

Norton Elementary Family Handbook 2021-2022



Norton Public Schools
Dr. Joseph F. Baeta
Superintendent

Henri A. Yelle
Elementary School
Martin R. Geoghegan
Principal

J. C. Solmonese
Elementary School
Dr. John Marcus
Principal

L. G. Nourse
Elementary School
Catherine J. Luke
Principal

It is the policy of Norton Public Schools to provide a learning environment free from discrimination or harassment. All students, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, limited English proficiency, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or housing status, have equal access to all programs including athletics and other extracurricular activities.

September, 2021

Dear Families:

Welcome back to what we hope will be a year of more normalcy, positive connections and optimal learning. We would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new students and their families! We look forward to leading Norton's Elementary community through a great year!

Our dedicated and caring staff will provide a rigorous, enriching, and age-appropriate educational experience for your child. Our Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science curricula are closely aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the developmental needs of our students. In addition to the core subjects, students will also attend two specials during the in school days: Art, Wellness, Music, Computer, or Library (grades 2 and 3) classes. Please do not hesitate to email or call your child's teacher if you have any questions regarding the educational program.

We encourage you to contact us when questions and concerns arise. It is important that we work as a team to solve problems and help our students. You can call the school office or email your child's teacher directly.

We would like you to review this Elementary Family Handbook as soon as possible, and to refer to it during the year, if you have questions about procedures or policies at your child's school. Please contact the school office if you would like a paper copy of the Handbook.

The elementary administration and staff look forward to providing every child outstanding opportunities for academic, physical, social, and emotional growth during the school year. We look forward to partnering with you in providing the best learning environments for your children!

Sincerely,

John Marcus, Ph.D., Principal of J. C. Solmonese Elementary
Martin R. Geoghegan, Principal of Henri A. Yelle Elementary
Catherine J. Luke, Principal of L. G. Nourse Elementary

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GENERAL DISCLAIMER

While this handbook serves as a guideline for students, parents, faculty and administrators to follow, the administration reserves the right to react to each situation as unique, and to make decisions at their discretion, on matters of concern which are not explicitly stated in this handbook.

CONTACT INFORMATION

	Henri A. Yelle 64 West Main Street	J. C. Solmonese 315 West Main Street	L. G. Nourse 38 Plain Street
Main Office	(508) 285-0190	(508) 285-0120	(508) 285-0110
Fax	(508)-285-0187	(508) 285-0130	(508) 285-0109
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Asst Principal/LL Coordinator		Ann Marie Baker abaker@norton.k12.ma.us	
Dean of Students	Robert Bielawa rbielawa@norton.k12.ma.us		
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Nurse	Jeanine Demelo (508) 285-0197 jdemelo@norton.k12.ma.us	Margaret Brazeau Miller (508) 285-0127 mbrazeaumiller@norton.k12.ma.us	Courtney Pacheco (508) 285-0117 cpacheco@norton.k12.ma.us
Adjustment Counselors	Kimberly Fulton kfulton@norton.k12.ma.us	Corinne Harvie charvie@norton.k12.ma.us Bethany Fitzroy bfitzroy@norton.k12.ma.us	Tracy Blanchette tblanchette@norton.k12.ma.us
School Psychologist	Jennifer Wise (508) 285-0157 jwise@norton.k12.ma.us	Carole Pazos (508) 285-0131 cpazos@norton.k12.ma.us	Rebecca Puntini (508) 285-0110 rpuntini@norton.k12.ma.us
Team Chair	Tracy McGarry (508) 285-0189 tmcgarry@norton.k12.ma.us	Diana Savage (508) 285-0134 dsavage@norton.k12.ma.us	Coleen Sheridan (508) 285-0113 cs Sheridan@norton.k12.ma.us

<u>School Hours</u>	Henri A. Yelle	J. C. Solmonese	L. G. Nourse
Student Drop-off	8:10 No drop-offs until at least this time.	9:05 No drop-offs until at least this time.	7:35 No drop-offs until at least this time.
School Start Time	8:25 Students considered tardy after this time.	9:15 Students considered tardy after this time.	7:45 Students considered tardy after this time.
AM Preschool		8:30 – 11:00	
PM Preschool		12:00 – 2:30	
Full Day Preschool		8:30 – 2:30	
Early Release Pre		10:30	
Early Release K-5	11:40	12:30	11:00
Dismissal K-5	2:45	3:35	2:05
Office Hours	7:30 – 3:00	8:30 – 4:00	7:00 – 2:30

EARLY DISMISSAL FROM SCHOOL

Students are expected to be in school for the entire day, unless notes are received from a parent or guardian for early dismissal. A student who is to be dismissed **must** present a **written** request from the parent or guardian stating the reason and the time of dismissal. This request must be approved by the office at the beginning of the school day. If a student attends less than a half of the length of the school day, he or she will be marked absent for that day. Students must report to the office prior to leaving school early. Students **must** be signed out by a parent/guardian. **Phone calls for dismissals will not be accepted, except in an emergency situation and with an approval by the principal.**

PARENT PICK-UP

If you wish to pick up your child and not have them ride the bus home, you must send in a written note. An adult must pick up the child from the parent pick-up location.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

Students in grades K-6 whose legal residence is 2.0 or more miles from their assigned school are eligible for transportation and there is no fee charged. **Students in grades K-6 whose legal residence is within 2.0 miles from their assigned school are offered transportation on a pay-to-ride basis.** Transportation information is available on the Norton Public Schools website.

