and milk substitutes shall meet the USDA definitions and standards for fluid milk and milk substitutes.
 - (c) Servings of milk and milk substitutes shall be no more than 8 ounces.
 - (d) Flavored milk and flavored milk substitutes shall be fat free and have no more than 22 grams of sugar per eight ounces.
- (3) Water
 - (a) Water shall contain no added sugars, sweeteners or artificial sweeteners, but may contain natural flavorings and/or carbonation.
- (4) Other Beverages
 - (a) No beverages other than juice, milk, milk substitutes and water, all as defined above, shall be sold or provided.

Vending machines not part of the school lunch program will be closed at or during lunch except those that only dispense water.

(B) Food

Calories

Food shall not exceed 350 calories for entrée items including accompaniments or 200 calories for side or snack dish items.

Fat

No food shall contain more than 35% of its total calories from fat, except as provided in 105 CMR 225.200 (B)(4).

Saturated Fat

No food shall contain no more than 10% of its total calories from saturated fat, except provided in 105 CMR 225.200 (B) (4).

Exception to Standards on Fat Content

Regardless of the limits established above in 105 CMR 225.200(B) for fat content schools may provide or sell up to one ounce of nuts, seeds, nut/seed butters, reduced fat cheese, part skim mozzarella, or products that consist of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat. Additionally, schools may provide or sell seafood with no added fat. No other combination products are exempt from the fat standard.

Exceptions to Standards on Saturated Fat Content

Regardless of the limits established above in 105 CMR 225.200 (B) for saturated fat content, schools may provide or sell up to one ounce of nuts, seeds, seeds, nut/seed butters, reduced fat cheese, part skim mozzarella, or products that consist of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat. No other combination products are exempt from the saturated fat standard.

Trans Fat

All foods shall be trans-fat free.

Sugar

No food shall contain more than 35% of its weight from total sugars; provided however, that a public school may provide or sell (a) Fresh, frozen and canned fruits/vegetables with no added sweeteners except for fruits packed in 100% juice; (b) Products consisting of only dried fruit with nuts and/or seeds with no added nutritive sweeteners or fat; and (c) Dried whole fruits/vegetables, dried whole fruit/vegetable pieces, dried dehydrated fruits/vegetables with no added nutritive sweeteners, and dried fruits with nutritive sweeteners that are required for processing and/or palatability purposes, i.e., cranberries, tart cherries and blueberries.

Sodium

No food shall contain more than 200 mg of sodium per item, with the exception of a la carte entrees, which shall not contain more than 480 mg of sodium per item.

Grains

All breads and other grain based products shall be comprised of whole grains.

Food and Beverages

(1) Artificial Sweeteners

No food or beverages shall contain an artificial sweetener.

(2) Caffeine

No food or beverages shall contain more than trace amounts of caffeine.

(3) Accompaniments

All accompaniments must be included in the nutrient profile as part of the item served.

A choice of fresh fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold

Portion Sizes

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually in accordance with the A List.

Fundraising Activities Recommendations

To support children's health and school nutrition-education efforts, school fundraising activities can involve food that meets nutrition and portion size standards for foods and beverages sold individually. Schools will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities. The policy will be amended as necessary per state standards.

Snacks from Home

We recommend that snacks brought in from home make a positive contribution to the students' diets and health. Suggestions for healthy snacks are available from your school nurse.

The district's web site will provide teachers, parents, students a link to the Massachusetts A List and will work to educate teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents about nutritious foods.

Rewards

Schools will refrain from foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, and will not withhold food or beverages (including food served through school meals) as a punishment. Please refer to Healthy Students, Healthy Schools Guide for a list of recommended alternative rewards.

Curriculum-Based Food Activities

The Belchertown Public Schools will adopt curriculum-based food activities approved by the principal/director or by their designee. All food will be prepared at school site by teachers/staff members. All teachers will be mindful of students with food allergies and will not allow allergy food to be brought in the classroom. A list of allowable peanut/tree nut free snacks will be available for parents and teachers. See district website under Health Services for suggested list.

School-Sponsored Events (such as, but not limited to, athletic events, dances, or performances)

Foods and beverages offered or sold at school-sponsored events outside the school day will try to meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion

The Belchertown Public Schools aim to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- will encourage students to start each day with a healthy breakfast;
- will develop a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise);
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Integrated Physical Activity into the Classroom Setting

For students to receive physical activity and for students to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. To that end:

- health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television;
- opportunities for physical activity will be incorporated into other subject lessons as appropriate;
- classroom teachers will provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes, as appropriate; and
- recess periods should not be used as a punishment

Communication with Parents

The district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district will send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on its websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district will provide parents with the link to the Massachusetts A list that meets the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities.

The district will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children

with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools

School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (see above). School-based marketing of brands promoting predominantly low-nutrition foods and beverages is prohibited. The promotion of healthy foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products is encouraged.

Examples of marketing techniques include the following: logos and brand names on/in vending machines, books or curricula, textbook covers, school supplies, scoreboards, school structures, and sports equipment; educational incentive programs that provide food as a reward; programs that provide schools with supplies when families buy low-nutrition food products; free samples or coupons; and food sales through fundraising activities. Marketing activities that promote healthful behaviors (and are therefore allowable) include: vending machine covers promoting water; pricing structures that promote healthy options in a la carte lines or vending machines; and sales of fruit for fundraisers.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) Pre-K through 12

All students in grades Pre-K through 12, including students with disabilities, special healthcare needs, and in alternative education settings, will receive physical education or its equivalent. All physical education classes will be taught by a licensed physical education teacher. Student involvement in other activities involving physical activity (e.g., interscholastic or intramural sports) will not be substituted for meeting the physical education requirement. Students will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

Daily Recess

All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity through the provision of space and equipment.

Unless no other options are available, loss of recess as a consequence will be discouraged.

Schools will discourage extended periods of two or more hours of inactivity. When activities, such as mandatory school-wide testing, make it necessary for students to remain indoors for long periods of time, schools will give students periodic breaks during which they are encouraged to stand and be moderately active, if allowable.

Safe Routes to School

The school district will assess and, if necessary and to the extent possible, make needed improvements to make it safer and easier for students to walk and bike to school. When appropriate, the district will work together with local public works, public safety, and/or police departments in those efforts. The school district will explore the availability of federal "safe routes to school" funds, administered by the state department of transportation, to finance such improvements.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring

The Superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those

policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district's Superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level to the school principal). In addition, the school district will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.

If the district has not received a SMI review from the state agency within the past five years, the district will request from the state agency that a SMI review be scheduled as soon as possible. The superintendent or designee will develop a summary report every three years on district-wide compliance with the district's established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from schools within the district. That report will be provided to the School Committee and will make it available to the community via the district web site.

Policy Review

Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement. As part of that review, the school district will review our nutrition and physical activity policies; provision of an environment that supports healthy eating and physical activity; and nutrition and physical education policies and program elements. The district, and individual schools within the district, will, as necessary, revise the wellness policies and develop work plans to facilitate their implementation. The district and/or individual schools will make updates available on an annual basis and will inform the public about content of wellness policy updated or revised.

Written documentation demonstrating compliance with community involvement, annual progress report, documentation of annual public notification of the wellness policy and triennial assessment will be available to the public, as well as any documentation of assessment for each school.

State agencies will conduct administrative reviews at least every 3 years (Local wellness policy, documentation demonstrating policy made available to public, documentation of efforts to review and update the wellness policy- indicating who is involved and methods district uses to make stakeholders aware of ability to participate), the most recent assessment on the implementation of the wellness policy and documentation demonstrating the most recent assessment on implementation of wellness policy made available to public.

LEGAL REFS.: Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010
 Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools, 105
 CMR 225

CROSS REFS.: [EFC](#), Free and Reduced-Cost Food Services
 IHAMA, Teaching About Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs
 [KI](#), Public Solicitations/Advertising in District Facilities

Personnel & Policy Approved: February 1, 2016
School Committee Approved: February 9, 2016
School Committee Approved: May 23, 2017

DFA - SCHOOL COUNCILS

The School Committee believes that the school will be the key unit for educational improvement and change and that successful school improvement is best accomplished through a school-based decision-making process. By involving those directly affected by any action or decision of the school council in the process of determining that action or decision, it helps to strengthen the commitment to those decisions by those most affected by its implementation.

Under this policy, the Principal shall have primary responsibility for the management of the school. Decisions which are made at the school level must be aligned with the budget, policies, curriculum, and long-range and short-range goals adopted by the School Committee. In addition, decisions must comply with any state and federal laws and regulations and with any negotiated agreements of the school District.

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following requirements define the role of the school council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Adoption of educational goals for the school that are consistent with state and local policies and standards.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a school improvement plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38Q](#), [71:59C](#)

Personnel & Policy Subcommittee Revised: January 11, 2016

Personnel & Policy Subcommittee Approved: February 1, 2016

School Committee Approved: February 9, 2016

EBCD - EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school may be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

The Superintendent will weigh these factors and take action to close the schools only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, parents and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with School Committee policy in reporting for work.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:4](#); [71:4A](#)

CROSS REF.: [EBC](#), Emergency Plans

EFC - FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES

The school system will take part in the National School Lunch Program and other food programs that may become available to ensure that all children in the schools receive proper nourishment.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, and in accordance with the wishes of the Committee, no child who a teacher believes is improperly nourished will be denied a lunch or other food simply because proper application has not been received from his/her parent or guardian.

As required by state and federal regulations, the School Committee will approve a policy statement pertaining to eligibility for free milk, free meals, and reduced price meals.

LEGAL REFS.: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760) Child Nutrition Act of 1966

P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended

M.G.L. [15:1G](#); [15:1L](#); [69:1C](#); [71:72](#)

Approved: February 13, 2018

EFD - MEAL CHARGE POLICY

The School Committee is committed to providing students with healthy, nutritious meals each day so they can focus on school work, while also maintaining the financial integrity of meal programs and minimizing any impact on students with meal charges. However, unpaid meal charges place a large financial burden on the school district, as food services is a self-supporting entity within the district. The purpose of this policy is to ensure compliance with federal reporting requirements of the USDA Child Nutrition Program, as well as provide oversight and accountability for the collection of outstanding student meal balances.

The provisions of this policy pertain to regular priced school meals only. The School Committee will provide a regular meal to students who forget or lose their lunch money.

Meal Charges and Balances

Students will pay for meals at the regular rate approved by the School Committee and for their meal status (regular, reduced-price, or free) each day. Payment options will be delineated in student handbooks and provided to parents of incoming students. After the balance reaches zero and enters the negative, students will not be allowed to purchase a la carte items including but not limited to a second entrée, snack, ice cream, or an additional beverage. The student will still be allowed to take a meal, and that meal will continue to be charged to the account at the standard lunch rate based on their meal status. The parent/guardian is responsible for any meal charges incurred. If there is a financial hardship, a parent/guardian should contact food services directly to discuss payment options such as an individualized repayment plan.

Payments

Parents/Guardians are responsible for all meal payments to the food service program. Notices of low or deficit balances will be sent directly to parent/guardians via email or regular postal mail at regular intervals during the school year. At no time shall any staff member give payment notices to students unless that student is known to be an emancipated minor who is fully responsible for themselves or over the age of 18. If parent/guardians have issues with student purchases they should contact food services for assistance.

Parents/Guardians may pay for meals in advance. Further details are available on the school district webpage and in student handbooks. Funds should be maintained in accounts to minimize the possibility that a child may be without meal money on any given day. Any remaining funds for a particular student, whether positive or negative, will be carried over to the next school year.

All school cafeterias possess computerized point of sale/cash register systems that maintain records of all monies deposited and spent for each student and those records are available to parents by setting up an online account (see student handbooks for more details) or by speaking with the school's food service manager. The point of sale system is designed to prevent direct identification of a student's meal status. Parents will receive automated low-balance emails or mailed notices weekly, if applicable. If notices do not result in payment, parents will receive a phone call from food services. If the phone call does not result in payment the food service manager shall turn the account over to the business office.

Refunds

Refunds for withdrawn and/or graduating students require a written request (email, postal, or in person) for a refund of any money remaining in their account to be submitted. Graduating students also have the option to transfer funds to a sibling's account or to donate to a student in need with a written request.

Delinquent Accounts/Collections

Failure to maintain up to date accounts may result in a delay of a student's extra-curricular school services, especially those that are fee based. Graduating seniors may lose the ability to participate in certain graduation related activities.

The Superintendent shall ensure that there are appropriate and effective collection procedures and internal controls within the school district's business office that meet the requirements of law.

