

Overlook Middle School



Parent-Student Handbook 2020-2021

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*As approved by the school committee this handbook contains the policies of Overlook Middle School and Ashburnham Regional School District. The handbook is subject to change at the discretion of the school committee and its language will be superseded by any newly adopted policies.

INTRODUCTION

Letter from the Principal

Hello & Welcome Overlook Champions ~

I am truly humbled to welcome you to Overlook Middle School for the 2020-2021 school year! This year will be filled with new and exciting experiences and I want you to know we are here to support and guide you.

Overlook Middle School has a dedicated and caring staff who work each and every day to make a difference in the lives of our champions. At OMS, we offer a supportive team approach while focusing on rigorous academic programs designed to improve growth and promote independence.

In an effort to maximize student success, we will continue to encourage and build strong parent & community partnerships. We believe that we are stronger together as a learning community and that our team efforts and differentiated approach helps prepare our students for their future experiences.

We are better together~

Warmly-
Christine Martellio
Principal
Overlook Middle School

Letter from the Assistant Principal

Students and Families,

Please let me take this opportunity to introduce myself, I am Mr. Simmons, the new Assistant Principal at Overlook Middle School. Although I am new to Overlook myself, I want to welcome you all to what is an amazing and fabulous place to learn and grow. Overlook is a place where all students are welcomed and encouraged to be active partners in learning. We take great pride in the educational experience, and see opportunity in every situation to learn and improve.

Middle School is an exciting time, where students really start the process of finding themselves, their interests, developing habits, and understanding the value of their education. As many of you know, this process is a little messier than I have described. For this reason, it is our mission to provide all students with the opportunity to learn using a variety of skills, in a variety of ways, that expands not only their knowledge and understanding, but encourages students to be well-rounded, self-motivated, and informed citizens.

I view education as a life-long process, that requires constant reflection, a desire to improve, consistent support, and a sense of humor. I bring a belief that students are at the center of the learning process, and it is their investment in their own growth that provides the biggest return.

With all this, it is important to note, that none of this is possible without first building strong relationships, not just between students, but with families as well. Relationships are the keystone to everything we do here at Overlook. Simply put, relationships between families and the school are vital to the success of our students. I encourage each and every student and family member to be involved in every way possible.

I look forward to meeting you soon!

Middle School Philosophy

The middle school staff of the Overlook Middle School recognizes that the middle school years are unique and challenging ones for the adolescent passing through them. Adolescence is a wonderful time, a time of profound change for youngsters as they make the adjustment from childhood to adulthood. It is a time when most students experience significant physical growth and become increasingly concerned about their appearance and social connections.

Our philosophy recognizes that the middle school must be a place where the gradual transition from elementary school to high school is accomplished. We believe that the middle school must be a place where students are encouraged and assisted in developing all areas of individual personality – physical, intellectual, social, and emotional. We accept the responsibility of responding to the individual needs, abilities, and interests.

A wide variety of teaching styles will meet the diverse learning styles of students. Staff and students will strive to create a learning environment that is intellectually stimulating, and aesthetically pleasing. The ultimate goal of the middle school is to develop students who are equipped with the skills to be successful and who have gained a lifelong appreciation for learning.

Mission Statement

Recognizing the unique needs of our early adolescent students, the staff of Overlook Middle School is dedicated to ensuring a successful transition from middle school to high school by:

- Providing a caring, welcoming, supportive environment for all;
- Teaching a standards-based curriculum, fostering intellectual, emotional, physical and social development;
- Cultivating individual strengths and talents within a heterogeneous environment;
- Collaborating and communicating with parents and the extended community;
- Developing learners, who value, respect and accept the diversity of others.

Guiding Principles

Our School believes in:

- Working collaboratively with dedication and knowledge to create exciting possibilities for all students;
- Building a strong sense of community that actively cultivates respectful, supportive relationships among students, teachers, and parents to help all students reach their potential;
- Creating an integrative, challenging, and exploratory curriculum that is student-centered and taught in a nurturing, caring, and structured setting;
- Teaching study habits and the skills of communication, research, technology, problem-solving, critical thinking, and social interaction in a manner that actively engages students in relevant learning experiences;

- Providing guidance programs that support the social, emotional, and academic needs of middle level students;
- Providing a wide range of opportunities which emphasize maximum involvement, group unity good sportsmanship, and the well-being of students;
- Incorporating cooperative learning experiences that cultivate an appreciation for and acceptance of the diversity among individuals;
- Establishing networks of communication for the exchange of ideas and information and sharing of experiences among staff and the community that will enhance student achievement and success.

Parent Note

We encourage parents/guardians to take an active role in the education of their children. We welcome your involvement. Parents can help in many ways, including the following:

- Providing an atmosphere at home that encourages students to study and complete their schoolwork,
- Knowing and supporting school policies, especially in the area of teacher expectations and disciplinary procedures,
- Calling the school and/or arranging for conferences with the teachers when you have questions,
- Sharing your ideas or constructive criticism directly with the staff members involved,
- Cooperating in discipline problems,
- Keeping informed of your children's school progress,
- Attending Parent Information Nights, monthly PTO meetings, School Council and other school programs and activities,
- Calling with any questions. Our telephone number is 978-827-1425,
- Accessing OMS web page for information regarding academic requirements and current school events.
- Volunteer for fundraisers and other school activities that benefit your school. Your caring presence speaks volumes to your child about how highly you value his/her education.