Please review the following bus safety procedures with your children throughout the school year. Bus drivers are not permitted to drop students off anywhere but their assigned bus stop. Students should:

- Be at the assigned bus stop **prior** to bus arrival.
- Wait safely and away from the street.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop before moving towards the bus.

An adult **MUST** be present at the bus stop for pick-up and drop-off for Kindergarten students. If an adult is not present at drop-off, the student will be brought back to the main office of the school.

We do not allow short-term or “day to day” bus changes, including early release days. If students are not able to take their regular bus home, other arrangements must be made for students to be picked up from school.

KINDERGARTEN SCREENING

It may be necessary for the school to cancel classes for Kindergarten when we conduct screening for the following year’s incoming class. These dates will be announced later during the school year once they have been determined. Kindergarten screening takes place in the Spring and then again on the first day of school for Grades 1-12 if Kindergartners had not been screened earlier. Please make arrangements with your child’s school to ensure

HEALTH SERVICES

We ask that parents/guardians contact the nurse if their children have allergies and/or other medical concerns. Any medications that need to be administered during school hours should be brought in to the nurse's office by parents/guardians in the original prescription container and will be administered only with written permission from a physician and the parent/guardian. **Students should not transport medications for any reason.** Parents should ask their physician if medications may be prescribed with a frequency that avoids school hours. Over the counter items such as cough drops, antacids, and aspirin should not be sent into school. Vision and hearing testing are done according to the State guidelines.

SCHOOL ENTRY MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS

All students entering school must present a copy of a recent physical exam and a copy of all immunizations

received. Kindergarten students must also present proof of a lead test and a complete vision screening including stereopsis.

ANNUAL ASSESSMENT OF PHYSICAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with the Massachusetts regulation (M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 57 and 105 CMR 200.000) Body Mass Index assessments will be conducted in the schools by the school nurses. These assessments will be done for all children in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. Prior notification of BMI screenings will be sent to all parents and guardians of students in the targeted grades. All parents and guardians have the right to waive their child's BMI screening by submitting a written request.

WELLNESS/PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Each student is expected to participate in Wellness classes, unless there are reasons that prevent this. Provisions are made for those with special needs. Sneakers should be worn for Wellness class. If a student cannot take Wellness class, a note from the parent/guardian stating the reasons for exclusion is required. In some cases, a parent conference is arranged so that other alternatives may be made for the child.

ATTENDANCE

In order for your child to do his/her very best work, he/she must attend school regularly, eat the right foods, get a good night's sleep, and dress appropriately in cold or wet weather. When a child is absent from school, a parent or guardian must call the school. You may utilize the answering machine at any time. The school will utilize the Parent Square system to contact you if we do not receive a telephone call. Your child must bring a note when he/she returns to school stating the reason for the absence. This note is given to the homeroom teacher and kept on file in the office. This note must contain the dates of absence, the reasons for the absence, and must be signed by a parent or guardian. If a student is absent from school, he/she will not be allowed to participate in any activities of the school that day unless the absence has been approved by the principal.

Per Massachusetts General Law, a student who is absent in excess of seven days for two marking terms or fourteen days for the school year will be considered truant. Parents will be notified after the fifth day of an unexcused absence. If the causes for absences were primarily the student's health or family emergencies, the school principal may grant waivers if all coursework has been completed.

SCHOOL ATTENDANCE TEAM

The School Attendance Team is made up of school administrators, the school nurse, and the school counseling staff. The responsibilities of the School Attendance Team are as follows:

- Investigating causes of absences and excessive tardiness
- Studying habitual absenteeism
- Sending letters to parents if absences/tardiness becomes excessive
- Handling court action for excessive absence/tardiness cases
- Researching reasons why children of school age are not in school

EXCUSED AND UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Excuses for absences will be accepted for:

- An absence excused by a physician, dentist, or school nurse
- Chronic illness documented by a physician - received at the start of each school year or when diagnosed
- Court appearance
- Bereavement
- Religious holidays
- Visitations with prior school approval

- Principal's approved absence

The following represent some unexcused absences:

- Family vacations while school is in session
- Illness not requiring a doctor's attention
- Appointments
- Dismissals (not included under excused absence)
- Tardiness (not included under excused absence)
- All suspensions

GUIDELINES FOR RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER ILLNESS

- **Fever** of 100 degrees or higher – return after 24 hours of normal temperature with no antipyretics.
- **Diarrhea** – No loose stools for 12 hours
- **Vomiting** – Return after 24 hours after last episode of vomiting
- **Conjunctivitis** – (pink eye) return after 24 hours of treatment
- **Strep Throat** – Return after 24 hours of treatment and fever free
- **Head Lice** – Return after treatment, and no evidence of live lice
- **COVID-19**- Please see current district protocols around COVID and similar communicable diseases.