If a student is without meal money on a consistent basis, the administration may investigate the situation more closely and take further action as needed. If financial hardship exists, parents and families are encouraged to apply for free or reduced price lunches for their child. Each school handbook shall contain detailed instructions for parental assistance.

Policy Communications

This policy shall be communicated to all staff and families at the beginning of each school year and to families transferring to the district during the year.

LEGAL REFS: MGL [71:72](#); USDA School Meal Program Guidelines May 2017

CROSS REFS: [JQ](#), Student Fees, Fines & Charges

SOURCE: MASC February 2018

Approved Belchertown School Committee: April 24, 2018

IHBA - PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

LEGAL REF.: Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504

IHBAA - OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

1. Parents' request to observe their child(ren), current program, or a potential placement must be made at least five days in advance with the Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal.
2. The Special Education Director or designee shall contact the parent(s) for initial scheduling conversation within five (5) days of receipt of the parents' request.
3. When a parent requests an observation of a special needs student or program, the Special Education Director or designee will seek approval from the Director of Special Education and the building principal before it is processed. Such approval may only be withheld for those reasons outlined within law and DESE regulation.
4. The Special Education Director or designee and/or Principal will work with the classroom teacher and the observer to set up the specifics of the observation (including, but not limited to, scheduling and placement of the observer in the class room).
5. The number, frequency, and duration of observation periods will be determined on an individual student basis in accordance with law and regulation. The start and end time of observation periods and a schedule of observation periods will be stated in advance. In order to minimize classroom or student disruption, the length of individual observation periods may be limited.
6. If the observer is not the parent, the parent must sign a release for the individual to observe.
7. The number of observers at any one time may be limited.
8. The observer will be informed that he/she is not to interfere with the educational environment of the classroom. If his/her presence presents a problem, he/she will be asked to leave. This notice is particularly important, since the presence of parents can influence both the performance of their child(ren) and those of others.
9. The observer will be asked to submit his/her report of the observation in advance of any follow-up TEAM meeting.
10. The observer will be informed that he/she is there to evaluate the appropriateness of a specific educational program to meet the needs of an individual child. He/she is not there to evaluate a teacher's ability to perform his or her contractual job duties.
11. The observer will be instructed regarding the disclosure of confidential or personally identifiable information relating to other children. Staff must be mindful of removing materials which may be part of students' records from plain view. In the event that removal is not possible the observer may be asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement.
12. A school administrator, or designee, also will observe at the same time and take notes as to what is observed, paying particular attention to note anything that is non-typical concerning the period. This observation summary will be placed in the student's file and provided to the parent(s) prior to any follow-up TEAM meeting.

LEGAL REF.: MGL [71B:3](#)
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Technical Assistance Advisory SPED 2009-2 dated January 8, 2009

CROSS REF.: KI, Visitors to Schools

NOTE: The following quotes from the DESE Advisory are important points of understanding to the implementation of this policy.

"School districts and parents have reported that, typically, observations are between one and four hours. While useful as a general rule, the Department recommends that district policies and practices specify that the duration and extent of observations will be determined on an individual basis. Districts should avoid rigid adherence to defined time limits regardless of the student's needs and settings to be observed. The complexities of the child's needs, as well as the program or programs to be observed, should determine what the observation will entail and what amount of time is needed to complete it. Discussion between school staff and the parent or designee is a good starting point for resolving the issue."

“The observation law states that districts may not condition or restrict program observations except when necessary to protect:

- the safety of children in the program during the observation;
- the integrity of the program during the observation;
- and children in the program from disclosure by an observer of confidential or personally identifiable information he or she may obtain while observing the program.”

IJNDB - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Purpose

Belchertown Public Schools maintain a computer network and computer systems to provide students, faculty and staff with access to a host of resources both internally within the district and on the Internet. These resources include, but are not limited to, desktop, laptop, and tablet computers, personal digital assistants, network and Internet access, e-mail, telephones, voicemail and facsimile machines (collectively to be called "Electronic Resources"). The Belchertown Public Schools network is established to support the educational mission and administrative operations of the individual schools.

Responsibilities

As a student or employee at Belchertown Public Schools you may have access to Electronic Resources, including the network and Internet. The network is viewed as an extension of the public schools community and all expectations regarding standards of behavior as outlined in the Student, Employee or Faculty Handbook apply to your actions while utilizing or accessing the network or other Electronic Resources. You are expected to use the Electronic Resources in a mature, ethical, and responsible manner. Personal use is allowed but Belchertown Public Schools reserves the right to limit your access. If you believe a website is blocked in error, please contact the Belchertown Public Schools Office of Information Technology to initiate a review. Access to the Belchertown Public Schools network is a privilege and not a right.

Unacceptable Uses and Behavior

Activities that are considered violations of this electronic resources acceptable use policy and school rules include:

Illegal Activities

- involvement in any activity prohibited by law.
- intentional use of invasive software such as "viruses," "worms," "Trojan Horses" and other malicious software.
- interfering with the normal and proper operation of this network, the Internet or any other network. This includes: "hacking," "cracking," probing, attempting to gain access to network servers and equipment, utilizing excessive amounts of bandwidth, and setting up servers on the network of any type without express permission.
- adversely affecting the ability of others to use equipment or services.

Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement

- transferring, utilizing or storing materials in violation of copyright laws or license agreements. This includes software, music files, images and text.
- plagiarizing work found on the Internet - all sources of work must be cited and credited.
- tampering with computers, printers, network devices and other equipment belonging to Belchertown Public Schools or other people.
- using the network for financial and/or personal gain or for political lobbying except as expressly allowed during a school activity.
- attempting to log on to the network as the system administrator or gain access beyond your authorized access level.
- attempting to bypass security systems and software.
- sharing passwords or using someone else's password or attempting to discover another person's password.
- trespassing in another's folders, e-mail, work, or files or using another person's account.
- changing computer files that do not belong to you.

Conduct

- conducting yourself in ways that are harmful to others.
- creating, transferring or otherwise using any text, image, movie, or sound recording that contains pornography, profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, or language that offends or tends to degrade others.
- sending or forwarding "chain" type letters, hate mail, anonymous or threatening messages.
- viewing, storing or transferring obscene, sexually explicit or pornographic material.
- posting or sending e-mail or voicemail messages that are personal attacks, including any prejudicial, discriminatory, racist or sexist content, could cause damage or disruption, contain false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or harassing another person. If you are told by a person to stop sending them messages, you must stop.
- posting personal contact information about yourself or other people. This includes your address, telephone number, school address, etc.
- Staff or Faculty professional communications with students and parents will only occur through district issued accounts.

Disciplinary actions

Violation of this Acceptable Use Policy is considered a violation of district policy. Some behaviors are considered violations of a major school rule. Violations will result in one or more of the following disciplinary actions (Belchertown Public Schools will decide in its sole discretion which disciplinary action is warranted under the circumstances):

- verbal warning
- written warning
- restriction of access privileges
- removal from a class activity
- removal from a course
- confiscation of computer equipment
- student detention, restrictions or work hours
- suspension or expulsion
- payment for damages due to your actions
- referral to legal authorities

Privacy

Users of the network or other Electronic Resources have no reasonable expectation of privacy concerning any materials transferred over or stored within the Belchertown Public Schools network or on other Electronic Resources (e.g., voicemail and e-mail). Information such as e-mails transmitted over the network may be a public record. The network is subject to monitoring.

Limited Liability

Belchertown Public Schools makes no guarantee that the functions or the services provided by or through the network will be error-free or without defect. Belchertown Public Schools will not be responsible for any damage you may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service. Belchertown Public Schools are not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. Belchertown Public Schools will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through your use of the system. **You are responsible for your activities.**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have completely read, understood and agree to abide by the Belchertown Public Schools Acceptable Use Policy.

Printed Name of Student or Staff Member

Signature

Date

Printed Name of Parent (if Required)

Signature

Date

School Committee Approved:

March 28, 2017

IJNDB-R ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - TECHNOLOGY

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. Commercial use of the system/network is prohibited.
2. The District will provide training to users in the proper use of the system/network.
3. The District will provide each user with copies of the Acceptable Use Policy and Procedures.
4. Copyrighted software or data shall not be placed on the District system/network without permission from the holder of the copyright and the system administrator.
5. Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement and permission of their supervisor.
6. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designee(s).
7. Account names will be recorded on access agreements and kept on file at the building level.
8. Initial passwords provided by the network administrator should be set to expire on login.
9. Passwords shall be changed every 15 days and all passwords shall be expired at the end of each school year.
10. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
11. Students completing required course work will have first priority for after-hours use of equipment.
12. Principals or their designee will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
13. Principals or their designee will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by policies and procedures regarding use of the system/network. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
14. Principals or their designee will ensure that training is provided to users on appropriate use of electronic resources.
15. Principals or their designee shall be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of electronic resources.
16. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing appropriate retention and backup schedules.
17. Principals or their designee shall be responsible for establishing disk usage limitations, if needed.
18. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
19. The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by District policy.
20. System users shall not use another user's account.
21. System users should purge electronic information according to District retention guidelines.
22. System users may redistribute copyrighted material only with the written permission of the copyright holder or designee. Such permission must be specified in the document or in accordance with applicable copyright laws, District policy, and administrative procedures.
23. System administrators may upload/download public domain programs to the system/ network. System administrators are responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.
24. Any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment, materials, data, or programs is prohibited.
25. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of District policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of computer viruses.
26. Vandalism will result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
27. Forgery or attempted forgery is prohibited.
28. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
29. Use appropriate language; swearing, vulgarity, ethnic or racial slurs, and other inflammatory language is prohibited.

30. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving message is prohibited.
31. Transmitting or viewing obscene material is prohibited.
32. Revealing personal information (addresses, phone numbers, etc.) is prohibited.
33. The District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the District's system/network.

A user who violates District policy or administrative procedures will be subject to suspension or termination of system/network privileges and will be subject to appropriate disciplinary action and/or prosecution.

IJNDD-R ELECTRONIC CONTACT AND SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY REGULATIONS

1. Technology Acceptable Use Policy still in force

These administrative regulations are adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the School District's Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the school district's technological resources.

2. General Concerns

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

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

3. Expectations of Staff

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

1. Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, faculty and staff should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, some social media sites require account holders to take specific steps to "privatize" the information they place online. You must educate yourself to these features of any social networking site you select. You will be responsible should any information you intended to be "private" becomes "public" due to your own ignorance of the features of the social network you have decided to use or your failure to properly use such features.
2. You must also know that any information you share privately with a recipient could be re-distributed by such recipient, without your knowledge or consent. The same principles you apply to in person communication should be applied to online conversation: use discretion, and do not place your trust in individuals who have not proven themselves trustworthy. In essence, nothing you post online is ever truly "private."

3. The school district expects you to keep the line between your professional life and your personal life clearly drawn at all times. There is no reason why this cannot be done, even in light of the proliferation of social networking sites. All that is required is some forethought before using social networking for both your professional and personal life, to be sure that these lines never become blurred. Therefore, all requests to use an educational social media site must have prior approval, as do any other web sites (see regulations IJNDC-R, Web Site Guidelines and Procedures for Approval).
4. At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, staff members will always adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information to retrieval by those third parties. For example, through an educational social networking account, a staff member may not post confidential student information through any part of that account that would be accessible to other members associated with that account. If a staff member wishes to communicate privately with a student through such an account, the staff member should access those features that allow him/her to communicate with that student alone.
5. Staff members are encouraged to communicate with students and parents on educational matters only, and only through school-based resources, such as school-provided email or web portal accounts. Use of one's personal email account or social networking account to discuss school business with students and parents is discouraged. It should be noted that, just because a staff member uses his/her personal email as opposed to a school email account, this does not shield such email from the provisions of the public records law or from discovery in litigation. It only prevents the archiving of such messages through the school district's automatic email archiving system. We again remind staff members that information sent or received by them, even through personal email or social network accounts that are related to their capacity as a school employee, are still subject to public records retention, exemption and disclosure requirements.
6. If a staff member conveys school related messages to students and parents on his/her private account, he/she should save such email or any communication conveyed through a social networking site, or print and save a paper copy of such email or other online communication, and file it, and regard its privacy, as he/she would any other document concerning that student. The staff member should forward copies of any such emails or online communications to his or her school based email account so that it can be properly retained and archived in compliance with the requirements of the public records law. Any document created or received by a public employee in his or her capacity as such is subject to retention, and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.
7. No matter what medium of communication a staff member selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate adult/student boundaries. You are a role model, not a student's friend, you are his/her responsible adult, and you should always conduct yourself in accordance with this understanding.
8. This policy is not intended to infringe upon a staff member's right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of your job duties. However, when you speak via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning your work, you are speaking as an employee and not as a citizen, and restrictions may be placed upon your freedom to express yourself. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain your status as an educator who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in your classroom, and remain objective with respect to your students.
9. Staff members are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones, personal email accounts and personal Facebook accounts to communicate with students. Your communications

with students, even if you do not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the school district to monitor as they arise out of your position as an educator or staff member within the district. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school district or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose an employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Even if you are not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student that such contact is not outside of the school district's authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If your behavior is inappropriate, undermines your authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises your objectivity, or harms students, the school district reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior. A staff member may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians, as well as exposing the district to vicarious liability in certain instances.