SCHOLASTIC INFORMATION

Grading & Homework Policy

Homework Guidelines

Homework is an integral part of Overlook Middle School's academic and enrichment programs. The faculty and staff at Overlook believe that the purpose of homework is to provide students with opportunities to extend classroom lessons and to transfer specific skills and concepts to new situations. In addition, homework is designed to develop personal responsibility, self-discipline, and effective study habits. As with all instructional activities, homework assignments should be meaningful, relevant and grade appropriate. Homework assignments will increase in both length and scope as the student progresses from grade 6 to grade 8. Students at Overlook are required to keep daily assignment books and write down homework in each class. Completing homework

and assignment preparation is essential for students to become successful learners. Students are expected to submit their homework by the announced due date.

Purpose of Homework Assignments

Homework assignments should fulfill one or more of the following:

- Drill and practice to reinforce and strengthen skills introduced in the classroom,
- Purposeful reading of assigned literature or text materials,
- Research activities,
- Work on reports or projects,
- Study for tests and quizzes.

Projects and Reports

Long range assignments including projects and reports can provide students with valuable opportunities to integrate a variety of skills and concepts into a single assignment. Book reports, research projects, interdisciplinary projects, written reports, and studying for tests and quizzes take careful planning and organization on the part of students. Parental support is essential for student success. Such assignments should include specific written directions for the student including due dates, purpose, expectations, and procedures.

Team Planning

Team teachers will communicate to ensure that students are not faced with several different projects, lengthy assignments, or major tests at the same time.

Amount of Homework

Parents should recognize that the amount of homework assigned to students generally increases as the student progresses through our school. While it is not possible to establish rigid time limits, homework for grades 6, 7, and 8 may range between 60 and 120 minutes.

Late Homework

It is the student's responsibility to see that homework assignments are handed in or ready to be checked on the due date assigned by the teacher. Students whose homework is incomplete on the assigned due date may be subject to the following:

- After school detention for makeup work,
- Partial credit for assignment.

It is not the responsibility of a teacher or teaching team to provide parents and students with a list of missing assignments for students who choose not to do homework during or at the end of a term. Homework is most often, an immediate need that reinforces a skill learned that day or prepares a student for the next day's lesson. To make up assignments days or weeks later serves little or no purpose and interferes with current daily lessons.

Students may be granted an extension for an assignment due to extenuating circumstances if requested in writing by a parent or guardian. Teachers will keep parents notified of any student's lack of effort in preparing homework either through progress reports, phone calls home, or report card comments.

Make-up work

If a student will be missing school for a period of time the office should be given advance notice in writing. Prior to the student's departure, it is the student's responsibility to make arrangements for the timely completion of any missed assignments. Upon the student's return, it is the student's responsibility to make up missed assignments in a period deemed appropriate by the team and enrichment teachers. If your child is going to be out of school for two or more days, due to illness, parents may call the office before 9:00 am to have homework available by 2:00 pm. Students and parents are encouraged to visit the Overlook web site (www.awrsd.org/oms) for homework assignments.

School Vacations

The faculty and staff at Overlook feel very strongly that school vacations should be a time for families to spend together, and therefore will not assign homework assignments that are due immediately following the three school vacation weeks (December, February, and April Break). However, long-range assignments may necessarily need to be assigned over these time periods.

Weekend Homework

Any homework that is assigned over a weekend should model the time commitment of one average weekday homework assignment. The purpose of any weekend assignment is to maintain student focus on class work in preparation for the following day's lesson.

On-Line Grading

In an effort to increase parental involvement and student accountability, parents will have access to view teachers' grade books through Rediker. They will be able to view assignments and grades as teachers enter them. Typically, assignment grades will be entered into Rediker approximately two weeks from the date an assignment is collected. Please keep in mind that assignment grades will be posted within a reasonable time frame with the understanding that the time required to grade assignments will vary greatly depending on the nature of the class and complexity of the assessment.

Report Cards

Report Cards: Issued in December, March, and June. Student grades are issued as follows:

A+,A, A-	.....	Outstanding	A+	97-100
B+, B, B-	.....	Above Average	A	93-96
C+, C, C-	.....	Average	A-	90-92
D+, D, D-	.....	Below Average	B+	87-89
F	.....	Failing	B	83-86
INC	.....	Incomplete	B-	80-82
MED	.....	Medical Excuse	C+	77-79
NG	.....	No Grade	C	73-76
P	.....	Passing	C-	70-72
			D+	67-69
			D	63-66
			D-	60-62
			F	50-59

Incompletes

In case of incomplete course work, the following applies:

- Students with incompletes are not eligible for after school activities;
- Incompletes are given to students who have had medical problems or other issues that have prevented them from attending school for extended periods of time;
- Each team or enrichment teacher will decide on completion dates for make-up work. If work is not completed on time, the incomplete becomes a failing grade.

Honor Roll

The Honor Roll exists to recognize academic achievement. Honor Roll eligibility for grades 6, 7, and 8 is as follows:

High Honors... All A's

Honors.... All A's and B's

Conferences ~ Please note due to the Covid-19 Pandemic conferences may be different in the 20-21 school year.

Parent-Teacher conferences are held annually in the fall. Parents/guardians sign up for conferences at Open Houses held at the beginning of the school year.

Promotion and Retention

Philosophy

The Ashburnham-Westminster School Committee is dedicated to providing the best total and continuous developmental program for each individual enrolled in its schools. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally. Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. However, exceptions may be made when, in the judgment of the professional staff, such exceptions are in the best educational interest of the student involved.

Exceptions to this annual promotion may include these:

- retention,
- conditional promotion involving summer school,
- transfer,
- placement in available special remedial programs.

Criteria for Promotion and Retention

The ultimate criteria in determining whether a student should be promoted or retained is whether that student has the basic skills necessary to function effectively at the next grade level. This is an educational decision and should be made by the professional staff. Other factors to be considered in the placement of a student will be:

- age,
- past performance,
- academic aptitude,
- social and emotional maturity,
- prediction of success,
- results of standardized tests,
- health and attendance records.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Teaming

The students at Overlook Middle School are divided into six interdisciplinary teaching teams. These teams have approximately 100 students who share the same math, science, social studies, and English. These teachers organize the teams' activities, share information about students and generally assist the team in running smoothly. The teams of students do not remain the same from year to year.