MEDICAL CLEARANCE

Students returning to school after four consecutive days of absence must be cleared by the school nurse or present a Physician's certificate. Parents will have the option to contact the school nurse to describe the illness and symptoms. The school nurse may authorize the student's return to school. The school nurse may also require that the student see a physician to obtain a physician's certificate. Students who are injured will need medical clearance to return to school and school activities, such as physical education and recess. A physician's certificate is required for the medical clearance.

MAKE-UP WORK

After an absence of two or more days, and upon request by the parent, make-up work will be prepared by teachers after a notice of one full school day.

When unexcused absences occur due to vacations, teachers may use discretion in preparing assignments. The student will be allowed one day for each day missed to make up homework assignments.

TARDINESS

When a student is late for school, he/she is to report to the office for a late slip and must be accompanied into the school by a parent. Please do not drop off students alone in front of the building. If tardiness becomes excessive, parents/guardians will be contacted by the main office to meet with us.

VACATION ABSENCES

Vacations while school is in session are not recommended. When a family takes a vacation while school is in session, the student will miss key classroom instruction. It is impossible for the teachers to recreate the learning experiences afforded to students during the school day. If you choose to vacation while school is in session, your child is allowed one day for each day absent to make up missed in-class work, homework, tests, and quizzes for all subjects. Students will not receive assignments in advance. A folder of missed work will be prepared during the student's absence. Long term projects due while the student will be out must be completed and passed in before the student leaves.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Norton Public Schools provides space to a private, for-profit company for this service. The company, Knowledge Learning Corporation (Champions), 40 Mechanic Street Suite 101, Foxboro, MA 02035, can be reached for information at their number (800) 246-2154. The tuition costs are the responsibility of the parents. It is also the parent's responsibility to notify the school of any changes in the children's after school care.

BICYCLES/WALKERS

For safety reasons, no child is to ride his/her bicycle to school without being accompanied by a parent or guardian. Also, for safety reasons, PreK-3 students are not allowed to walk to or from the school without a parent or guardian.

EVACUATION OF BUILDING

Whenever the school building must be evacuated for any reason, all staff are assigned to escort and supervise students in designated areas around the building. If, for any reason, the grounds must be evacuated, the District Crisis Plan procedures will be followed.

SCHOOL CLOSING

Announcement of school closing for any reason will be broadcast on local news channels, cable access channel 9, the District website, Twitter, and Facebook. A Parent Square telephone message will be sent to all families as early as possible with the "no school" or "delay" announcement. Announcements of an early dismissal due to weather conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances, will also be aired on the local stations, District webpage, Twitter, and Facebook, and a Parent Square emergency message will go out. Parents are urged to make arrangements for their child/children in case they will not be home to receive them. Please share with your child/children possible emergency arrangements that may need to be made should you not be able to meet your child/children in extreme weather situations.

DELAYED OPENINGS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

If school is delayed due to inclement weather, students will not be picked up by our buses until one hour, 90 minutes, or two hours after the usual start time. The exact time of the delay will be determined by the superintendent of schools in collaboration with other town departments. Students who are dropped off at school by parents should also adhere to the one hour, 90 minute, or two-hour delay in start time. When there is a delayed opening, AM Preschool may be cancelled.

PARENT ORGANIZATIONS

Each school's parent organization will send information regarding meeting times and activities in the beginning of the school year. Parent participation is welcomed and encouraged.

SCHOOL SITE COUNCIL

The School Site Council is made up of elected representatives of parents, faculty, and community members as mandated by the Education Reform Act of 1993. Meeting times will be posted on the school calendar.

LOST AND FOUND

We encourage parents to mark coats, lunch bags, backpacks, and sweatshirts with student names. Unclaimed articles will be placed in the "Lost and Found" area located near the cafeteria. At the end of the school year, unclaimed articles are given to charity. Parents are urged to check the "Lost and Found" frequently.

VALUABLE AND FAD ITEMS

We ask that students not bring extra money, expensive items/clothing, or "fad" items to school with them. This

includes toys, electronic devices, and cell phones (unless permitted per BYOD policy and with prior approval by principal). The school cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to these items.

BIRTHDAY INVITATIONS

We ask that students not pass out birthday invitations at school, unless they are inviting everyone in the class. Passing out invitations to some students, but not others, often creates hurt feelings.

SCHOOL LUNCH AND BREAKFAST

Lunch is served in the school cafeteria every day, except the last day of school. A hot meal, including milk, is available at a daily cost of \$3.00 per student. For children bringing lunch, milk is available for \$.50 a carton. School breakfast is served every day before school and costs \$1.75, including milk. For students who have food allergies, tables will be designated such as "peanut free", etc. and will be monitored by our school nurse. Students may bring in lunch from home. This lunch should contain items that students can open and eat independently. Please do not send a knife with your child to cut fruit, etc., instead, pre-cut any items that may need to be cut. Free and reduced lunch applications will be sent home.

SNACKS

Students should bring a healthy snack and drink to school with them each day.

ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Parents should be aware that the school system has no health insurance for children injured during school. School insurance is available to parents at the beginning of the school year and is an excellent investment at a nominal fee, especially for families without medical insurance.

ADJUSTMENT COUNSELOR

The School Adjustment Counselor is available to provide social and/or emotional support to students on an "as needed" basis. The counselor is available for conferences by appointment, please contact the main office if you would like to make an appointment with the school adjustment counselor.