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

10. Staff members may not access their personal email accounts or private Facebook accounts using school district computer resources.
11. If you are communicating as an employee of the district in your online communications, you must be aware that readers will assume you "speak for the school district." Therefore, all of your online communications, when you are actually acting on behalf of the district, or creating the appearance that you are doing so, must be professional at all times and reflect positively on the school district.
12. In the use of your Facebook account or other social networking site, you may not, without express permission from the superintendent of schools, use the school's logo, likeness or any school photographs or other property that belongs to the school in accordance with all other policies and procedures relative to the use of technology as outlined in the School Committee policy manual.
13. References to "Facebook" are not included to limit application of their policy to use of that program. All online, electronic or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy. Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications.

SOURCE: M.A.S.S.

IJOC - SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

It is the policy of the School Committee to encourage volunteer efforts in the schools. Parents/guardians, business representatives, senior citizens, and other community volunteers are recognized as important sources of support and expertise to enhance the instructional program and vital communication links with the community. The volunteer program will be coordinated in cooperation with building administrators.

CROSS REF.: [ADDA](#), C.O.R.I. Requirements

IKE - PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, student attendance, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the students involved. Exceptions will only be made after prior notification and explanation to each student's parents/guardians, but the final decision will rest with the building Principal.

IMDA - RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Any student who is unable because of religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused. Absence from school will require that the parent(s)/guardian(s) use the same procedure outlined in the Attendance Policy and call the Absentee Call-in line for the school site. Absence from school for religious observance will be an excused absence.

Non-completion of school work or an examination for excused absences must be made up within five days.

Educators shall make reasonable accommodations for any student present in school and observing a religious holiday. Such accommodations shall include, but are not limited to, allowing the student to postpone the taking of a test or quiz, or the submission of any assignment until the second school day following the end of the religious holiday. A note from the parents) /guardian(s) is required in advance or on the holiday.

IMG - ANIMALS IN SCHOOL

No animal shall be brought to school without prior permission of the building Principal.

The Belchertown Public Schools are committed to providing a high quality educational program to all students in a safe and healthy environment. School Principals, in consultation with the Health Services Providers in each building, shall utilize the Department of Public Health publication "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and review student health records to determine which animals may be allowed in the school building. The decision of the Principal shall be final.

Educational Program

Use of animals to achieve specific curriculum objectives may be allowed by the building Principal provided student health and safety is not jeopardized and the individual requesting that the animal be brought to school is responsible for adhering to the "Guidelines for Animals in Schools or on School Grounds" and any other conditions established by the Principal to protect the health and well-being of students.

Student Health

The health and well-being of students is the District's highest priority. Animals may cause an allergic reaction or otherwise impair the health of students. No animals may be brought to school or kept in the school, classroom, office or common area that may negatively impact the health of any student who must utilize that area. Animals that cause an allergic reaction or impair the health of students shall be removed from the school immediately so that no student shall have his/her health impaired and each student shall have full access to available educational opportunities.

Animals Prohibited from School

Rabies is a growing problem and any fur-bearing animal is susceptible to this very serious fatal disease. Infected animals can transmit this disease to students and staff. Based on the Massachusetts Departments of Health and Education recommendations the following animals are prohibited from schools within the Belchertown School District.

Wild Animals and Domestic Stray Animals - Because of the high incidence of rabies in bats, raccoons, skunks, foxes and other wild carnivores, these animals should not be permitted in school buildings under any circumstances (including dead animals).

Fur-Bearing Animals (pet dogs,* cats, wolf-hybrids, ferrets, etc.,) - These animals may pose a risk for transmitting rabies, as well as parasites, fleas, other diseases and injuries.

Bats - Bats pose a high risk for transmitting rabies. Bat houses should not be installed on school grounds and bats should not be brought into the school building.

Poisonous Animals - Spiders, venomous insects and poisonous snakes, reptiles and lizards are prohibited for safety reasons.

***Exception: Guide, Hearing and Other Service Animals or Law Enforcement Dogs** - These animals may be allowed in school or on school grounds with proof of current rabies vaccination.

Exceptions may be made with the prior approval of the Superintendent of Schools.

Service Animals

The Belchertown School Committee does not permit discrimination against individuals with disabilities, including those who require the assistance of a service animal. The District will comply with Massachusetts law concerning the rights of persons with guide or assistance dogs and with federal law and will permit such animals on school premises and on school transportation.

For purposes of this policy, a “service animal includes any animal that has been individually trained to do the work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.” The regulations further state that “a public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with the disability.”

Service animals perform some of the functions and tasks that individuals with disabilities cannot perform themselves. Service animals are not pets. There are several kinds of service animals that assist individuals with disabilities. Examples include, but are not limited to, animals that:

- assist individuals who are blind or have severe sight impairments as “seeing eye dogs” or “guide dogs;”
- alert individuals with hearing impairments to sounds;
- pull wheelchairs or carry and pick-up items for individuals with mobility impairments; and
- assist mobility-impaired individuals with balance.

The District shall not assume or take custody or control of, or responsibility for, any service animal or the care or feeding thereof. The owner or person having custody and control of the animal shall be liable for any damage to persons, premises, property, or facilities caused by the service animal, including, but not limited to, clean up, stain removal, etc.

If, in the opinion of the School Principal or authorized designee, any service animal is not in the control of its handler, or if it is not housebroken, the service animal may be excluded from the school or program. The service animal can also be excluded if it presents a direct and immediate threat to others in the school. The parent or guardian of the student having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the service animal from District premises immediately.

If any student or staff member assigned to the classroom in which a service animal is permitted suffers an allergic reaction to the animal, the person having custody and control of the animal will be required to remove the animal to a different location designated by the Building Principal or designee and an alternative plan will be developed with appropriate District staff. Such plan could include the reassignment of the person having custody and control of the animal to a different classroom. This will also apply if an individual on school transportation suffers an allergic reaction. In this case, an alternate plan will be developed in coordination with appropriate school, District, and transportation staff including the involvement of the parents/ guardian of the student.

When a student will be accompanied by a service animal at school or in other District facilities on a regular basis, such staff member or such student’s parent or guardian, as well as the animal’s owner and any other person who will have custody and control of the animal will be required to sign a document stating that they have read and understood the foregoing.

The Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee shall be responsible for developing procedures to accommodate a student’s use of an assistance animal in District facilities and on school transportation vehicles.

Approved: April 24, 2018

UAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender

identity, homeless student status or physical and intellectual differences.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law (known as Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971), which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs. The law reads as follows:

No child 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 public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or homeless student status.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, guidance, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

LEGAL REFS.:	Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972 M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971) Board of Education Chapter 622 Regulations Pertaining to Access to Equal Educational Opportunity, adopted 6/24/75, amended 10/24/78 Board of Education, Chapter 766 Regulations 10/74 - amended through 3/28/78 603 CMR 26:00
CROSS REF.:	AC, Nondiscrimination

JF-E-2 - SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Admission to Course of Study

- (1) Each and every course of study offered by a public school shall be open and available to students regardless of race, color, sex, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin. Nothing herein shall be construed to prohibit the use of prerequisite requirements that have been demonstrated to be essential to success in a given program. However, if participation in a course or program is dependent upon completion of a prerequisite which was previously limited to students of one sex, or if close scrutiny reveals that access mechanisms or other administrative arrangements have limited the opportunities of any class of students to participate in such prerequisites, then all members of the previously excluded group shall be given the opportunity to acquire the prerequisites or be allowed to enter the program without such prerequisites. If it cannot be shown that a prerequisite is essential for success in a given program, the prerequisite shall be abolished.
- (2) The determination of what courses or units of study are to be required of any student shall also be made without regard to the race, color, sex, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or religion of that student.
- (3) The scheduling of students into courses or units of study shall not be done on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation or national origin.
- (4) Each student, regardless of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation or limited English-speaking ability, shall have equal rights of access to courses of study and other opportunities available through the school system of the city or town in which he/she resides, along with appropriate bilingual instruction and programs or other curriculum offerings of a supportive nature such as appropriate remedial programs.
- (5) Nothing in 603 CMR 26.03 shall be construed to prevent particular segments of a program of instruction from being offered separately to each sex when necessary in order to respect personal privacy.

JH - STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents/guardians of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

1. Illness or quarantine (with medical documentation)
2. Bereavement or serious illness in family
3. Weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child
4. Observance of major religious holidays
5. Court Appearance
6. Sanctioned School Activities: i.e. scheduled athletic events

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the school administrator.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of their character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.

Whether a student's absence is excused or unexcused, the student is responsible for completing all work assigned while absent. The requirements for making up assigned work while absent rests with the individual schools. Students are responsible for knowing the expectations for making up assigned work.

With a doctor's medical note, a student experiences a medical absence and is home-bound. Administration will work with the family to provide support for the student.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justifiable.

More than eight unexcused absences will be subject to administrative review and possible action.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:1](#); [76:16](#); [76:20](#) M.G.L. [119:39](#)

Revision Approved by School Committee: July 28, 2015

Revision Approved by School Committee: March 28, 2017

Revision Approved by School Committee: October 10, 2017

JI - STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The School Committee has the responsibility to afford students the rights that are theirs by virtue of guarantees offered under the federal and state constitutions and statutes. In connection with rights, there are responsibilities that must be assumed by students.

Among these rights and responsibilities are the following:

1. Civil rights — including the rights to equal educational opportunity and freedom from discrimination; the responsibility not to discriminate against others.
2. The right to attend free public schools; the responsibility to attend school regularly and to observe school rules essential for permitting others to learn at school.

3. The right to due process of law with respect to suspension, expulsion, and decisions the student believes injure his rights.
4. The right to free inquiry and expression; responsibility to observe reasonable rules regarding these rights.
5. The right to privacy, which includes privacy with respect to the student's school records.

It is the School Committee's belief that as part of the educational process students should be made aware of their legal rights, and of the legal authority of the School Committee to make and delegate authority to its staff to make rules regarding the orderly operation of the schools.

Students have the right to know the standards of behavior that are expected of them, and the consequences of misbehavior.

The rights and responsibilities of students, including standards of conduct, will be made available to students and their parents through handbooks distributed annually.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:37H](#); [71:82](#) through [71:86](#)

JICA - STUDENT DRESS CODE

The responsibility for the dress and appearance of the students will rest with individual students and parents.

They have the right to determine how the student will dress providing that attire is not destructive to school property, complies with requirements for health and safety, and does not cause disorder or disruption. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

This does not mean that student, faculty, or parent groups may not recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions. It means that students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their dress and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

JICC - STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The School Committee and its staff share with students and parents the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the Principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the School Committee.

JICC-R - STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Procedures for Drivers and Parents

1. In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident will be reported on the proper form to the school Principal. He/she will report the incident in writing to the parent concerned, with a copy to the Superintendent.
2. In case of a repetition by the same student, the Principal will suspend the student's transportation privileges with written notice to the parent to report at once with the child to the Superintendent's office.
3. After a second offense and a conference with the Superintendent, if a third such incident occurs, bus privileges will be denied the student and the responsibility for transportation will then rest with the parent.

Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop

1. Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait.
2. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only.
3. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required.
4. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus.

Required Conduct aboard the Bus

1. Riders must remain in seats or in place when the bus is in motion.
2. Whistling and shouting are not permitted.
3. Profanity and obscene language are forbidden.
4. Smoking is prohibited.
5. The following disturbances are prohibited:
 - Pushing or wrestling
 - Annoying other passengers or disturbing their possessions
 - Talking to the driver
 - Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
 - Climbing over seats
 - Opening or closing windows without permission
 - Leaning out of windows
 - Littering the bus
6. Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.

Distribution of Literature

Parents and students will be informed of these regulations at the beginning of each school year, and parents will be asked to return signed forms indicating that the regulations have been received and read.