PALS

Preparing All Learners for Success! This class is designed to personalize and maximize learning for every student. Students will be identified utilizing various sources of data to ensure timely identification of struggling students, define their skill gaps & implement effective support plans. During this period of time, students will have the opportunity to participate in service learning activities, check in with teachers, receive interventions, and implement enrichment opportunities.

Enrichment Courses

In addition to Math, Science, Social Studies, and English, students at Overlook also take Enrichment courses. These courses will meet in 15-30 day cycles. The class periods will be 80 minutes long. Students will be graded in these courses, as in other core academic subjects, and homework may be required. Enrichment and PALS classes are an important part of Overlook's goal to meet the academic, social and emotional needs of all students.

Donna Philbin Library/Media Center (LMC)

Students have the opportunity to be exposed to a wide range of print and technology based resources. At the library students may search the library's computer catalog, borrow books and materials, use reference sources, search computer databases, and work on projects requiring the use of the library. Students may access the Internet at the library..

Student Responsibilities:

- The LMC is a place of study and work. Students should be respectful of others by behaving in a responsible manner and to handle all materials, computer equipment and furniture with care.
- No food or drink is permitted in the library.
- Borrowing is a privilege and students are expected to return books on time.
- Students are held accountable for lost or damaged materials, which may result in a bill to replace the book.
- Students with unreturned library books may become ineligible for the end of the year SOAR Day assembly.

Achieve Program

The Achieve Program is a program set up for special needs students. These students have specific needs that can best be addressed in a small group and often in an individualized setting. Within this program, the students meet daily for individualized instruction and are also included within the mainstream of a "regular education" team. The goal of the program, through this team approach, is to foster independence and self-worth by teaching functional academic achievement and socially acceptable behaviors. The result is that students

will strive toward challenging/competitive employment for themselves in the future. The Achieve Program runs the school store and the Quick Stop Café. Both are open on Thursday mornings. Family and community members are welcome. The school store will be open during lunches and students may visit with a pass.

Band

The Overlook Middle School Band is open to any student in grades 6, 7 and 8 who plays an instrument. Students who elect to play an instrument will take the band as an Enrichment in their schedule and will meet every other enrichment cycle for 80 minutes. The band plays a variety of music from the classics to contemporary music. The band performs several concerts each year and also participates in a competitive band festival each spring.

Jazz Band

Jazz band students are selected by audition. Jazz band begins in January and continues to the end of the school year. The emphasis is on improvisation and creativity. Jazz band performs at school concerts, jazz band festivals, and the SOAR Day assembly.

Chorus

The Overlook Middle School Chorus is open to any student in grades 6, 7, and 8 who wants to sing. Students who elect to be part of the chorus will take chorus as an Enrichment in their schedule and will meet every other cycle for 80 minutes. The chorus sings a variety of music from the classics to contemporary music. Several concerts are given each year. The chorus also participates in a competitive chorus festival each spring.

Drama

Students in grades 6, 7, and 8 will expand their dramatic knowledge through improvisation games and performance experience. All students may audition to be part of school-wide productions which rehearse after school. Past productions include Alice in Wonderland and Annie Jr.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In order to provide the best possible environment for learning, we expect that the students of Overlook Middle School will:

- Give and get respect;
- Respect other people's property;
- Do all their homework;
- Come to class prepared with pen, pencil, books, or materials necessary for enrichments such as gym clothes;
- Complete all assignments to the best of their ability;
- Obey all school rules;
- Stay after school when told to do so;
- Take care of property loaned to them in school;
- Be on time to all classes;
- Prompt return of school forms / permission slips.

Arrival and Dismissal from School

The Overlook Middle School building opens for breakfast at 7:10 am. Students should not arrive at school prior to this time as there is no supervisor on duty until 7:10 am. Walkers and students traveling via personal transport should report to the cafeteria if they are having breakfast or the gym for grade 6 and the team room for grades 7&8. Students arriving at school on busses will be allowed access to the cafeteria for breakfast upon arrival. A block starts for all students at 7:35 and marks the official beginning of the school day. School dismissal is at 1:50 pm. For your safety, you may not run through the lines of buses nor may you go into any of the parking areas.

Early Dismissal Request

If you are going to be dismissed while classes are in session, you must bring a written request from home to the main office when you arrive at school to receive a dismissal pass. The note must state the reason for the dismissal and the time. You must report to the main office before leaving the building to give your signed dismissal pass to the office. You will be released only to an adult as specified in the note. The adult also must report to the main office before you will be released.

Care of School Property

Students shall be held responsible for all books or other school property issued to them during the school year. Students are required to cover all of their textbooks. In a case of loss or damage of school materials, students will be required to pay the full replacement value. Outstanding obligations resulting from nonpayment of goods, books and materials may result in the withholding of official documents until all obligations have been met. Students with outstanding obligations will be ineligible to participate in any school activities until such bills are paid in full.

Attendance ~ please note due to Covid-19 attendance policies will be different for the 20-21 school year.