VISITORS TO THE SCHOOL

For safety and security reasons, **all** visitors to the school must first report to the main office to receive a visitor's pass before visiting elsewhere in the building. The School Department policy requires all parent volunteers to have a Criminal Offender Record Information (C.O.R.I.) check. This policy does not apply when parents or guardians of enrolled students have been invited to a classroom or assembly program.

- School principals are authorized to take appropriate action to prevent unauthorized persons from entering buildings and from loitering on school grounds.
- A log shall be maintained in each school office for recording the name, address, and purpose of each visitor.

VISITATIONS/OBSERVATIONS

If, for educational purposes, you wish to observe your child in class, a written request should be made to the building principal at least three days in advance. A mutually agreeable time will be worked out.

DRESS REQUIREMENTS

In an effort to address concerns for student safety and welfare, and to create an appropriate learning environment, the administration will be responsible for enforcing this dress code fairly and reasonably. Violations are determined at the discretion of the administration. If students are in violation of the dress code, they will be given the opportunity to correct the violation. If they fail to correct the violation, they may be asked to call home

for appropriate clothing and/or may receive disciplinary consequences as determined by the administrative staff. Students should dress in a manner that shows pride in themselves and their school. All students are required to dress and groom themselves suitably for school activities in clothes, which do not disrupt the educational atmosphere of the school. In general, some attire that would not be acceptable would be:

- Hats, bandanas or visors worn in the building and head covering of all kinds for all students
- Jackets worn in the building
- Chains or spikes
- T-shirts, sweatshirts or jackets with vulgar or offensive words, pictures, and symbols or with words or symbols promoting the use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs
- Beach-like attire, bathing suits, bare midriffs, bare backs, halter-tops (grades 4 and 5), low-cut blouses, tube tops and muscle shirts, cut off tee shirts, any shirt exposing the midriff or otherwise revealing, extremely short shorts
- Skirts and shorts should be school-appropriate in length allowing freedom of movement while maintaining modesty appropriate in a school or work setting, i.e. the hem should be just below the fingers when standing
- Sunglasses should not be worn in school unless there is a medical reason to do so
- Undergarments of any kind should not be visible
- Students may be asked to remove jewelry for classes during which jewelry poses a safety issue such as art, wellness, science etc.
- Unsafe shoes, heeled shoes, slippers, flip-flops

A parent/guardian will be contacted if clothing is not appropriate.

STUDENT BEHAVIOR CODE

Our aim is to build a safe, orderly, and productive school environment where students take responsibility, respect themselves and others, and are cooperative. It is expected that students will adhere to the rules in a consistent manner. When a student is having difficulty maintaining appropriate behavior, the staff will make every effort to respond in a reasonable and fair manner. We expect students to understand they are responsible for their actions and consequences for their misbehavior will be applied. In an effort to ensure that students understand expectations for behavior, the staff discusses and reviews the rules of behavior throughout the year. The behavior expectations also apply to student behavior on the school bus, in the cafeteria, in the hallway, and on the playground.

Students are expected to:

- Talk and behave with respect to other students and adults
- Respect the rights and property of others
- Follow the directions of the adults in authority
- Walk at all times in the school
- Keep hands, feet, and objects to oneself
- Use school materials appropriately
- Take care of our school and school property
- Remain seated appropriately while on the bus, keeping the aisle clear
- Talk quietly on the bus
- Bring only safe and appropriate items to school (no toys, trading cards, electronics, weapons)

Students who break school rules will face various consequences, depending on the type and severity of the infraction. When a student is sent to the office due to dangerous or disruptive behavior, either in the classroom, in specials, on the bus, or on the playground, there is a referral form filled out by the referring staff member. A copy of this form may be sent to parents/guardians to be signed and returned to school the following day.

Parents/guardians will also receive a phone call about incidents that require an office referral.

Possible consequences are separation from the group, loss of recess or other privileges, school detention, conference with the principal and parents, in-school or out of school suspension, or other consequences determined by the school administration. Students will always be given the opportunity to express their views to the principal prior to any disciplinary action. Parents/Guardians will be notified before any suspension is imposed. If a disciplinary report is filed on a student the same week as an in school or out of school field trip, student participation in that field trip will be at the principal's discretion.

STUDENTS RIGHT TO DUE PROCESS IN THE EVENT OF SUSPENSION

1. Oral or written notice of the nature of the rule, violation of which will result in suspension.
2. Oral or written notice of the nature of the specific violation and the intended consequence.
3. An opportunity for the student in question to "tell his side of the story" to the appropriate school official.
4. If the student denies the charges, the evidence of the violation upon which the school authority is relying on will be explained.

SCHOOL BUS

We consider riding the school bus to be a privilege and expect students to follow the rules of the bus. It is essential that parents/guardians reinforce the rules of the bus with their children regularly to emphasize that we are all working together to create a safe and positive environment for the students. Bus rules and expectations apply to daily bus rides as well as extracurricular trips.