JICF - GANG ACTIVITY / SECRET SOCIETIES

The goal of the School Committee is to keep District schools and students free from the threats or harmful influence of any gang. For purposes of this policy, gang is defined as any group, secret society, organization or association that advocates drug use, violence, ethnic intimidation, or disruptive or illegal behavior. The Principal or his/her designee shall maintain supervision of school premises to deter intimidation of students and confrontations between members of different gangs.

The Superintendent shall establish open lines of communication with local law enforcement agencies so as to share information and provide mutual support in this effort within appropriate legal guidelines.

The Superintendent may provide in-service training to help staff members identify gangs and gang symbols, recognize early manifestations of disruptive activities, and respond appropriately. Staff members shall be informed about conflict management techniques and alerted to intervention measures and community resources that may help students.

Symbols

The School Committee finds that gang symbols are inherently disruptive to the educational process, and therefore prohibits the presence of any insignia, apparel, jewelry, accessory, notebook or other school supply, or manner of grooming which by virtue of its color, arrangement, trademark, or any other attribute denotes membership in gangs. The School Committee further prohibits any demonstration of gang membership through the use of hand gestures, graffiti, or printed materials. This policy shall be applied by the Principal or his/her designee as the need for it arises individual school sites. A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

Prevention Education

The School Committee realizes that students may become involved in gangs without understanding the consequences of such membership. Early intervention is a key component of efforts to break the cycle of such memberships. Therefore, gang violence prevention information shall be made available in the elementary, middle, and high schools as appropriate.

SECRET SOCIETIES

Fraternities, sororities and/or secret societies shall not receive District or building recognition in any manner.

A student may be suspended or expelled for failure to comply with the provisions of this policy.

JICFA - ANTI-HARASSMENT, HAZING AND BULLYING POLICY

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

- A. It is the policy of the School District to provide a safe and orderly educational environment that is free from harassment, hazing and bullying, and conducive to giving each student the best opportunity to receive the education to which he or she is entitled under State and Federal law. Incidents of harassment, hazing and bullying prevent students from receiving the education to which they are entitled and foster violence.
- B. It is the purpose of this Policy to prohibit and prevent acts of harassment, as defined in this policy, and violence. The School District does recognize that students retain certain rights under State and Federal law, including freedom of expression, although such rights are not necessarily co-extensive with the rights of adults in society at large. It is not the purpose of this Policy to infringe the legitimate rights of students or school personnel in the school environment under State and Federal law.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Harassment" as used in this Policy means verbal, written, graphic or physical conduct which has the purpose or effect of
 - 1. substantially or materially interfering with a student's educational performance;
 - 2. denying any student the benefits or opportunities offered by the School District;
 - 3. disrupting school operations or activities; or,
 - 4. creating a hostile or abusive environment that materially alters a student's educational environment.
- B. "Sexual Harassment," is a form of Harassment that is directed at an individual because of his/her gender. Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of enjoying educational opportunities; or (2) that conduct or communication has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's education or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment. Sexual harassment may include but is not limited to:
 - 1. unwelcome verbal harassment of a sexual nature, including but not limited to expressions of profanity;
 - 2. unwelcome pressure for sexual activity;
 - 3. unwelcome, sexually motivated or inappropriate patting, pinching, or physical contact;
 - 4. unwelcome sexual behavior or words, including demands for sexual favors, accompanied by implied or overt threats concerning an individual's educational status;
 - 5. unwelcome behavior, verbal or written words, symbols or jokes directed at an individual because of gender; and/or,
 - 6. the use of authority to emphasize the sexuality of a student in a manner that prevents or impairs that student's full enjoyment of educational benefits, climate or opportunities.
- C. "School Personnel" as used in this Policy means school committee members, school administrators, employees, agents, volunteers, contractors, vendors and/or persons subject to the supervision and control of the School District.
- D. "Bullying" is a form of Harassment that involves intimidating verbal or physical conduct toward a student that is intended to place the student in fear of bodily harm, or recurring or habitual conduct, including "name-calling" as defined below, that is intended to humiliate the student or isolate the student from his/her peer group. Bullying can include extortion, malicious damage to or theft of property, spreading rumors, or conspiring with others to shun another student.

- E. "Name-calling," is a form of Bullying or Harassment that involves the chronic, habitual, or recurring use of names or comments to or about a student regarding the student's actual or perceived physical or personal characteristics when the student has indicated by his or her conduct, that the names or comments are unwelcome, or when the names or comments, by their nature and the circumstances, are clearly unwelcome, inappropriate, or offensive.
- F. "Hazing" is a form of Harassment that involves conduct that includes but is not limited to, any act that endangers the mental health, physical health or safety of a student for the purpose of initiation or as a condition or precondition of attaining membership in, or affiliation with, any district-sponsored activity or grade level attainment, i.e., forced consumption of any food, drink, alcoholic beverage, drug or other substance, forced exposure to the elements, forced prolonged exclusion from social contact, sleep deprivation or any other forced activity that could adversely affect the mental or physical health or safety of a student; requires, encourages, authorizes or permits another to be subject to wearing or carrying any obscene or physically burdensome article, assignment of pranks to be performed or other such activities intended to degrade or humiliate.
- G. "Harasser" or "Alleged Harasser" are used in this policy to refer to individual students, school personnel or other persons connected with the schools, who have or are alleged to have engaged in the prohibited activities of harassment, sexual harassment, hazing or bullying as defined in this policy.

III. PROHIBITIONS

- A. It shall be a violation of this Policy for any student or school personnel of the School District to engage in harassment, hazing or bullying of a student where there is a connection between the conduct and school, including but not limited to: on school property; during the use of school facilities; during school-sponsored activities, services or events; at school bus stops; and while traveling to and from such locations or events.
- B. It shall also be a violation of this Policy for any school personnel to tolerate harassment, hazing or bullying, as defined by this Policy, by any student or school personnel or third parties who are participating in, observing or otherwise engaged in activities, including extra-curricular activities, on school property or at school related activities, services or events.
- C. Harassment prohibited under this Policy includes, but is not limited to, harassment based on race, gender, color, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and/or disability, and specifically includes Sexual Harassment, Hazing and Bullying.
- D. Retaliation against anyone who, in good faith, makes a complaint or participates as a witness in an investigation under this Policy is prohibited, irrespective of whether the underlying complaint is sustained. Likewise, making a knowingly false complaint, or statement under this Policy is also prohibited.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR NOTIFICATION

- A. The District shall inform students, parents and school personnel of the District's policy by means of one or more of the following:
 - 1. Distribution of Policy
 - 2. Publication in handbooks
 - 3. Assembly presentation
 - 4. Training session(s)
 - 5. Posting of notices/signs
 - 6. Other means of notice to be implemented by the District.
- B. The District shall use its discretion in developing and initiating age-appropriate programs to effectively inform students, parents and school personnel about the substance of the Policy and procedures in order to help prevent harassment, hazing and bullying.

V. PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING, INVESTIGATING & RESOLUTION

A. Reporting

1. The Complaint Officials for purposes of this Policy are (1) the Principal and Assistant Principal(s) in each building, and such other persons as they may designate in their absence; and (2) [one or more other person(s) or class of persons, e.g., guidance counselors, the Superintendent, the Director of Special Education, Athletic Director, etc.].
2. Any school personnel who hear, observe or otherwise become aware of harassment, or who reasonably believe that harassment has occurred, must take prompt and appropriate action to stop the harassment, prevent its recurrence, and bring the matter to the prompt attention of a Complaint Official.
3. Any student who believes, in good faith, that harassment has occurred shall inform any school personnel and/or one of the Complaint Official(s) designated by this Policy. The complaint may be made orally or in writing.
4. If one or more of the Complaint Officials is the alleged harasser, the complaint may be filed with any complaint official not alleged to have engaged in harassment or any other school personnel not alleged to have engaged in the complained-of harassment.

B. Grievance Procedure

1. Informal Procedure

In an appropriate case, it may be possible to resolve a complaint through a voluntary conversation between the complaining student and the alleged harasser which is facilitated by a school employee or by a designated harassment complaint official. The School District will determine whether a case is appropriate for the informal procedure.

2. Formal Procedure

Written Record . The Complaint Official shall make a written record of the complaint detailing the facts and circumstances of the incident or pattern of behavior alleged. In most cases, if a student under 18 is involved, his/her parents shall be notified.

Investigation . An investigation appropriate to the nature of the circumstances will be conducted, which may consist of personal interviews with the complaining student, the alleged harasser and any other individuals who may have knowledge of the alleged incident(s) or circumstances giving rise to the complaint. During the investigation, the School District may take immediate steps to protect persons, as well as to guard the integrity of the investigation pending its completion. The investigation will be completed as soon as practicable and the investigating official shall make a written report of the factual findings.

Action . The School District shall take appropriate action in all cases where this Policy has been violated. Any person who is determined to have violated this policy shall be subject to action, including but not limited to warning, exclusion, suspension, expulsion, transfer, termination, discharge and/or any other remedial action, including but not limited to training, education, or counseling. Action taken for violation of this policy shall be consistent with the requirements of any applicable collective bargaining agreement, School District policy, and state and federal law, including but not limited to the due process protections for students with disabilities.

VI. REPORTING OF POTENTIAL PHYSICAL OR SEXUAL ABUSE

Several behaviors listed as harassment, hazing or bullying may also constitute criminal conduct and/or child abuse that must be reported to appropriate authorities. In such cases, the District will determine whether such reports are appropriate or legally required, and if so, make such reports promptly.

VII. CONFIDENTIALITY

The School District recognizes that both the complaining student and the alleged harasser have strong interests in maintaining the confidentiality of the allegations and related information. The privacy of the complaining student, the individual(s) against whom the complaint is filed, and the witnesses will be respected as much as possible, consistent with legal obligations to investigate, to take appropriate action, and to comply with any discovery or disclosure obligations.

VIII. ALTERNATIVE COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to harassment on the basis of a protected classification (gender, race, color, national origin, age, religion, sexual preference, or disability) you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies.

1. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")

Boston Office:

One Ashburton Place, Room 601
Boston, MA 02108 (617) 727-3990

Springfield Office:

424 Dwight Street, Room 220
Springfield, MA 01103 (413) 739-2145

2. The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights

Boston Office

U.S. Department of Education
J.W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse
Room 701,01-0061
Boston, MA 02109-4557
Telephone: 617-223-9662
FAX: 617-223-9669; TDD: 617-223-9695

XI. CONSTRUCTION

This Policy shall not be construed to infringe the legitimate rights of students or school personnel in the school setting. To the extent that any provision of this Policy is declared to be invalid or unenforceable, said declaration shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any of the remaining provisions, which shall remain in full force and effect.

JICFA-E - HAZING

CH. [269, S.17](#). CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

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

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public 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 be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. [269, S.18](#). DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

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

CH. [269, S.19](#). HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

JICFB - BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY FOR THE BELCHERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Belchertown Public Schools Priority Statement

The Belchertown Public School community is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning and working environment, where all students, employees, and visitors, are free from bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, and intimidation. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, a culture of respect and tolerance; and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behaviors that can impede the learning process.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying

The law defines bullying as the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional (aggressors) of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim (target) that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the student (target) or damage to his or her property;
- placing the student (target) in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creating a hostile environment - which 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 - at school for the target;
- infringing on the rights of the student (target) at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Examples of bullying include but are not limited to repeated acts of:

- Intimidation, either physical or psychological (in person or via an electronic device)
- Threats of any kind, stated or implied (in person or via an electronic device)
- Assaults, whether verbal, physical, psychological, or emotional
- Attacks on student property
- Demeaning names or phrases directed at an individual student
- Touching another individual in a demeaning manner
- Exclusion.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents, families, and staff are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,

- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Belchertown Public Schools.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Belchertown Public Schools if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying, which is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means, which includes, but shall not be limited to; cell phones/smart phones, personal electronic devices and computers using email, social networking sites (such as Facebook, My Space, Twitter, FormSpring, etc.), any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or part by wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including but not limited to; electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications. This includes, but shall not be limited to, the distribution of communications such as text messages or emails and posting of material on web sites that can be accessed by more than just the student who may be the target of such bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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

The following definitions describe other behaviors that may be associated with bullying and are governed by state and federal laws, as well as Belchertown Public Schools policies:

Discrimination

Treating people differently, or interfering with or preventing a person from enjoying the advantages, privileges, or course of study in a public school because of an individual's protected status (i.e., race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability). A person may not be subjected to discipline or more severe punishment for wrongdoing, nor denied the same rights as other students because of his/her membership in a protected class (See Belchertown Public Schools Policy [JB](#)).