The Ashburnham-Westminster School District considers regular attendance in school as most important for the student to receive these benefits:

- skilled dissemination of knowledge,
 - socialization with other students in a structured setting,
 - lively classroom interaction,
 - varied enrichment activities,
 - cultural awareness and diversity,
 - academic success.
1. The compulsory school attendance law in Massachusetts requires all students between the ages of seven and sixteen to be registered in school and be in regular attendance. Specifically Massachusetts General Law, Ch. 76, sec. 2 reads “Every person in control of a child shall cause him to attend school as therein required.....” A student who misses more than one-half of a school day is defined as absent for the entire day.
 2. Ch. 76, S.1. reads, “Necessary absences by a student may not exceed 7 days or 14 half days in any six month period.” A death in the family, health professional appointment, religious holiday, required court appearance or illness with proper documentation are considered excusable reasons for being absent from or tardy to school. Parents are discouraged from scheduling vacations when school is in session.
 3. In the case of absence, the parent should call the school to report the child’s absence. For the protection of the student, parent, and the school, the school will make calls to the homes of students who are listed absent and whose parents have not called.
 4. Upon the student’s return to school, the student must bring a note from home including the full name, date(s) absent, reason for the absence, and the signature of the parent/guardian. This note must be brought to the office. A note is not required if you made a phone call.
 5. If a student is absent for more than five consecutive days due to illness, a doctor’s note may be required.
 6. If your child is going to be out of school for two or more days due to illness, parents may call the school before 9:00 am to have homework available by 2:00 pm.
 7. Students will not be allowed to participate in after school activities if they are absent for more than half a day on the day of the activity. Students must be in school by 11:00 am.
 8. Truancy cases require a parent/guardian to accompany the student back to school and the child will make up for lost time on succeeding days.
 9. Students must provide the nurse and physical education staff with a medical note from a doctor in order to be excused from PE class. Notes from a parent will not be accepted.

Attendance Policy ~ please note due to the Covid-19 pandemic attendance policies will be different for the 20-21 school year.

The Administration will work to promote 100% student attendance. In the event that the student exhibits patterns of habitual absences, the following policy will be enforced:

1. At the culmination of 4 unexcused absences or tardies, a parent contact may be made via phone;
2. At the culmination of 8 unexcused absences or tardies, a second contact may be

made via letter to request a parent/administrator conference;

3. At the culmination of 12 unexcused absences or tardies, a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) application may be filed with the Fitchburg Juvenile Court.

Tardiness

1. Any student arriving at school after 7:35 am will be considered late and must report to the office for admittance slip to class;
2. When a student does arrive late, a note of explanation should be presented to the office. Excused reasons include medical appointments. Unexcused reasons include oversleeping and missing the bus (unless it is the bus company's fault);
3. Excessive tardiness will require a meeting with the parent/guardian to alleviate the problem.

Truancy

Absentee lists are checked to make sure the student is legitimately absent. Once you are truant, the following consequences will apply:

- Administration will contact with parent or guardian;
- Student will be responsible for the completion of all class work with a potential reduction in credit;
- In-school counseling may be recommended;
- An administrative detention will be given for each day truant;
- Repeated truancy for students under eighteen years of age will result in the filing of a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) application with the court.

CRA (Child Requiring Assistance)

When a child between the ages of 6 and 18 repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable regulations of the child's school or is habitually truant, the school may initiate a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) application for assistance in court stating that said child is not excused from attendance in accordance with the lawful and reasonable regulations of such child's school, has willfully failed to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter or repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable regulations of the child's school.

Academic Honesty

Cheating/Plagiarism

A student shall not copy or attempt to copy another person's work. No student shall conspire to cheat on an assignment or test by handing in another student's work, using cheat notes, or looking at another student's paper. Plagiarism is defined as stealing and passing off the ideas and words of another as one's own, using a product without crediting the source, turning in a paper retrieved from any Internet source (either free or for a fee) or including information from an encyclopedia, book, textbook, web site, database, etc. without citation is plagiarism. A paper is considered plagiarized if any part of it is taken from another source without proper citations.

Forgery

A student shall not sign a parent/guardian name to any school document for the purpose of gaining parental permission/acknowledgement. Said documents include but are not limited to; detention slips, field trip permission forms, behavior contracts, bus notes, report cards, and progress reports.

Sanctions

Sanctions for violation of Academic Honesty will result in a zero grade for the assignment in question, and/or discussions involving the student, teacher, guidance counselor, parents and administration. Serious or multiple offenses may result in administrative consideration for suspension.

Classes Supervised by Substitute Teachers

Substitute teachers are professional staff members who do the important work of enabling us to continue important learning activities when teachers are absent. Students are required to show respect for all substitute teachers and complete the classroom assignments given by substitute teachers. Students must follow the instruction given by the substitute teacher and must comply with all standards of behavior expected of students at Overlook.

Failure to comply with the above will result in the student being assigned consequences as defined by the Discipline Code.

Dress Code

Students are expected to exercise maturity and responsibility in all matters including their dress and personal grooming. Overlook is a place of serious work and dress should be attuned to that concept. Students should remember at all times the five guiding principles of dress: neatness, suitability, moderation, cleanliness and safety. School is a serious work environment and clothing should be appropriate to that setting.

Teachers and the administration will determine the interpretation of these guiding principles. Any attire that is disruptive, distractive, covers the face or does not conform to standards of common decency and propriety is forbidden. Wearing apparel harmful to school property or that could be injurious including clothing with chains is not permitted. Footwear must be worn at all times, subscribing to public health and sanitation standards. Outside clothing, including hats, coats, jackets or sunglasses must be kept in lockers. We do not advocate tobacco, drugs, alcohol or sex and we do not allow clothing that advertises or advocates these topics.

Some current fashion trends are not acceptable in our school environment. These include but are not limited to: pants worn low on the hips to reveal underwear or the midriff, midriff or breast baring tops, short shorts or skirts, pajama tops or bottoms, tank tops, halter tops, spaghetti straps, beachwear, underwear as outerwear and any form of revealing clothing. Dress for physical education must adhere to the dress code. Sneakers must be worn and tied securely for all physical education sports/activities.

Refusal to change or cover offensive clothing items will result in disciplinary measures for insubordination and may result in removal from school.