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

1. In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident will be reported to the principal with the Norton Public Schools Bus Discipline Report. He/she will report the incident to the parent concerned.
2. In case of a repetition by the same student, the principal will assign appropriate, progressive consequences up to and including suspension.
3. If a student's bus privileges are denied due to suspension, 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 their 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, alcohol and illegal drugs are prohibited
5. No inappropriate body contact while on the bus
6. The following disturbances are prohibited.
 - a. Pushing or wrestling
 - b. Disturbing other students or their possessions
 - c. Distracting the driver
 - d. Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
 - e. Climbing over seats

- f. Opening or closing windows without driver's permission
 - g. Leaning out windows
 - h. Littering the bus
 - i. Use of cell phones*, cameras and other recording devices
 - j. Possession of any dangerous weapon
7. Parents will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.

*Cell phone use may be permitted by bus driver in case of emergency or tardiness, or by coaching staff to change arrival times for parents. In the case of the driver being incapacitated students would utilize their phones to contact emergency services for support.

Parents and students will be informed of these regulations through the Student Handbook at the beginning of each school year, and parents will be required to acknowledge through their signature that the regulations have been received and read.

BUS DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES

The school bus drivers will fill out a Norton Public Schools Bus Discipline Report for any student in violation of the bus rules or safety procedures. The principal will contact parents/guardians if a Bus Discipline Report is filed. Depending on the severity or frequency of the bus infraction(s), consequences will range from a verbal warning, to an assigned seat, or suspension/expulsion.

DESK AND PERSONAL SEARCHES

The school reserves the right to search a specific desk or personal property if the administrator involved has reasonable suspicion that an inappropriate or stolen item, or illegal contraband may be present.

LOST TEXTBOOKS

It is the policy of the school district that lost or damaged textbooks or library books must be paid for by the borrower. Notices of lost textbooks or library books will be sent to parents/guardians. It is the student's and/or the student's family's obligation to meet all fiscal responsibilities.

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework strengthens academic skills, reinforces concepts students learn in class, helps students learn responsibility and self-discipline, develops positive study habits and organization, helps parents become aware of students' work and academic responsibilities.

Homework is an independent activity to be accomplished beyond the regular school-day and without teacher assistance to reinforce concepts and practice skills learned in the classroom, to prepare for future classes, to apply skills to new situations, and to integrate several skills on a single task. Some homework may require parental participation. Homework helps to keep parents up to date about what is going on in school.

Students, in addition to homework for each subject/course varying with course level of difficulty, may also be required to complete projects and research as homework assignments that have long-term deadlines. Such assignments are in addition to daily homework and need advance planning to be completed both effectively and in a timely manner. Homework will not be assigned on holidays. Regular assignments that require more than one night to complete should not be given for vacation periods. Such assignments should not be given on the last day of classes prior to a vacation if they are due immediately upon return.

Students are responsible for noting and understanding the homework assignment, completing it, and returning it

to school on the required day. Students should be aware that teachers may use homework assignments to help determine their grades.

Parents should set a specific time and place for the student to complete homework and should check to ensure that the student completes homework assignments. Parents should help with directions and checking the work but should not perform their child's homework. If at any time parents have a concern about the school's homework policy, their child's difficulties with homework, or the need for enriched assignments, they should contact their child's teacher. Parents of children in grades 4-12 should check online for assignments.

Teachers are responsible for assigning meaningful homework to students and for providing the explanation and direction required to ensure that students can accomplish the work with reasonable success. Teachers are also responsible for checking and providing a timely response to student's homework and notifying parents if students are having problems with homework assignments. When possible, teachers will attempt to coordinate homework demands among the various subjects so that students are not overloaded. Teachers will provide a balance between long-range and short-term assignments and monitor progress in long-term assignments so as to avoid last minute student efforts.

After an absence of two or more days, and upon the request by the parent, make-up work will be prepared by teachers after a notice of one full school day in all schools.

When unexcused absences occur due to vacations, teachers may use discretion in preparing assignments. The student will be allowed one day for each day missed to make up homework assignments.

TOBACCO USE

The Education Reform Act of 1993 expressly prohibits the use of any tobacco products within school buildings, the school facilities, school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

Possession, use, or sale of any mind altering substance (drugs or alcohol) is not only against the law, but also represents a very serious disciplinary offense. Students are strictly prohibited from the sale, use, or possession of drugs or alcohol on school grounds, during school, on the school buses or at school bus stops, and during school sponsored events.

Students found in violation of the substance abuse policy will be dealt with as follows:

- A. Use, possession
 1. Five (5) days out of school suspension
 2. Notification to the parents, administration and superintendent
 3. Notification to the Norton Police Department
 4. Recommendation for counseling
- B. Sale, distribution or possession with intent to distribute
 1. Ten (10) days out of school suspension
 2. Notification to parents, administration, and superintendent
 3. Recommendation of expulsion to the superintendent and the School Committee
 4. Immediate police intervention including court follow-up

C. Rumor or suspicion

With reasonable cause, any student under suspicion of use, possession, or sale may be asked to empty his/her

pockets, handbag, locker, etc. This will be done under the direction of the principal (or assistant principal). Failure to comply will result in a five (5) days out of school suspension.