Harassment

Harassment is oral, written, graphic, electronic, or physical conduct on school property or at a school-related event, function or activity relating to an individual's actual or perceived race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability, that is sufficiently severe, pervasive, or persistent, so as to interfere with or limit a student's ability to participate in or benefit from the district's programs or activities, by creating a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. For purposes of this policy, harassment shall also mean conduct, if it persists, that will likely create such a hostile, humiliating, intimidating, or offensive educational environment. A single incident, depending on its severity, may create a hostile environment (See Belchertown Public Schools Policy [JBA](#)).

Hate Crime

A hate crime is a crime motivated by hatred, bias, or prejudice, or where the victim is targeted or selected for the crime at least in part because of his/her actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, age, disability, or sex. A hate crime may involve a physical attack, threat of

bodily harm, physical intimidation, or damage to another's property (See Belchertown Public Schools Policies: [JB](#) and [JBA](#)).

Prevention and Intervention Plan

The Superintendent and/or his/her designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Reporting

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

The district shall have a means for anonymous reporting by individuals of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. A member of the school staff may be named the "aggressor" or "perpetrator" in a bullying report.

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

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying to the school principal or designee as soon as possible.

Belchertown Public Schools Faculty and Staff, which includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extra-curricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals take bullying very seriously and will investigate and take prompt action with individuals who engage in these activities. Belchertown Public Schools Faculty and Staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or designee.

Through the Belchertown Public Schools' Memorandum of Understanding with the Belchertown

Police Department, the Belchertown Public Schools may share any and all information with regard to student safety, and/or possible illegal activity with the Belchertown Public Schools Resource Officer and/or other members of the Belchertown Police Department.

Investigation Procedures

The Principal or designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The Principal or designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying Intervention and Prevention Incident Reporting Form, which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

If the Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred, he/she shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the Principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. The Principal or designee shall contact the parents or guardians regarding the status of the investigation throughout the investigation process.

Disciplinary actions for students or staff members who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies for students and due process/appropriate discipline for staff.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. All reports shall be provided to the Superintendent for his/her files.

As required by M.G.L. c. [71B section 3](#), when a Special Education Team determines that a 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 Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and to respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The Principal or his/her designee will take any step he/she determines is necessary and/or advisable to protect, to the extent practicable, the complainant, witnesses, and other individuals from further incidents or from retaliation pending the outcome of the investigation.

The Principal or his/her designee will maintain a separate confidential file containing the original completed Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form, investigatory interview notes, and reports, findings made, the results of the investigation, including any decision for action, and other relevant investigatory materials.

Retaliation

Belchertown Public Schools' Faculty and Staff will also investigate retaliation which is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student (target) who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Retaliation is prohibited.

Target Assistance

The Belchertown Public Schools shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary. In the case of a school staff member, the Belchertown Public Schools will refer the individual to the town's Employee Assistance Program.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K-12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan shall be posted on the Belchertown Public Schools website www.belchertownps.org.

Relationship to Other Laws

Nothing in our policy prevents the Belchertown Public Schools from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies. In addition, nothing in this policy is designed or intended to limit the authority of the Belchertown Public Schools to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. [71 sections 37H](#) or [37H ½](#), other applicable laws, or local or school district policies in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether our policy covers the behavior.

BULLYING AMENDMENTS TO SCHOOL BULLYING LAW

On April 24, 2014, Governor Patrick signed into law "An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools," Chapter 86 of the Acts of 2014, which legislation expands the protections of the 2010 anti-bullying law. The law goes into effect 90 days after April 24, that is, July 25, 2014. The new law revises certain provisions of the current anti-bullying law, G.L.c. [71:380](#), and adds several new subsections to that statute.

There are four main components for the new law: (1) it requires school's anti-bullying plans to recognize that certain enumerated categories of students may be more susceptible to bullying, including LGBTQ students; (2) it requires school districts to annually report bullying incident data to DESE; (3) it requires DESE to develop and school districts to administer surveys at least once every four years on the climate of the school district and prevalence of bullying; and (4) it grants DESE the power to investigate certain alleged incidents of bullying. The law also permits school districts to "adopt an anti-bullying seal to represent the district's or school's commitment to bullying prevention and intervention."

School Committee Approved:

August 23, 2016

JICG - TOBACCO USE BY STUDENTS

Smoking, chewing, or other use of tobacco products by staff, students, and members of the public shall be banned from all District buildings. All forms of tobacco use shall be prohibited on all District property. In addition, tobacco use by students is banned at all school-sponsored events, even though this use does not take place on school grounds.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

JICH - ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids, or any illegal or controlled substance, including but not limited to, opioids on school property or at any school function.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of above mentioned substances prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

When the school administration determines a student(s) has been using and/or distributing alleged above mentioned substances in school or on school grounds or at a school sponsored event, the parents/guardians will be called and asked to meet the administration immediately. DYS, DCF, police and/or emergency medical services may be called if necessary.

School Committee Approved: August 23, 2016

School Committee Revised: May 8, 2018

JICJ - COMMUNICATION AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students may possess personal communication devices and personal electronic devices so long as such devices are turned off and stored in backpacks, purses or personal carry-alls. Such devices include, but are not limited to, wearable technology such as eye glasses, rings, or watches that have the capability to record, live stream, or interact with wireless technology; cell phones; laptops; tablets; and mp3 players. However, a teacher may grant permission for the use of these devices to assist with instruction in his/her classroom, and teachers are encouraged to integrate the devices into their course work. The principal or his/her designee may also grant a student permission to use such a device at his/her discretion.

Unauthorized use or improper storage of a device will result in confiscation until such time as it may be released to the student's parents or guardian. A student in violation of this policy is subject to disciplinary action.

Subcommittee Approved: January 11, 2016

School Committee Approved: January 26, 2016

JIE - PREGNANT STUDENTS

The Belchertown Public Schools wishes to preserve educational opportunities for those students who may become pregnant and/or take on parenting responsibilities.

Pregnant students are permitted to remain in regular classes and participate in extracurricular activities with non-pregnant students throughout their pregnancy, and after giving birth are permitted to return to the same academic and extracurricular program as before the leave.

The Belchertown Public Schools may require a pregnant student to obtain the certification of a physician that the student is physically and emotionally able to continue in school and participate in extracurricular activities.

Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services, as well as instruction, are offered; that return to school after leave is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:84](#)
 Title IX: 20 U.S.C. § 1681
 34 CFR § 106.40(b)

JIH - SEARCHES AND INTERROGATIONS

Searches by Staff

The right of inspection of students' school lockers is inherent in the authority granted school committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment so as to protect each child's constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and to act in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students' automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students' rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Interrogations by Police

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student's rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials. Therefore:

1. When law enforcement officials find it necessary to question students during the school day or periods of extracurricular activities, the school Principal or his/her designee will be present when possible. An effort will be made to contact the student's parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the Principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

JII - STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school system that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community. Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any concerns in a friendly and informal manner.

Students--and their parents and/or guardians, who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance through the appropriate channels. Appeals of disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

CROSS REF: [JIC](#) Student Discipline

Approved: May 8, 2018

JJAA - FUNDRAISING POLICY

The Superintendent and Principals will approve fundraising activities, to supplement the school budget, which meet the following guidelines:

1. Participation in any fundraising activity must be optional, not required;
2. The fundraising activity must have a stated purpose that will benefit an individual school, the district, or specific recognized groups within the school or district;
3. The fundraising activity must specify how the funds will be allocated prior to approval and implementation;
4. For individual school fundraising proposals the approval process is:
 - Step one: the specific school must have its School Council review and recommend the proposed fundraising activity to the Principal;
 - Step two: the Principal must approve, approve with modifications, or disapprove the proposed fundraising proposal;
 - Step three: the Principal must notify the Superintendent within ten school days prior to the implementation of the fundraising proposal of his/her approval, giving the superintendent the opportunity to approve, further modify, or veto the proposal for good reason.
5. For district-wide fundraising proposals the approval process is:
 - Step one: the fundraising proposal must be submitted to the Superintendent for review;
 - Step two: the Senior Leadership Team must review and endorse the proposed fundraising activity;
 - Step three: the Superintendent or designee shall give final approval or denial of the fundraising activity.
6. The school councils, Principals, and Senior Leadership Team shall consider, at a minimum, the following criteria to evaluate fundraiser proposals:
 - a. Timing of project
 - b. Workload on school personnel
 - c. Appropriateness and value of stated purpose
 - d. Impact on students and families
 - e. Conflicts with other school-related fundraising organizations
 - f. Appropriateness of the promotional materials and items to be sold
 - g. Cost and quality of the merchandise
 - h. Percentage of return to schools from gross revenue earned.
7. No student assemblies, without special permission from the Superintendent or designee, will be allowed to promote fundraisers and no incentives or prizes shall be part of any fundraising activity;
8. All materials used for the promotion of the fundraiser and all materials sold as part of the fundraiser must be pre-screened by the school for appropriateness;
9. All funds collected, except by outside school committee approved school affiliated organizations must be deposited and spent in accordance with the Student Activity Agency Accounts policy guidelines; and
10. No fundraisers shall be approved that use students and the schools to solely promote the interests of a private business.

Approved by the Belchertown School Committee: July 23, 2013

JJIF - ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities including but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website; coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with the law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verification of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities.

Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's selfreport of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be "fine" on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information of Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff.

Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

Marching Band students will follow this policy. Band Director will be responsible for band members (to follow concussion protocol, impact testing, watch DPH video, complete pre participation form).

School Committee Approved: October 27, 2015

Revised: June 6, 2017

JKAA - PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations as a last resort and with extreme caution after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate.

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

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603 CMR [46.02](#).

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR [46.03](#), shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR [46.03](#)(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR [46.00](#);
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

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

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

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

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

The use of “time out” procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered “seclusion restraint.”

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Physical Restraint regulations to each Principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:37G](#); 603 CMR [46.00](#)

ADOPTED: August 2015

Subcommittee Approved: January 11, 2016

School Committee Approved: January 26, 2016

JKD - SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

SUSPENSIONS

The Belchertown Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, §§37H, 37 H1/2 and 37 H ¾ and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq. Unless the misconduct falls under M.G.L., c. 71, §37H or §37 H1/2 (described below), the following procedures shall apply for in-school suspensions and out-of-school suspensions (including emergency removals, short-term suspensions, and long-term suspensions)

IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:

A student may be removed from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for up to ten (10) consecutive school days or up to ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year as an alternative to a short-term suspension. If a student receives in-school suspensions for more than ten (10) consecutive or cumulative school days, the due process procedures described below for a long-term suspension shall apply. Students who are placed in in-school suspension shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the in-school suspension.

Notice of In-School Suspension:

The principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student with an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal or his/her designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal or his/her designee shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. On the day of the suspension, the principal or his/her designee shall send written notice (by hand delivery, certified mail, first class mail or email) to the student and parent/guardian including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent/guardian to a meeting if the meeting has not already occurred. The notice shall be in English and the primary language of the home if another language is identified in the home language survey, or by other means, as appropriate.

Parent/guardian Meeting:

The principal or his/her designee shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal or his/her designee is unable to reach the parent/guardian after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension.

No Right to Appeal:

The decision of the Principal or his/her designee is the final decision for in-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

OUT-OF-SCHOOL SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:

Due Process Procedures for Out-of-School Suspensions:

There are two types of out-of-school suspensions, Short-Term Suspensions and Long-Term Suspensions (defined below). The principal or his/her designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal or his/her designee shall afford the student additional rights as described below, in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school. All students facing out-of-school suspension shall have the right to oral and written notice, as described below.

Notice for Any Out-of-School Suspension:

Prior to suspending a student, the Principal or his/her designee will provide the student and the Parent/guardian oral and written notice of the possible suspension, an opportunity for the student to have a hearing, and the opportunity of the Parent/guardian(s) to participate in the hearing. The notice will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English as identified in the home language survey, or by other means of communication where appropriate. The notice will set forth in plain language:

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

The principal or his/her designee shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. Prior to conducting a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal or his/her designee will document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. The principal or his/her designee is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal or his/her designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency notification.

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

Emergency Removal of Student:

Under certain emergency circumstances, it may not be practical for the principal or his/her designee to provide prior oral and written notice before removing a student from school. The principal or his/her designee may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's (or his/her designee's) judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The principal or his/her designee will immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, the disciplinary offense,

the basis for the charge, the potential consequences, including potential length of suspension, the opportunity for a hearing including the date/time/location of the hearing, the right to interpreter services, and other rights permitted for students who may be placed on long-term suspension as set forth in 603 CMR. 53.08(3)(b);

- b) Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian, including the information described in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal or his/her designee that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or 53.08(3), as applicable, and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.
- d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and 53.08(2)(d) or 603 CMR 53.08(3)(c) and 53.08(3)(d), as applicable.