School administrators and/or teachers will use the following guidelines for dress code infractions.

- 1st offense – Warning and asked to change. Parents will be notified by telephone or letter and may be asked to bring in appropriate clothing. Dress code reviewed with the student;
- 2nd offense – Detentions will be issued and parents will be asked to bring appropriate clothing;
- 3rd offense – Detentions will be issued and students may be sent home.

A general rule of thumb to follow: If you are not sure if it is inappropriate to wear – don't.

Book Bags ~ please note due to the Covid-19 pandemic

Students will be allowed to bring their book bags to class. There will be no locker usage until further notice.

BEHAVIORAL GUIDELINES

Disciplinary Concept

Rules and regulations are necessary. They are merely the visible products of an attitude toward discipline, a system of values by which an individual conducts himself/herself. The basis for this attitude is mutual consideration for the needs of others. Discipline is an extension of an adult's concern for a child's welfare. Discipline is a set of limits for the child so that he/she knows what is and what is not acceptable. Discipline is enforced through mutual trust, and this trust is established through a recognition of the dignity and value of each individual. A child will respond to disciplinary policies if he/she feels that the people setting the limits are really concerned about him/her. It is important to understand the rationale supporting reasonable disciplinary action. Any action must be designed to modify the individual's future behavior in an appropriate direction. It should be limited to protect others in the school environment from physical endangerment. Disciplinary action should ensure the rights of those in the school to teach and learn productively. Disciplinary action should always be administered in a dignified, firm, and consistent manner.

Specific policies have been developed from this concept of discipline. The policies are reasonable and fair and have, as their ultimate objective, effective student self-discipline. Communication and cooperation are the keys to a successful program of school discipline.

Classroom Infraction Procedure

Teachers are responsible for establishing standards of conduct. They should use common sense to diffuse or stop situations which interfere with the educational process. Teachers need to recognize the individual differences in students. Teachers are encouraged to refer students to guidance counselors when appropriate, as there may be underlying causes for a student's behavior.

In their attempts to affect student behavior, teachers are encouraged to utilize all school resources including guidance counselors, the school adjustment counselor, nurse, student support teachers, and other staff. These resources should be utilized by teachers before situations need the attention of the administration.

Teachers are encouraged to contact parent(s)/legal guardian(s) and/or notify guidance counselors when appropriate to enhance communication between home and school.

There are some areas of discipline which should remain in the classroom and be handled by the classroom teacher. These include, but are not limited to:

1. Tardiness to class,
2. Being prepared for class,
3. Talking and other minor disruptions,
4. Passing notes,
5. Minor horseplay,
6. Chewing gum, candy, etc.,
7. Non-participation in classroom activities/assignments,

8. Cheating (see Academic Honesty, contained herein; disciplinary action by administrators may occur.)

Dangerous Weapons and Incendiary Devices

Possession of dangerous weapons or incendiary devices of any kind will not be tolerated at Overlook. Incendiary devices include, but are not limited to, firecrackers, smoke bombs, matches and lighters. Any object that could be used to injure another person and that has no school-related purpose for being in school or on school property or at school-sponsored or school-related events will be considered a weapon for purposes of this code. Appropriate criminal laws (MGL 37H) will be enforced in any situation where a student is found in possession of weapons. The possession of a firearm or other dangerous weapon in the school environment is an expulsion offense as well as a crime punishable by a fine of \$1000.00 and/or one year imprisonment. Any student in possession of any kind of weapon will be immediately referred to the Administrative Office. The parent or guardian will be notified, and disciplinary action will be taken including a ten (10) day out of school suspension and a recommendation for expulsion from school. See **Selected Applicable State and Federal Laws** for MGL 37H, 37H 1/2 and 37H 3/4.

A reminder to all students that pocket knives, box cutters or razor knives are considered dangerous weapons under the code -- do not bring them or any other knife to school.

Possession and/or lighting of any incendiary device, which includes but is not limited to fire crackers, smoke and stink bombs, or the irresponsible use of matches or lighters in and around the school building will result in suspension from school.

Chemical Health Policy

During the school year, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy/sell or give away any material containing alcohol, any tobacco product, or any controlled substance while under school jurisdiction.

(1) **Tobacco or Tobacco Products**: The use or possession of tobacco in any form is prohibited while in school, at school related functions, on school property and school buses. A student found in possession of or using tobacco products will be suspended from school a minimum of three days (see **Suspension from School**).

(2) **Intoxicants, Alcohol and Drugs**: The use of, attendance after use of, or possession of intoxicants, drugs, alcohol, e-cigarettes, vaporizing device, nicotine product, and/or any controlled substance at school functions or while under school jurisdiction is prohibited. It may result in a minimum 10-day suspension from school and/or a recommendation for expulsion from school and confiscation of intoxicants, alcohol and/or drugs (see **Expulsion**). Students suspended for violating this provision may be required to participate in a substance abuse education program as part of the disciplinary action taken. Details of the plan will be determined by administration. The parent or guardian will be notified; law enforcement officials will be notified and legal action may follow at the discretion of these officials. Attendance at school or school functions while "under the influence", "hung-over" or smelling of intoxicants violates the policy as "attendance after the use of" category and carries the same penalty. **The possession of substances or paraphernalia that are meant to represent illegal substances also violate this policy.**

Any student found to be selling or distributing any of the above on school property or while under school jurisdiction will be subject to **expulsion** from school.