D. The principal reserves the right to modify any of the above procedures when he or she feels the situation warrants modification.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

Students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the Elementary Family Handbook. The regulations in 603, CMR 28.00 pursuant to MGLc.69 Section 1B and Chapter 71B, Section 3 require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education by an evaluation TEAM. The following are these additional requirements:

1. The IEP or 504 Plan for each student with special education needs will indicate if the student's disability requires a modification of the discipline code.
2. The principal must notify the Administrator of Special Education in writing within one school working day of the suspendable offense of any student with special needs whose IEP or 504 Plan does not reflect the need for modifications of the regular education discipline code. A record must be kept of such notices.

No single area in State or Federal Regulations has changed with as much frequency as the area of discipline. It is therefore advisable to stay abreast of the most recent advisories. Discipline is the responsibility of the school principal and all authority for discipline rests with him/her. Any questions around procedures regarding the discipline of students with special education needs or students who have been referred for an evaluation or even students who may be suspected as having a disability should be addressed to the Administrator of Special Education. Special education staff, principals and guidance counselors should be familiar with the regulations regarding:

1. Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE): Norton Public Schools is responsible for providing FAPE to all of its students. A student with special needs may not be suspended for more than ten school days within an IEP or 504 Plan period without the provision of FAPE. The Administrator of Special Education must be notified immediately of students with special needs who are suspended for ten or more days or have reached the tenth day of suspension within an IEP or 504 Plan period. If a student is on day 8 of suspension, a TEAM meeting should be held to review the IEP or 504 Plan and make adjustments if necessary. A Functional Behavioral Assessment should be completed prior to the TEAM meeting to allow the TEAM to develop a Behavior Intervention Plan.

2. Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP): An FBA must be completed ten business days after the removal that will result in the 11th day of suspension; the BIP must be completed as soon as is possible following the FBA. Good practice allows for the completion of the FBA prior to the tenth day of suspension. TEAMS should consider completing an FBA on or about the 8th day of suspension. After completion of the FBA, a TEAM meeting is held to develop a behavioral intervention plan. The goal of the Functional Behavioral Assessment is to understand why a student misbehaves. What does the TEAM feel is the function of the behavior? What behaviors could be chosen to try and redirect the student? The Behavioral Intervention Plan should include instructions on how to substitute problem behavior with replacement behavior. Please use the district form when completing FBAs and BIPs.

Manifestation Determination: Upon the tenth day of suspension, a TEAM meeting must be called to determine if the student's behavior is caused by or related to the student's disability. Whenever possible, the Administrator of Special Education should attend Manifestation Determination meetings. In making this determination, the TEAM must consider the following questions:

- Is the student's program appropriate?

- Is the program being implemented?
- Is the misconduct a manifestation of the disability?
- Does the student have the ability to control the behavior?

If the misconduct is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the TEAM can consider changing the IEP, the 504 Plan and/or the behavioral intervention plan. All other discipline stops. If the misconduct is not a manifestation of the child's disability, the regular discipline process is followed. However, FAPE must be provided to students with special educational needs. Therefore, after the principal completes the discipline process, the TEAM must meet to determine the appropriate services and determine where those services will be provided. All determinations are provided to parents/guardians in writing along with a copy of the Parent's Rights Brochure informing the parents of their due process rights and under special education regulations. As needed, training in the manifestation determination process will be provided to TEAMS by the Administrator of Special Education. There is a written "script" available to follow when doing manifestation determination meetings. Contact the Administrator of Special Education for assistance. If a lawyer is present representing the child and family, the school hold the manifestation determination meeting until a school attorney can also be present. While the school department must hold the determination in a timely fashion, we are at the same time entitled to have legal representation if a student and his/her family have representation. Contact the Administrator of Special Education immediately should these or other circumstances develop.

CHAPTER 71 SECTIONS 37H, 37H1/2, 37H3/4

Section 37H. The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling such vehicles on school grounds, consistent with section 16B of chapter 90 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto and by the department. The policies shall also prohibit bullying as defined in section 37O and shall include the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by said section 37O. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

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

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The student handbook shall include an age-appropriate summary of the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by section 37O. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

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

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

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

(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.

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

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial

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

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion. Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

Section 37H3/4.

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language

spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

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

HARASSMENT

Harassment of students by other students, employees, vendors and other 3rd parties will not be tolerated in the Norton Public Schools. The alleged harassment must involve conduct that occurred within the school's own program or activity, such as whether the harassment occurred at a location or under circumstances where the

school owned, or substantially controlled the premises, exercised oversight, supervision or discipline over the location or participants, or funded, sponsored, promoted or endorsed the event where the alleged harassment occurred, against a person in the United States. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of the School District, school buses, or attending or engaging in school sponsored activities.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Sexual Harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity, it also includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes conduct by an employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, often called quid pro quo harassment and, sexual assault as the Federal Clery Act defines that

crime. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstance).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

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

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

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Due process protections include the following:

- 1) A presumption of innocence throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
- 2) A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
- 3) The clear and convincing evidence or preponderance of the evidence, subject to limitations;
- 4) The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through cross examination, subject to "rape shield" protections;
- 5) Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence;
- 6) Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
- 7) Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where schools offer appeals;
- 8) Upon filing a formal complaint, the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools a hearing is optional but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other's credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying either the preponderance of the evidence or the clear and convincing standard; however, a school can use the lower preponderance standards only if it uses that standard for conduct code violations that do not involve sexual harassment but carry the same maximum disciplinary sanction. As long as the process is voluntary for all parties, after being fully informed and written consent is provided by both parties, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