A principal will not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

SHORT-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:

A Short-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less or for ten (10) or fewer cumulative days in the school year. Students facing a short-term suspension are entitled to the oral and written notice described above. Any student facing a potential short-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the principal or his/her designee with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension:

- a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts that the principal or his/her designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
- c) The principal or his/her designee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
- d) If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

No Right to Appeal:

The decision of the Principal or his/her designee is the final decision for short-term out-of-school suspensions not exceeding ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year.

LONG-TERM SUSPENSION PROCEDURES:

A Long-Term Suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, §37 H, or in Massachusetts General laws Chapter 71 § 37H ½, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed. Any student facing a potential long-term suspension is entitled to a hearing with the principal or his/her designee with the following process:

Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension:

- a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal or his/her designee is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal or his/her designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as alternatives to suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- b) In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following additional rights:
 - 1) In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
 - 2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent/guardian's expense;
 - 3) the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so. Note that any minor student may only be called as a witness if the accused student has obtained, in advance of the hearing, written permission from that minor student's parent/guardian for the minor student to participate.
 - 4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
 - 5) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/guardian requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.
- c) The principal or his/her designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- d) Based on the evidence, the principal or his/her designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal or his/her designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/guardian. If the principal or his/her designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

- 1) Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
 - 2) Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
 - 3) Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
 - 4) Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
 - 5) Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension.
- e) If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English as determined by the home language survey or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:

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

Superintendent's Appeal Hearing:

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

consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

- 8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, with regard to the suspension.

A parent/guardian conference (re-entry meeting) with the Principal or his/her designee is strongly encouraged before students who are suspended return to school. This conference will be used to promote the engagement of the parent/guardian in discussions of the student's misconduct and to assist the student in re-engaging with the school community.

EXCLUSION UNDER M.G.L., c. 71, §37H:

A student may be expelled or suspended from school under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H as follows:

- 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, a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94 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 a hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at his/her expense at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.
- f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.
- g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

EXCLUSION UNDER M.G.L., c. 71, §37H 1/2:

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37 H ½, the following procedures shall be implemented for students charged with or convicted of a felony:

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

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his/her 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/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/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

- 2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such 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/her 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/her 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/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/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

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

Disciplining Students with Disabilities

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below.

In general, a student with a disability may be excluded from his or her educational program, to the same extent that a non-disabled student can be, for up to ten (10) school days per year. Under state law, whenever any student is excluded from school for more than ten (10) school days in the school year, that student is entitled to the opportunity to receive educational services during the period of exclusion. M.G.L., c. 76, s. 21. For students with a disability, the student's Team determines what FAPE services are necessary to enable him or her to continue to access the curriculum and make effective progress during the period of exclusion.

In addition, within ten (10) school days of the decision to remove a student with a disability for disciplinary reasons beyond ten (10) school days, the parent(s) and relevant members of the student's Team must convene to determine whether the student's behavior was a manifestation of his/her disability. This meeting is referred to as a Manifestation Determination Review.

At the Manifestation Determination Review, the Team must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the student's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parent(s), in order to determine:

- 1) Was the student's behavior a direct of the school district's failure to implement the IEP? and
- 2) Does the behavior have a direct and substantial relationship to the disability?

If the answer to either of the above questions is "Yes", then the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. If the Team determines that the behavior **was** a manifestation of the student's disability, the student may not be excluded and must be immediately returned to his/her educational program, unless the Special Circumstances apply (see below), or unless the parent(s) and the school district otherwise agree. The Team must also conduct a functional behavior assessment (FBA) and develop a behavior plan for the student, or review and modify an existing behavior plan as needed.

If the answer to both questions is "No", then the behavior **was not** a manifestation of the student's disability and the school district may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the student with a disability in the same manner and for the same duration as would be applied to non-disabled students. The Manifestation Determination Review should also consider whether a functional behavior assessment (FBA) or behavior plan would be appropriate for the student.

Special Circumstances regarding discipline of students with disabilities:

The school district may remove a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for not more than 45 school days, whether or not the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, if the student:

- 1) Carried a weapon to or possessed a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function; or
- 2) Knowingly possessed or used illegal drugs, or sold or solicited the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- 3) Inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function

BSEA proceedings regarding discipline of students with disabilities:

If the parent(s) disagrees with the manifestation determination, or with any decision regarding placement in the discipline context, the parent(s) may request an expedited hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). This right is more fully described in the Parents' Notice of Procedural Safeguards.

If the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, and no Special Circumstances apply, and the parent(s) do not otherwise agree to a change in placement, the school district may also seek an expedited hearing at the BSEA if the school district believes that maintaining student in his/her current program is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others. If the school district prevails, the BSEA may order a change of placement or order the student to be placed in an IAES for up to 45 school days.

The Belchertown Public Schools adheres to nondiscrimination in the student disciplinary process

EDUCATION SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS UNDER SECTIONS 37H, 37H1/2 AND 37H3/4:

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾, in conjunction with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 21, the Belchertown Public Schools must provide opportunities for students to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her in-school suspension, short-term suspension (10 days or less), long-term suspension (10 days or more), or expulsion. In addition, any student who is expelled or long-term suspended from school may select one of the following education service options for the duration of his or her exclusion:

Access to tutoring services:

Students choosing this option are expected to attend tutoring sessions at a designated public site identified by the school district. The tutoring will be provided by qualified Belchertown Public Schools' personnel or contracted providers as assigned by the Belchertown Public Schools. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English as determined by the home language survey, or other means of communication where appropriate. The academic work will be consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under G.L. c. 69 §§1D and 1F. Students' tutoring schedule is by appointment and prepared weekly. **

**Based upon the availability of qualified tutors, tutoring services may only be available before or after school hours.

Collaborative for Educational Services

The Belchertown Public Schools collaborates with the Collaborative for Educational Services (CES) to ensure that students are offered an opportunity that is appropriate for them, depending on the severity of the student behavior and the individual needs of the student.

Other options may be added to this plan in the future.

The Belchertown Public Schools will facilitate and verify enrollment of the student in the service, upon selection of an educational service by the student and the parent/guardian.

School Committee Approved:	11/10/2015
School Committee Amended:	10/11/2016

JLA - STUDENT INSURANCE PROGRAM

A non compulsory accident insurance plan totally administered by an insurance company may be made available to students. The District does not assume any responsibility regarding service, claims, or other matters relating to the insurance program.

All students participating in competitive athletics shall be required to be covered by a medical insurance plan provided by parents or guardians.

JLCC - COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

The District is required to provide educational services to all school age children who reside within its boundaries. By law, however, admission to school may be denied to any child diagnosed as having a disease whereby attendance could be harmful to the welfare of other students and staff, subject to the District's responsibilities to handicapped children under the law.

The School Committee recognizes that communicable diseases which may afflict students range from common childhood diseases, acute and short-term in nature, to chronic, life-threatening diseases.

Management of common communicable diseases shall be in accordance with Massachusetts Department of Health guidelines. A student who exhibits symptoms of a communicable disease may be temporarily excluded from school attendance. The District reserves the right to require a physician's statement authorizing the student's return to school.

The educational placement of a student who is medically diagnosed as having a life-threatening communicable disease shall be determined on an individual basis in accordance with this policy and accompanying administrative procedures. Decisions about the proper educational placement shall be based on the student's behavior, neurological development, and physical condition; the expected type of interaction with others in school setting; and the susceptibility to other diseases and the likelihood of presenting risks to others. A regular review of the placement decision shall be conducted to assess changes in the student's physical condition, or based on new information or research that may warrant a change in a student's placement.

In the event a student with a life-threatening communicable disease qualifies for services as a handicapped child under state and federal law, the procedures for determining the appropriate educational placement in the least restrictive environment shall be used in lieu of the procedures designated above.

Neither this policy nor the placement of a student in any particular program shall preclude the administration from taking any temporary actions including removal of a student from the classroom as deemed necessary to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the student, staff, and others.

In all proceedings related to this policy, the District shall respect the student's right to privacy. Only those persons with a direct need to know shall be informed of the specific nature of the student's condition. The determination of those who need to know shall be made by the Superintendent.

SOURCE: MASC October 2016

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:55](#)

Approved: May 8, 2018

JLCD - ADMINISTERING MEDICINES TO STUDENTS

Medication may not be administered to students while at school unless such medicine is given to them by the school nurse acting under specific written request of the parent or guardian and under the written directive of the student's personal physician. Narcotics will not be kept in school. Any student requiring narcotics will remain at home. No one but the school nurse, and those others listed in the medical administration plan (example: Epinephrine and a field trip) may give any medication to any student.

The school district shall, through the district nurse leader, register with the Dept. of Public Health for field trips and Epinephrine administration. The School Nurses will train personnel in the use of Epinephrine and limited medication delegation for field trips. (Source MDPH regulations 105 CMR 210.005)

The school district may, in conjunction with the School Physician and the School Nurse Leader, stock nasal naloxone (Narcan) and trained medical personnel and first responders may administer nasal naloxone to individuals experiencing a life threatening opiate overdose in a school setting.

If the school district wishes medical personnel to train non-medical staff in the administration of nasal naloxone, Superintendent will notify the School Committee and the Superintendent shall ensure that medical personnel have a written protocol which complies with medical directives and regulations from the Dept. of Public Health.

Following consultation with the school nurse with physician orders and parental permission, students who fall into the following exceptions may self-administer medications:

1. Students with life threatening allergies may possess and administer prescription Epinephrine.
2. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
3. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
4. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and prescription insulin delivery systems.

Naloxone (Narcan)

The Belchertown Public Schools will maintain a system-wide plan for addressing potential life threatening opioid overdose reaction. This plan shall include:

- Building-based general medical emergency plan
- The Director of School Nursing Services will have the responsibility for the development and management of the naloxone administration program in the school setting in accordance with MDPH protocols.
- The school physician will provide oversight to monitor the program and ensure quality improvement and quality control.
- Training per MDPH protocols will be provided for all school nurse responders.
- Integration with the local emergency medical services (EMS) system will be included in the implementation of this program.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [71:54B](#)
Dept. of Public Health Regulations: 105 CMR 210.00

CROSS REF: [GBGA/JLCE](#), Nalaxone (Narcan) Policy

Personnel & Policy Subcommittee Approved: February 1, 2016
School Committee Approved: February 9, 2016
School Committee Revised and Approved: September 27, 2016

JLCG - FOOD ALLERGY POLICY

The Belchertown Public Schools recognize that some students have mild, severe, and even lifethreatening allergies. It is imperative that parents/guardians notify school administration regarding allergies and health issues with their children. Upon notification and identification of a student with mild, severe, and life-threatening allergies by a parent/guardian, and with complete documentation from a physician, the school will follow the plan of care as identified below.

Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) or 504 Plan:

1. Role of School Nurse

- a. The school nurse will initiate the development of an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) for all students with diagnosed food and other significant allergies with the parent/guardian and meet with them before school opens if possible.
- b. The Individual Health Care Plan would include warning signs, type of allergen, emergency care, and medications to administer. IHCP will be signed by parent/guardian, school nurse, student's physician, student, if self-administering, and have physician documentation of allergy and medication needed.
- c. A copy of IHCP will be given (with parent/guardian permission) to appropriate school district teachers, specialists, before and after school program personnel, coaches, and cafeteria staff.
- d. The medication plan portion of the IHCP must be updated yearly and as needed when there are changes in medications. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to obtain the necessary forms and assure that the completed forms are returned to the school prior to the start of each school year.
- e. IHCP will have emergency protocol for accidental exposure. If an Epi-Pen is needed, the student will be sent via ambulance to the hospital. If Benadryl is administered by a school nurse, the student will be sent home to be monitored by parent/guardian. When a school nurse is not available to administer Benadryl (e.g., field trips, before and after school programs), the IHCP will be followed (i.e., follow physicians directions), since Benadryl can only be administered by a school nurse.
- f. School nurses will train staff (including cafeteria staff, bus drivers and recess paraprofessionals) in Epi-Pen administration, with review. Those trained in Epi-Pen administration will be noted on the student's plan. The location of the medication that is to be administered during the school day will be noted on the IHCP. Training will include information on signs and symptoms of allergic reactions.
- g. The school will register with the Department of Public Health for Epi-Pen administration of non-licensed staff, for field trips and emergencies, such as accidental exposure.
- h. The school nurse will, while the student is on an IHCP, refer the student to the District Section 504 Coordinator for an evaluation and eligibility determination if his/her allergy has been diagnosed by a physician as severe or life-threatening (i.e., having a significant impact on one or more major life functions).