Credible Threats

Any student who makes a credible threat toward a staff member will receive a minimum of a ten (10) day suspension on the first offense and parents and the police will be contacted. Subsequent offenses will result in more serious consequences that may result in exclusion or expulsion. A credible threat is defined as a statement in verbal, written, or electronic form that expresses the intent to harm another person and causes the recipient to fear for his or her safety. It is important to note that it is the victim's perception of harm that defines the threat, not the intent of the person making the threat. A student who makes a credible threat toward another student will receive a minimum of a five (5) day suspension on the first offense and parents and the police will be contacted. Subsequent offenses will result in more serious consequences that may result in exclusion or expulsion. Any student who makes a credible threat must undergo a risk assessment prior to return to classes.

Public Display of Affection

Overlook rooms, hallways, and school grounds are NOT a place for public displays of affection. Those who are confronted by public displays of affection are frequently embarrassed and uncomfortable and such situations are not necessary. Continued incidents of public affection will result in disciplinary action, as well as parental contact.

Civil Rights - Discrimination

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District's Policy of non-discrimination will extend to students, staff and the general public and with who it does business; and will apply to race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.

No student shall discriminate, by either verbal or physical action or attacks, based upon race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences. Reports of such activity should be directed to the school administration and appropriate disciplinary action taken.

Some indicators that a crime was hate-motivated include:

- Use of racial, ethnic, religious, sexual or anti-gay slurs;
- Use of symbols of hate, such as a swastika or a burning cross;
- Similar behavior by the wrongdoer towards other students from the same racial, ethnic or religious group or against students from the same sexual orientation;
- The incident occurs while the victim was participating in an activity promoting a racial, ethnic/national origin, gender or sexual orientation group.

Bullying and Harassment

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Regulations

I. DEFINITIONS

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

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

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

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

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.

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.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying resources. Each school within the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District will designate members within their building that will participate on the anti-bullying taskforce. This group which consists of school personnel, local law enforcement, advocacy organizations, parents and other interested parties will meet on a bi-annual basis with the sole purpose of evaluating the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. During this process taskforce members will identify current programs and services that are already in place. Once a comprehensive mapping process has been completed the taskforce will develop action steps for addressing any gaps in services. This may include adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, establishing safety planning teams, and identifying other agencies that can provide services.

B. Counseling and other services. Taskforce members will be responsible for monitoring and updating an already established list of community resources.

C. Students with disabilities. As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

D. Referral to outside services. All referrals will be consistent with the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District, Critical Incident Management Plan.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The law requires each school or district to provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the school's or district's curricula. Curricula must be evidence-based. Effective instruction will include classroom approaches, whole school initiatives, and focused strategies for bullying prevention and social skills development. The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District will follow the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's guidelines for implementing social and emotional learning curricula when it is established prior to June 30, 2011. In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 the plan will be reviewed annually with the students of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional District.

The following are guidelines that will be followed while developing and implementing social and emotional curricula:

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches. Bullying prevention curricula will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

- using scripts and role plays to develop skills;
- empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
- helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
- emphasizing cyber safety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
- enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
- engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.

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

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;

- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

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

Reporting bullying or retaliation. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, or a direct email to school administration.

Incident reporting forms can be found: 1. on the school district's website; 2. in the school's main office, the counseling office; 3. in the student handbook. Guidelines for reporting are as follow:

- **Reporting by Staff**

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

- **Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others**

The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee.

Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the

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

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

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

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

c. Notice to Law Enforcement. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. All notification will be done in accordance with the district and police departments’ memorandum of understanding. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

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

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee

(or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

Interviews may be conducted by the principal or designee, other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the principal or designee will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation.

Determinations. The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

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

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

E. Responses to Bullying.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O(d)(v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;

- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the school's or district's code of conduct.

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

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

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

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

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

A. Parent education and resources. The district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying curricula and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

Notification requirements. Each year the district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying curricula that are being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The

school or district will send parents written notice each year about the student-related sections of the Plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The school or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

VII. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences color. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

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

Discipline Code

Academic Probation

Students who have not passed all of their academic, enrichments and grade level special subjects in a trimester will not be able to participate in any of Overlook's extracurricular activities. Examples of these activities include dances, sports, evening and sports events. A student who receives passing grades at progress report time will be considered eligible to participate in extracurricular activities. Prior to the distribution of progress reports, a student may be put on an academic improvement plan. Details of the plan will be determined by administration.

Social Probation

Students who have demonstrated poor attendance, continual tardiness, poor attitude, lack of effort, behavior problems, and a general lack of trust will not be allowed to participate in Overlook's extracurricular activities. Students who have been suspended from school will not be able to participate in any of Overlook's after school activities. Students suspended from 1-3 days lose 15 days of activities. Students suspended 4-7 days lose 20 days of activities. Students suspended 7 or more days lose 40 days of activities. Examples of these activities include dances, class trips, sports, intramurals, evening activities and games.

Detention

1. When a student has caused a problem in school, he/she will be assigned a detention. The detention will be served the following day from 1:50 to 2:30 pm. The student is to report to the teacher who assigned the detention no later than five minutes after dismissal. Failure to do so will mean another detention. Upon dismissal the student is to leave the building immediately.
2. Failure to accept the responsibility of showing up for detention will require a meeting with the administration. If the first offense is unexcused, the student will receive two

administrative detentions. Students who continue to miss detentions will be subject to further consequences, including parent conferences and, if necessary, out of school suspensions.

3. Overlook Middle School is sensitive to the transportation problems that arise when students have detentions. We also believe that detentions must be served in a timely manner in order for them to be effective. Students are given a minimum 24-hour notice before a detention has to be served. If a student cannot stay because of transportation problems on a first offense, we ask that the student bring a note to school stating the problem and make arrangements to serve this detention within a five day period. If there is a continued transportation problem (more than twice), a parent conference will be requested with the administration and the team/teacher to discuss and resolve this issue.