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

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

least, a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. Also, the alleged harasser will be interviewed. When the investigation is completed, the complaint recipient will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

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

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

District Title IX Coordinator ~ Vincent Cerce, Director of Pupil Personnel, (508) 285 0100, vcerce@norton.k12.ma.us

Norton High School ~ Ethan Dolleman, Principal, (508) 285-0160, edolleman@norton.k12.ma.us

Norton Middle School ~ Vincent Hayward, Principal, (508) 285-0140, vincenthayward@norton.k12.ma.us

H. A. Yelle School ~ Martin Geoghegan, Principal, (508) 285-0190, mgeoghegan@norton.k12.ma.us

J.C. Solmonese School ~ Dr. John Marcus, Principal, (508) 285-0120, jmarcus@norton.k12.ma.us

L.G. Nourse School ~ Catherine Luke, Principal, (508) 285-0111, catherineluke@norton.k12.ma.us

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

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

LEGAL REFERENCES:

M.G.L. 151B:3A

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

BESE 603 CMR 26:00

34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)

34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)

34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

Note: A summary of the attached Policy, as adopted, must be sent to parents/guardians, students, employees, unions, and prospective employees of the school district including Title IX Coordinator(s), investigator(s) and

the decision-maker. The above referenced employees must attend training sessions on the implementation of the Policy.

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an Act Relative to Bullying in Schools. This law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to addressing bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements are included in the school or district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"). The Plan includes the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs. In developing the Plan, schools and districts consulted with school and local community members, including parents and guardians.

Definitions

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Prohibition Against Bullying

Acts of bullying, which include Cyberbullying, are prohibited:

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

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

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

Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously.

Norton High School ~ Ethan Dolleman, Principal, (508) 285-0160, edolleman@norton.k12.ma.us

Norton Middle School ~ Vincent Hayward, Principal, (508) 285-0140, vincenthayward@norton.k12.ma.us

H. A. Yelle School ~ Martin Geoghegan, Principal, (508) 285-0190, mgeoghegan @norton.k12.ma.us

J.C. Solmonese School ~ Dr. John Marcus, Principal, (508) 285-0120, jmarcus@norton.k12.ma.us

L.G. Nourse School ~ Catherine Luke, Principal, (508) 285-0111, catherineluke@norton.k12.ma.us

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of a aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Professional Development for School and District Staff

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown

to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Additional information about the school or district’s Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan can be found at www.norton.k12.ma.us under the “Parents & Students” tab.

TITLE VI, TITLE IX/622, SECTION 504 NOTICES

All programs, activities, and employment opportunities are offered without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, and disability. Complaints and requests for information should be forwarded to:

Title IV Equity Coordinator

Jennifer O’Neill
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
64 West Main St.
Norton, MA 02766
(508) 285-0100

Title II and Title IX Coordinator

Vincent Cerce
Director of Pupil Personnel Services
64 West Main St.
Norton, MA 02766
(508) 285-0100

Title I and Section 504 Equity Coordinator

Jennifer O’Neill
Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
64 West Main Street
Norton, MA 02766
(508) 285-0100

Sexual Harassment Reporters

District:
Elizabeth Simone
64 West Main Street
Norton, MA 02766
(508) 285-0100

SUMMARY OF REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT RECORDS

The State Board of Education has adopted Regulations Pertaining to Student Records. The development of these regulations, which have the force of law, was mandated by state laws enacted in 1972 and 1974. The regulations apply to all public elementary and secondary schools. (They also apply to all private schools which have state approval to provide special education services under Chapter 766, the Special Education Act.) They are designed to insure parents' and students' rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records.

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

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

The following is a summary of the major parent and student rights regarding their student records, as provided by the Regulations Pertaining to Student Records:

INSPECTION OF RECORD

A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is a least 14 years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student no

later than two days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials. Finally, the parent and student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORD

With a few exceptions where mandated by law, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student, and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or the student.

AMENDMENT OF RECORD

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

DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the Regulations Pertaining to Student Records that relate to student and parent rights. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be reviewed at the school Guidance Office.

STUDENT RECORD ACCESS BY NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

The Massachusetts Board of Education approved the following regulations on October 25, 2005. Non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The non-custodial parent has been denied legal custody based on a threat to the safety of the student or to the custodial parent
- The non-custodial parent has been denied visitation or has been ordered to supervised visitation
- The non-custodial parent's access to the student or to the custodial parent has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the order or any subsequent court order specifically allows access to student record information.

This notice will be provided to parents via the student handbook.

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY POLICIES

Instructional Technology

Developments in technology are making a great impact on every aspect of society. Computers and mobile devices have become an integral part of our everyday lives. The School Committee recognizes the importance of

implementing technology resources in each school facility. Because of the many types of applications and the potential costs, the Committee establishes the following policy to plan for and guide growth for instructional and administrative uses.