2. Parent /Guardian Responsibility

- a. The parent/guardian will provide documentation of the allergy from the student's primary care provider (PCP) or preferably, allergist. Documentation from the physician must include the specific type of allergy, the severity of the allergy (i.e., is the allergy mild, severe, or life-threatening), the major life functions impacted, specific symptoms, and include a specific plan of action including the type of medication that is to be administered in school. The doctor's order should note if the student has ever had an anaphylactic reaction, and the date of the last reaction.
- b. The parent/guardian is responsible for obtaining an order for epinephrine and/or other medications on an annual basis and more often, if there is a change in the medication protocol for the student.
- c. The parent/guardian who wishes to request a meeting before the start of the school year should contact the school principal or nurse directly with the request.
- d. The parent/guardian is responsible for granting consent for staff to administer medication to their child in the event of an emergency during school or at a school-based event.
- e. The parent/guardian will document what type of allergy their child has and what type of reactions occur when the student is exposed to the allergen(s). This information will include triggers and warning signs. Emergency numbers for parents and PCP will be on this information sheet.
- f. The parent/guardian is to provide three (3) pictures of their student for the school and for the bus driver.

- g. The parent/guardian, in addition to the school district, is responsible for informing the bus driver of the student's allergy and should request the form for this interaction from the school nurse.
 - h. The parent/guardian, PCP, and nurse will decide if student can self-medicate and selfcarry medication,
 - i. The parent/guardian will provide medication for the school and provide medication for after school hours. The medication must be in original packaging and clearly labeled with the student's name,
 - j. The parent/guardian is to provide safe snacks, to be left at school, if party food is questionable. The parent/guardian will provide special tools (scissors) for student use only if indicated,
 - k. The parent/guardian will contact the Food Service Director if the student will participate in the school lunch program. This will allow for alternate food selections to be discussed. The student's physician must provide the Food Services Director with recommendations for appropriate and safe food alternatives if such food alternatives are to be provided by the Food Services Department.
1. The parent/guardian will provide the child with a medic alert bracelet or chain for identification.
 3. Annual Meeting for Individual Health Care Plan or 504 Plan
 - a. IHCP or 504 Plan Team meeting will be held yearly, as close to the opening of school as possible, or even a pre-meeting held at the end of the year with the next year's staff.
 - b. The nurse, for an IHCP, and guidance counselor, for a 504 plan, will invite teachers, principal, parents/guardians, and the student, if age appropriate, to the meeting. Other individuals may be invited per the request of the parent/guardian.
 - c. If it is an IHCP meeting, the nurse will give an overview of the food allergy and IHCP. If it is a 504 Plan meeting, the District Section 504 Coordinator will give the overview. Plan implementation, management, and prevention will be discussed. If individuals are not able to attend the IHCP or 504 meeting, the nurse will share information from the IHCP and the guidance counselor or District Section 504 Coordinator will share the 504 Plan with the appropriate staff, pending written permission of the parent/guardian.
 - d. Protocols/Guidelines will be developed that are age appropriate for: cafeteria, classroom, gym, recess, field trips, bus, before and after school activities, custodian, and emergency care.
 4. Cafeteria Guidelines
 - a. The food service will arrange for an allergy free table during lunch time and training for food service staff in cleaning tables.
 - b. The food service staff will have identification of the student.
 - c. The Food Service Director will post a monthly menu so parents and children can choose appropriate foods. However, the student's physician must provide the Food Services Director with recommendations for appropriate food substitutes if such substitutes are to be provided by the Food Services Department.
 - d. If a student's parents have requested an allergy free zone in the classroom, the student must sit at an allergy free table in the cafeteria.
 5. Classroom Guidelines
 - a. Classroom teachers and aides will be educated about food allergies for the students within their classroom(s) and/or designated area(s). Teachers and aides will become Epi- Pen trained yearly, with a review.
 - b. Parents of all students within the classroom will be notified via letter that there is a student with a Life Threatening Allergy (LTA) in class for grades K-8.
 - c. Within this classroom, an allergy free desk and/or table will be designated, as necessary, and this will be cleaned on a daily basis.

- d. Hand washing techniques for students before and after eating will taught by the school nurse as age appropriate. Additional training for the students within the classroom will be provided and may include a video on LTA.
- e. Only allowable foods for snacks and parties, preferably in wrapped containers, will be brought into the classroom. If there is a question about food being served in the classroom, the parent/guardian will provide a snack for the student that the teacher will have available for the student's consumption.
- f. There will be no sharing of food between students.
- g. The teacher will send an adult with the student to the nurse, if accidental exposure is suspected (or call the nurse to the classroom).

6. School District After-School Activities

- a. Staff involved with after school activities that are school sponsored will be aware of LTA, signs and symptoms and trained in Epi-Pen administration, and know where it is stored.
- b. Parents/guardians are to inform the school nurse two weeks prior to their child's participation in any after school activity. The nurse will identify responsible staff for keeping/administering Epi-Pen.
- c. Unless specified, there will not be a nurse for before or after school activities.

7. Field Trip Protocol

- a. Teachers will notify the school nurse at least 2 weeks in advance of a field trip. The Nurse will make arrangements according to the IHCP or 504 Plan following field trip protocol for that student. Staff will be knowledgeable of the requirements in the IHCP or 504 Plan, have access to a phone and know how to activate 911, contact the school and parents, if the need arises.
- b. The teacher will be trained in Epi-Pen administration.

8. Bus Policy

- a. The parent/guardian, in addition to the school district, is responsible to share medical information with the bus driver. A student with LTA, and who is recommended for preferred bus seating according to his/her IHCP or 504 Plan, is to sit in the right front seat of the bus. Bus drivers will be trained in the identification of serious food allergy reaction symptoms, administration of Epi-Pens, and how to implement the proper emergency protocol procedures (i.e., who to contact for emergency care) yearly. If appropriate, the students will carry their own Epi-Pen (if parent, MD, and school nurse are in agreement). The Epi-Pen will be in front zippered pocket of backpack, with emergency instruction sheet.
- b. Please refer to the district-wide Bus Policy for further information
- c. Parents must complete the school bus Epi-Pen plan and return it to their child's school nurse before their child carries their approved Epi-Pen on any school bus.

JLD - GUIDANCE PROGRAM

Guidance is defined as helping individuals understand themselves in the light of their abilities, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, strengths and limitations. This process should assist students in the development of their potential; their decisions relating to personal, educational, and vocational matters, and also in becoming capable of mature self-guidance.

The school system's guidance program will be based on this definition and developed from these broad fundamental principles:

1. Individuals are different from one another in their capabilities, aptitudes, interests, needs, goals, desires and values.
2. Conditions may be improved. Equality of educational opportunity will benefit the individual and society.
3. Guidance is a continuous and developmental process. Every experience of the individual influences his performance in some way.
4. Guidance does not propose to program an individual's course of action but rather tries to assist him in arriving at his own satisfactory solutions.

Guidance services will include: educational guidance; testing programs; occupational, career, and higher education assistance and information; study aids; consultation services; and personal developmental guidance as needed. These services will be available to all students.

While some of the problems of the individual may relate to behavior and consequently entail guidance on behavior, student discipline will not be a regular function of guidance personnel.

To ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, and homelessness, all counselors:

1. Encourage students to consider programs of study, courses, extracurricular activities, and occupational opportunities on the basis of individual interests, abilities, and skills;
2. Examine testing materials for bias and counteract any found bias when administering tests and interpreting test results;
3. Communicate effectively with limited-English-proficient and disabled students and facilitate their access to all programs and services offered by the district;
4. Provide limited-English-proficient students with the opportunity to receive guidance and counseling in a language they understand;
5. Support students in educational and occupational pursuits that are nontraditional for their gender.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [71:38A](#) through [71:38F](#); [71:46G](#)
603 CMR [26.04](#)

School Committee Approved: August 23, 2016

JN - VOLUNTEERS

Volunteer forms will always be available in each School's Office and at the Central Office. To be approved, a volunteer must be on an approved volunteer list which will be regularly updated and on file with each Principal. To become eligible for this list, the volunteer must have on file at the Central Office the following:

1. A completed School Volunteer Registration Form;
2. An approved CORI Report;
3. A signed Sexual Harassment Policy Acknowledgement Form; and
4. A signed Code of Ethics

In addition, volunteers must sign in/out and wear an official volunteer badge while volunteering. It is very important to always know who is out and about in our school buildings and to keep track of volunteer hours. If you have any questions regarding the Volunteer Program, please do not hesitate to call the school office or the Central Office.

JP - STUDENT GIFTS AND SOLICITATIONS

Because of the embarrassment that might result among children, students will be discouraged from giving gifts to classroom teachers and other school personnel. For the same reason, there will be no formal exchange of gifts between students in the classroom.

Solicitation of funds for charitable purposes from students of the school system will be made only after approval by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Any organization desiring to distribute flyers or other materials to students in connection with fund drives may do so only with the approval of the Superintendent.

CROSS REFS.: [GBEBC](#), Staff Gifts and Solicitations
 [JJE](#), Student Fund-Raising Activities
 [KHA](#), Public Solicitations in the Schools
 [KHB](#), Advertising in the Schools

JQ - STUDENT FEES, FINES, RENTALS, AND CHARGES

The School Committee recognizes the need for student fees to fund certain school activities. It also recognizes that some students may not be able to pay these fees. No student will be denied access into any program because of inability to pay these supplementary charges.

Some programs or courses may have student rental fees (i.e., musical instruments).

A school may exact a fee or charge only upon Board approval. The schools, however, may:

- Charge students enrolled in certain courses for the cost of materials used in projects that will become the property of the student.
- Charge for lost and damaged books, materials, supplies, and equipment.

Students who are indigent are exempt from paying fees. However, indigent students are not exempt from charges for lost and damaged books, locks, materials, supplies, and equipment.

All student fees and charges, both optional and required, will be listed and described annually in each school's student handbook or in some other written form and distributed to each student. The notice will advise students that fees are to be paid and of the penalties for their failure to pay them. Permissible penalties include the withholding of report cards until payment is made or denial of participation graduation services and in extra class activities while the student is enrolled in this District.

Any fee or charge due to any school in the District and not paid at the end of the school year will be carried forward to the next succeeding school year, as such debts are considered to be debts of the student to the District and not to a particular school.

Source: MASC Approved: July 28, 2015

Approved: May 8, 2018

JRA - STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations (603 CMR [23.00](#)). The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
 P.L. 93-380, Amended
 P.L. 103-382, 1994
 M.G.L. [66:10](#) [71:34A](#), [B](#), [D](#), [E](#), [H](#)
 Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/77, June 1995 as
 amended June 2002.
 603 CMR: Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education [23.00](#) through [23:12](#) also
 Mass Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Records;
 Questions, Answers and Guidelines, Sept. 1995

CROSS REF: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

JRA-R - STUDENT RECORDS

603 CMR [23.00](#) is promulgated by the Board of Education pursuant to its powers under M.G.L.c.[71, s.34D](#) which directs that "the board of education shall adopt regulations relative to the maintenance of student records by the public elementary and secondary schools of the Commonwealth," and under M.G.L.c.[71, s.34F](#) which directs that "the board of education shall adopt regulations relative to the retention, duplication and storage of records under the control of school committees, and except as otherwise required by law may authorize the periodic destruction of any such records at reasonable times." 603 CMR [23.00](#) was originally promulgated on February 10, 1975, and was reviewed and amended in June 1995. 603 CMR is in conformity with federal and state statutes regarding maintenance of and access to student records, and is to be construed harmoniously with such statutes.

Application of Rights

603 CMR [23.00](#) is promulgated to ensure parents'/guardians' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of students' records and to assist local school systems in adhering to the law. 603 CMR [23.00](#) should be liberally construed for these purposes.

- (1) These rights shall be the rights of the student upon reaching 14 years of age or upon entering the ninth grade, whichever comes first. If a student is under the age of 14 and has not yet entered the ninth grade, these rights shall belong to the student's parent.
- (2) If a student is from 14 through 17 years or has entered the ninth grade, both the student and his/her parent, or either one acting alone, shall exercise these rights.
- (3) If a student is 18 years of age or older, he/she alone shall exercise these rights, subject to the following. The parent may continue to exercise the rights until expressly limited by such student. Such student may limit the rights and provisions of 603 CMR [23.00](#) which extend to his/her parent, except the right to inspect the student record, by making such request in writing to the school Principal or Superintendent of Schools who shall honor such request and retain a copy of it in the student record. Pursuant to M.G.L. c.[71, s.34E](#), the parent of a student may inspect the student record regardless of the student's age.
- (4) Notwithstanding 603 CMR [23.01](#)(1) and [23.01](#)(2), nothing shall be construed to mean that a school committee cannot extend the provisions of 603 CMR [23.00](#) to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered the ninth grade.