Suspension

Suspension from school is a denial of a student's privilege to attend school and school activities for a specified period of time. It is a step taken for Level II, Level III, Level IV and Level V infractions as outlined in the Disciplinary Guidelines or when other disciplinary actions have proven ineffective in correcting the student's inappropriate behavior. A student may be suspended from school by the school administration for a period of up to 10 school days. The school administrator will notify the parent or guardian via a written report setting forth the reasons for the suspension and to arrange a readmission hearing.

At the conclusion of a suspension, the student's parent or guardian must make an appointment to meet with the appropriate school administrator to review the circumstances which resulted in the suspension. This parent-administration meeting is a condition for readmission of the student to school. A suspended student may not attend any school-sponsored activity or function for the duration of his/her suspension.

Expulsion

Expulsion is the result of the most serious offenses as it denies educational access at Overlook. Students violating our **Chemical Health Policy**, or School Reform Law 37H/37H1/2 (see **Selected Applicable State and Federal Laws**), or repeatedly violating school rules, disrupting the educational process, and/or harming other members of the school community, may be subject to a Principal's hearing with a recommendation for permanent removal from the school.

Disciplinary Offense Code Levels

Five levels of disciplinary violations, along with the consequences for breaking school rules, have been established. It should be noted, however, that the listing of these violations cannot anticipate every eventuality and that disciplinary options will vary depending on the severity of the behavior and at the administration's discretion. Restorative and diversionary practices may be implemented as part of the disciplinary action. Details of the restorative action will be determined by guidance and administration.

Level I

Accumulation of tardies; pass violations; refusal to sign detention; public display of affection; loitering; dress code violations and failure to be in assigned area:

1st Offense = warning or 1 teacher or administrative detention

2nd Offense = 2 teacher or administrative detentions

3rd Offense = 3 teacher or administrative detentions

Level II

Failure to attend assigned teacher or administrative detention; disruptive or inappropriate behavior in class or out of class; repeated dress code violations; minor technology misuse; forgery; false identification; continued public displays of affection and horseplay:

1st Offense = 1 teacher or administrative detention

2nd Offense = 3 administrative detentions

3rd Offense = 1 day suspension

Level III

Leaving or returning to school grounds without permission; vulgar, obscene or defamatory language, materials and/or gestures; name calling; accumulation of minor infractions; insubordination:

1st Offense = 2 day suspension

2nd Offense = 3 day suspension

3rd Offense = 5 day suspension

Level IV

Gross disrespect to persons of authority by word or action; harassment; major technology misuse; trespassing on school property:

1st Offense = 3 day suspension

2nd Offense = 5 day suspension

3rd Offense = possible suspension for up to 10 days and referral to the Superintendent

Level V

Vandalism; theft; extortion; hazing; possession, use of, or attendance after the use of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, e-cigarettes, vaporizing device or tobacco (see **Chemical Health Policy**), weapons or incendiary devices; pulling of false fire alarms; threats of violence; bomb threats; assault; threats; fighting; or any other illegal acts:

Law enforcement officials may be notified.

Punishment will incorporate penalties outlined in Level IV at the discretion of an administrator as well as referral to the School Committee by the Superintendent with all legal requirements prescribed, including exclusion from school.

Discipline of Special Needs Students and Students on Section 504 Plans

The disciplining of special needs students is governed by federal and state special education law and the regulations promulgated there under. These laws include the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 1400, et seq., 34 C.F.R. section 300.519, et seq., and Massachusetts General Laws c71B.

If a special needs student has violated school rules, the school may suspend the student from his or her educational placement for up to ten school days without consideration of manifestation rights. If a student on an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) is suspended for more than ten days in a school year, the team must conduct a manifestation determination.

During a manifestation determination meeting, if the team answers yes to either of the following questions, the student's conduct is considered to be a manifestation;

1. Was the conduct in question caused by or did the conduct have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability; or
2. Was the conduct in question the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP?

When the conduct in question is deemed to be a manifestation of a student's disability, the team must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan. Regardless of whether a behavior is deemed to be a manifestation or not, the district is obliged to provide services that will enable the student to continue to receive a free appropriate public education.

Procedures for suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days; responsibilities of the Team; responsibilities of the district

1. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 consecutive days but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement.
2. Prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement of a student with disabilities, district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team, as determined by the parent and the district, convene to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."
3. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the district may suspend or expel the student consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities, except that the district must still offer:

- a. services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and
 - b. as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.
4. Interim alternative educational setting. Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (as determined by the Team) for up to 45 school days
- a. on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or
 - b. on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is “substantially likely” to injure him/herself or others.

Characteristics. In either case, the interim alternative education setting enables the student to continue in the general curriculum and to continue receiving services identified on the IEP, and provides services to address the problem behavior.

5. If district personnel, the parent, and other relevant members of the Team determine that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the Team completes a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already done so. If a behavioral intervention plan is already in place, the Team reviews it and modifies it, as necessary, to address the behavior. Except when he or she has been placed in an interim alternative educational setting in accordance with part 4, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents and district agree otherwise.
6. Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student’s current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

	Federal Requirements
	34 CFR 300.530-537

School personnel may order a change in the placement of a student with a disability to an interim alternative educational setting for up to forty-five (45) days in a student 1. carries a weapon to school or to a school function; or 2. knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance while at school or at a school function. Under the described circumstances in this section, or if the removal of a student will constitute a change in the student's placement, a student's IEP team may convene to review the student's educational program and the misconduct.