Goals

1. Technology literacy for all students.
2. Technology literacy for all staff appropriate to their assignment.
3. A district-wide coordinated technology program that provides skill development in the use of instructional technology tools.

The Norton Public School District will provide a balanced program in instructional technology to ensure that students have an opportunity to:

- Gain an understanding of the applications of technology in society
- Demonstrate creative thinking and problem solving skills
- Apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information
- Use digital media to create, communicate and work collaboratively
- Understand human, cultural, and societal issues related to technology
- Practice legal and ethical behavior when using technology

Any student or staff member using technology will be instructed in the proper use and care of the hardware and software prior to its use.

The Director of Instructional Technology will oversee the coordination and implementation of instructional technology preK-12.

Source: ISTE Standards for Students http://www.iste.org/docs/pdfs/20-14_ISTE_Standards-S_PDF.pdf

Student Email and Internet Publishing Guidelines

Student use of email and posting material on the Internet must follow these guidelines. Adherence to the Acceptable Use Policy for Students is the basis for use of email and posting on the Internet and it must be complied with at all times.

Grades K-5

Students may not use any individual email accounts. Messages may be sent through teacher monitored accounts.

As part of a teacher-directed project, students may publish their own work on the Internet, including their first name, last initial, and picture and name of their school provided that their parent or guardian has given permission by signing the Internet Publishing Permission and Release Form for Students. These postings must be reviewed by the classroom teacher prior to actual publishing.

Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)

Purpose

The Norton Public School District is committed to moving toward a 21st century learning environment. As part of this commitment, the district will allow access to our academic wireless network for students and staff using their own technology. Students and staff members will be able to access a filtered Internet connection to be used for educational purposes. We want all members of the school community to embrace appropriate use of technology so that they may have access to global resources when and where needed.

Users will be responsible for adhering to all other district/building acceptable use policies, codes of conduct, or administrative guidelines while using the district's wireless network. Students and staff members who do not accept the Norton Public Schools BYOD Agreement will not be permitted network access using personally owned devices. The use of devices by students is not permissible unless teacher or staff member approval has been granted.

Definition of "Device"

For the purpose of this B.Y.O.D. program, "device" means any privately owned wireless communication or portable electronic equipment. This includes, but is not limited to: smartphones, tablets, netbooks, laptops, iOS devices, chromebooks and ereaders.

Internet

When using personal devices on school grounds for educational purposes, only the WiFi provided by the school may be accessed. This is in accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). The Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) requires that K12 schools and libraries in the United States use Internet filters and implement other measures to protect children from harmful online content as a condition for the receipt of eRate funding.

Security and Damages

- Responsibility to keep personal technology secure rests with the individual owner.
- The district is NOT responsible for stolen or damaged personal technological devices.
- The district is NOT responsible for the maintenance or repair of any personal technology.
- The district is NOT responsible for any costs incurred due to use of personal technology.
- The district's network filters will be applied to all connections to the Internet and attempts will not be made to bypass the filters.
- The district technology staff will advise only for troubleshooting purposes regarding issues on personal technological devices.
- Infecting the network with a virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information is in violation of this policy.
- Processing or accessing information on school property related to "hacking", altering, or bypassing network security policies is in violation of this policy.
- The district has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of interfering with the network, or is the source of an attack or virus infection.

Illegal Uses/Consequences - Students, Employees, Visitors

Chapter 272, Section 99C of the Massachusetts General Law states in part that it is illegal for someone to attempt to or actually record any communication secretly or to procure another to do so. This is a felony, punishable by a state prison term of up to five years and or a fine of not more than \$10,000.00. Some states have laws that allow for "one party" consent, whereby so long as one party involved in the recording is aware of it and

consents to it, others do not have to be aware of it. This is not the case in Massachusetts. Anyone recorded must be aware of it and must consent to it. In addition to the criminal penalties a violator might face, there are also potential civil damages that could be pursued by a victim.

NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS MASK POLICY

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

A face mask that covers the nose and mouth must be worn by all individuals in school buildings, on school grounds and on school transportation, even when social distancing is observed.

Individuals may be excused from the requirement for the following list of reasons, per CDC guidance:

The individual:

- has trouble breathing;
- is unconscious;
- in incapacitated;
- cannot remove the mask or face covering without assistance.

In addition, masks will not be required for anyone who has a medical, behavioral or other challenge making it unsafe to wear a face mask. A written note from a physician is required for a requested exemption. Parents may not excuse their child from the face mask requirement by signing a waiver.

Additionally, face masks will not be required when appropriate social distancing is enforced:

- during mask breaks;
- while eating or drinking;
- during physical education classes;
- while outside.

Exceptions to this policy under certain circumstances, such as for students with medical, behavioral or other challenges who are unable to wear masks, must be approved by the building principal in consultation with the school nurse or local Board of Health. Face shields or physical barriers may provide an alternative in some instances.

A student's mask is to be provided by the student's family. Staff members are responsible for providing their own face masks. However, the district will supply disposable face masks for individuals who arrive at a building, or board school transportation, without one.

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

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

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

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

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

REFS.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention – Considerations for Wearing Masks -
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/cloth-facecover-guidance.html>

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

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

SOURCE: MASC – August 2020

ADOPTED: August 27, 2020