Definition of Terms

The various terms as used in 603 CMR [23.00](#) are defined below:

Access: shall mean inspection or copying of a student record, in whole or in part.

Authorized school personnel: shall consist of three groups:

- (1) School administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the School Committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the School Committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling and/or diagnostic capacity. Any such personnel who are not employed directly by the School Committee shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.
- (2) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel, including operators of data processing equipment or equipment that produces microfilm/microfiche, who are either employed by the School Committee or are employed under a School Committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student

record. Such personnel shall have access only to the student record information that is required for them to perform their duties.

(3) The evaluation team that evaluates a student.

Eligible student: shall mean any student who is 14 years of age or older or who has entered 9th grade, unless the School Committee acting pursuant to 603 CMR [23.01](#)(4) extends the rights and provisions of 603 CMR [23.00](#) to students under the age of 14 or to students who have not yet entered 9th grade.

Evaluation Team: shall mean the team, which evaluates school-age children pursuant to M.G.L.c.[71B](#) (St. 1972, c.766) and 603 CMR [28.00](#).

Parent: shall mean a student's father or mother, or guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the child in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or guardian. Any parent who by court order does not have physical custody of the student, is considered a non custodial parent for purposes of M.G.L. c. [71, s.34H](#) and 603 CMR [23.00](#). This includes parents who by court order do not reside with or supervise the student, even for short periods of time.

Release: shall mean the oral or written disclosure, in whole or in part, of information in a student record.

School-age child with special needs: shall have the same definition as that given in M.G.L. c. [71B](#) (St. 1972, c.766) and 603 CMR [28.00](#).

School committee: shall include a school committee, a board of trustees of a charter school, a board of trustees of a vocational-technical school, a board of directors of an educational collaborative and the governing body of an M.G.L. c.[71B](#) (Chapter 766) approved private school.

Student: shall mean any person enrolled or formerly enrolled in a public elementary or secondary school or any person age three or older about whom a school committee maintains information. The term as used in 603 CMR [23.00](#) shall not include a person about whom a school committee maintains information relative only to the person's employment by the School Committee.

The student record: shall consist of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information, recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth. The terms as used in 603 CMR [23.00](#) shall mean all such information and materials regardless of where they are located, except for the information and materials specifically exempted by 603 CMR [23.04](#).

The temporary record: shall consist of all the information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. This information clearly shall be of importance to the educational process. Such information may include standardized test results, class rank (when applicable), extracurricular activities, and evaluations by teachers, counselors, and other school staff.

Third party: shall mean any person or private or public agency, authority, or organization other than the eligible student, his/her parent, or authorized school personnel.

Log of Access: A log shall be kept as part of each student's record. If parts of the student record are separately located, a separate log shall be kept with each part. The log shall indicate all persons who have obtained access to the student record, stating: the name, position and signature of the person releasing the information; the name, position and, if a third party, the affiliation if any, of the person who is to receive the information; the date of access; the parts of the record to which access was obtained; and the purpose of such access. Unless student record information is to be deleted or released, this log requirement shall not apply to:

(a) Authorized school personnel under 603 CMR [23.02](#)(9)(a) who inspect the student record;

(b) Administrative office staff and clerical personnel under 603 CMR [23.02](#)(9)(b), who add information to or obtain access to the student record; and

(c) School nurses who inspect the student health record.

Access of Third Parties. Except for the provisions of 603 CMR [23.07](#)(4)(a) through [23.07](#)(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for the information described in 603 CMR [23.07](#)(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall only be released to a third party on the condition that he/she will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent.

(a) A school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under 603 CMR [23.07](#) and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR [23.10](#).

Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents. As required by M.G.L. c.[71, s.34H](#), a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

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

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

(b) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the high school principal annually. The initial request must include the following:

1. A certified copy of the court order or judgment relative to the custody of the student that either indicates that the requesting parent is eligible to receive access as set forth in 603 CMR [23.07](#)(5)(a), or a certified copy of a court order specifically ordering that the student records be made available to the non-custodial parent, and
2. An affidavit from the non-custodial parent that said court order or judgment remain in effect and that there is no temporary or permanent order restricting access to the custodial parent or any child in the custodial parent's custody.

(c) The non-custodial parent must submit a written request for a access each year stating that said parent continues to be entitled to unsupervised visitation with the student and is eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR [23.07](#)(5)(a).

(d) Upon receipt of the request (initial and annual) the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent

provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR [23.07](#)(5)(a).

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

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

At least once during every school year, the school shall publish and distribute to students and their parents in their primary language a routine information letter informing them of the following:

(a) The standardized testing programs and research studies to be conducted during the year and other routine information to be collected or solicited from the student during the year.

(b) The general provisions of 603 CMR [23.00](#) regarding parent and student rights, and that copies of 603 CMR [23.00](#) are available to them from the school.

LEGAL REFS: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,
 P.L. 93-380, Amended
 P.L. 103-382, 1994
 M.G.L. [66:10](#) [71:34](#) [A](#), [B](#), [D](#), [E](#), [H](#)
 Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/75, as amended June 2002
 603 CMR: Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education [23.00](#) through [23:12](#)
 Mass Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education publication Student Records; Questions, Answers and Guidelines, Sept. 1995

CROSS REF: [KDB](#), Public's Right to Know

JRD - STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS

Individual schools may arrange, in cooperation with the school's parent organization, student council, designated student committee, or a staff committee, to take individual student and/or class group pictures.

Individual and/or class group pictures may be taken at the school facility and during the regular school day hours. The pictures shall be made available for purchase by students and/or parents on a voluntary basis. The building Principal or his/her designee shall have final authority in authorizing the picture-taking program and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

Students may be required to have an individual picture taken for the cumulative file or identification purposes; however, no student shall be pressured or required to purchase photographs.

The purpose of the policy is to:

Enhance the safety of students through visual identification in an emergency situation.

Facilitate the social, educational, and administrative activities conducted in the school.

Provide a service to parents and students.

Allow the profits gained from the picture-taking program to be used by the sponsoring group and authorized by the building Principal.

KE - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring their complaints to the Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the Committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern Committee actions or Committee operations only.

The Committee believes that complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible, and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the Committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline or learning materials will be as follows:

1. Teacher
2. School building administrator
3. Superintendent
4. School Committee

If a complaint, which was presented to the Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is adjusted before it comes back to the School Committee, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the Committee and then placed in the official files.

Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committee must be in writing and should be specific in terms of the action desired.

The Committee expects the professional staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant.

LEGAL REFS.: MG.L. [76:5](#)

KEB-R - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL

The following procedures are established to ensure that a citizen's complaint is given respectful attention and that the integrity of the educational program is upheld. "Complaint" in this regulation will be restricted in meaning to that criticism of particular school employees by a citizen of the School District which includes or implies a demand for action by school authorities. Other comments and suggestions will be referred informally to affected personnel.

1. If a complaint comes first to the person against whom it is directed, he/she will listen courteously and may try to resolve the difficulty by explaining the background and educational purpose involved. If the complaint remains unsatisfied, the employee will refer him/her to the building Principal or other immediate supervisor to have his/her views considered further. Whether the complaint terminates with the individual staff member involved or seems likely to go further, the staff member will immediately inform his/her supervisor of the complaint.

2. If a complaint comes first to the Principal or other supervisor of the person criticized, he/she should listen courteously or acknowledge a letter promptly and politely, but should make no commitments, admissions of guilt, or threats. If the complaint involves a particular employee, the supervisor should suggest a conference between the complainant and the person criticized and should inform that person immediately of the complaint.

If the complainant has already met with the person criticized and remains unsatisfied, the supervisor should invite the complainant to file his complaint in writing and offer to send him the appropriate form regarding a school employee's behavior, character or qualifications.

3. If a complaint comes first to any other school employee, that employee will refer the complainant to the person criticized or his immediate supervisor and immediately inform both.

4. No further action on the complaint should be taken unless the complainant submits the complaint in writing.

5. When a written complaint form is received, the Principal or other supervisor will schedule a conference with himself, the complainant, the person criticized, and if advisable, the department chairman or other personnel that either the supervisor or the person criticized feels could contribute resolution of the problem.

6. If the complainant is not satisfied with the results of the conference above, he/she should then be referred to the Superintendent, who may handle the complaint personally or refer it to other personnel, as he/she may see fit.

7. Should dissatisfaction remain after the above steps have been taken, the matter will be placed on the agenda for the next regularly scheduled Committee meeting. The decision of the Committee will be communicated in writing to all interested persons.

LEGAL REFS.: 603 CMR [26.09](#) and [26.10](#)

KEC - PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE CURRICULUM OR INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

The School Committee, though it is ultimately responsible for all curriculum and instructional materials (including library books), recognizes the need and right of students to free access to many different types of books and materials. It also recognizes the right of the professional staff to select books and other materials supportive of the school system's educational philosophy and goals.

Criticism of a book or other materials used in the schools may be expected from time to time. In such instances:

1. If a parent requests that his/her own child not read a given book, the teacher and/or school administrator should resolve the situation, perhaps by arranging for use of alternative material meeting essentially the same instructional purpose. This does not apply, however, to basic program texts and materials that the Committee has adopted.

2. The Committee will not permit any individual or group to exercise censorship over instructional materials and library collections, but recognizes that at times a reevaluation of certain material may be desirable. Should an individual or group ask to have any book or other material withdrawn from school use:

a. The person who objects to the book or other material will be asked to sign a complaint on a standard form on which he/she will document his criticism.

b. Following receipt of the formal complaint, the Superintendent will provide for a reevaluation of the material in question, he/she will arrange for the appointment of a review committee from among the faculty to consider the complaint.

c. The Superintendent will review the complaint and the committee's reevaluation and will render a decision in the matter. Should the decision be unsatisfactory to the complainant, he/she may appeal it to the Committee.

In summary, the Committee assumes final responsibility for all books and instructional materials it makes available to students; it holds its professional staff accountable for their proper selection. It recognizes rights of individual parents with respect to controversial materials used by their own children; it will provide for the reevaluation of materials in library collections upon formal request. On the other hand, students' right to learn and the freedom of teachers to teach will be respected.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. [76:5](#)

CROSS REFS.: [IJ](#), Instructional Materials

[IJL](#), Selection and Adoption of Library Materials

KI - CLASSROOM VISITATIONS

The School Committee welcomes parents and guests to visit classrooms to observe and learn about the instructional programs taking place in our schools. Such visits can prove most beneficial in promotion of greater school-home cooperation and community understanding of how we carry out the school system's mission and goals.

Visits by parents to several classrooms in a given grade for the purposes of comparing teaching styles to provide a basis for a request for student assignment to a particular teacher are strongly discouraged because the School District's policy of assigning a student to a particular class is the sole responsibility of the building Principal in consultation with the staff of that school.

The following guidelines to classroom and school visits should be followed:

1. Parental requests for classroom visitations will be welcomed as long as the educational process is not disrupted. To this end we require that such requests be made at least forty-eight hours in advance to allow for proper arrangements to be made.
2. The building Principal has the authority to determine the number, times, and dates of observations by visitors. This will be done in consultation with staff members so as to give adequate notice to the staff members of the impending visits.
3. For security purposes, it is requested that all visitors report to the main office upon entering and leaving the building to sign a guest log showing arrival and departure times along with picking up a visitor's badge to wear while in the building. The staff is encouraged to ask visitors if they have registered in the Principal's office.
4. Under ordinary circumstances, classroom observations will be strongly discouraged during the first three weeks of school in September and during the month of June.
5. Any student who wishes to have a guest in school MUST ask permission of one of the administrative staff 24 HOURS in advance of the proposed visit. If permission is granted, the guest is expected to follow the standards of behavior expected of all students. Upon arrival, the guest must register in the office. Any guest who fails to comply with student regulations will be asked to leave the school building and grounds immediately.
6. Since younger children distract the attention of both the visitor and the class, parents are strongly urged to make arrangements for them.

SOURCE: Belchertown High School and other Handbooks

CROSS REF.: [IHBAA](#), Observations of Special Education Programs

Approved: June 12, 2018