Procedural requirements applied to students not yet determined to be eligible for special education

1. If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
 - a. The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
 - b. The parent had requested an evaluation; or
 - c. District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.
2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

State Requirements	Federal Requirements
	34 CFR 300.534

SCHOOL SERVICES

Guidance Office

Phone: 978-827-1422

Fax: 978-827-1423

Mrs. Erin Coyne

School Counselor

Ms. Taryn Holman

School Counselor/Adjustment Counselor

Mrs. Katherine Whitaker

School Counselor/Adjustment Counselor

Mrs. Wendy Higgins

Guidance Secretary

Mission Statement

The Overlook Middle School counseling program works to create a safe, welcoming, nurturing environment to support all students. Our mission is to provide a comprehensive program that cultivates each student's academic, career and personal/social growth. Counselors collaborate with students, teachers, parents, administrators and community members to promote the value of positive citizenship and lifelong learning.

Students, in grades 6, 7, and 8, from linguistic, racial, and ethnic minorities; males; females; homeless students; and students with disabilities all receive the same information and academic counseling as other students on the full range of general curricular and any occupational/vocational opportunities available to them.

To ensure that counseling and counseling materials are free from bias and stereotypes on the basis of race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences, all counselors:

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

School Counselors

School counselors, in addition to their team responsibilities, are involved in the following:

- Academic counseling,
- Crisis counseling (individual and group),
- Home/school liaison activities,
- Transitional activities (elementary to middle school and middle school to high school),
- Student registrations and transfers,
- Grade 7 Career Awareness Program

- Grade 6 Orientation,
- School wide initiatives,
- Grade 7 SOS (Signs of Suicide),
- Secondary School Application Process (Montachusett Regional Vocational, Private Schools).

Students may receive a pass from time to time to meet with the school counselor. However, students can arrange a meeting whenever needed, by stopping by the Guidance Office. Students are welcomed and encouraged to visit with their counselor at any time.

Adjustment Counselor

The adjustment counselor meets with students who have a counseling component as part of their individualized educational plan.

School Psychologist

The school psychologist provides assessment and consultation services for the district through the special education department.

Medical/Health

School Nurse

Students should consult the school nurse when they have any problems or questions pertaining to health. Medical treatment consists of first aid for injuries that happen in school and care for students who become ill during school hours. Students who take prescription or over-the-counter medication during the school day **MUST** have a medication order from a physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant, along with written consent signed by the parent/guardian on file in the nurse's office.

Breathe sprays are also not allowed in school. All medication must be in the original container, i.e. the prescription bottle which was dispensed from the pharmacy, taken under the supervision of the school nurse, and brought to school by a parent/guardian or a responsible adult, and given directly to the nurse. **ALL MEDICATIONS** will be dispensed under the supervision of the nurse. A student who wishes to see the nurse during school time must secure a pass from the teacher and should report directly to the nurse's office. If the student needs to leave school during the day because of illness, the nurse will notify the parent/guardian so that they may arrange transportation for the student. If your child calls you and tells you to pick them up because they are being dismissed for illness, something is not right. Please call the School Nurse to verify the dismissal. Students should not use the pay phone to call home for a dismissal. Failure to follow this policy will result in an after school detention.

Screenings performed yearly, for all students, in accordance with the Massachusetts' Department of Health guidelines include the following:

- postural
- screening,
- vision,
- hearing,
- height,

- weight,
- blood pressure.

Physical Examination

Students entering Grade 7 and all students who are new to the district must have a physical examination. All students who participate in competitive sports also must have a physical examination **ANNUALLY**. The physical must be done prior to participation in the sport, which includes practice. The physical exam must be done by an athlete's physician. The physical exam form must be forwarded to the school nurse **BEFORE** practice begins. All student physical exams are **valid for one year** and need to be updated for participation in any sport activity. The physical exam form must include the date that the physical was given and state whether or not the student is physically fit for competitive sports.

SOAR

In the fall of 1996, a committee was formed to discuss additional ways we could recognize students for achievement. The discussions led to the creation of SOAR or Student/Staff Over Achievement Recognition Program. The committee developed a mission statement and goals for the program.

Scholarships, prizes and awards sponsored or administered by the district are free of restrictions based upon race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.

Students who receive Caught Being Good Cards are eligible for chances for prizes through weekly and end of the year drawings. Each student will receive information about this program at the beginning of each school year. SOAR is also responsible for the Highest Soaring Eagles Banquet and Student of the Month program.

Highest Soaring Eagles Banquet

The SOAR Committee honors grade eight students who have demonstrated exceptional achievement during their three years at Overlook Middle School. Students and parents are invited to a banquet that is held in the spring. To receive this recognition, must have maintained Highest Honors for at least six terms and Honors for the remaining terms to receive this recognition when they are grade 8 students. Eligibility will be determined at the end of the second trimester of grade eight. Students who transfer to OMS must meet the academic criteria listed above.

Student of the Month

In 2002, the SOAR Committee introduced a new program called Citizen of the Term. Originally, this program honored students from each team during the first two trimesters of the school year. Now, the students are recognized monthly from September to May. In addition to being academically successful, teachers look for students who volunteer within the Overlook community, volunteer in their own community, and/or are involved in clubs, teams or outside school activities. Students must show effort, exhibit good character, demonstrate positive behavior, and have leadership skills. Each candidate must attend

school on a regular basis and have no behavior detentions. After review of the nominees, the teachers of each team choose the recipients. These honored students will be displayed on the school bulletin board and their names will be read on the school announcements. Then they will be honored during their grade-level morning meetings. We truly believe this is a worthwhile project that enhances the Overlook community and supports our mission statement.

SOAR Day

On the last day of school, all Overlook students attend an assembly in the gym to participate in our annual SOAR Day program. This is the day that our students take part in drawings that afford them an opportunity to win a variety of prizes. All of the Caught Being Good cards given out during the year are put into a box and winners are picked during the assembly. This is the culminating event for the SOAR program each year.

SOAR Mission Statement

The Overlook Middle School SOAR program celebrates students who achieve excellence in our school community. Overlook Middle School, the towns of Ashburnham and Westminster, and the local business community join together to acknowledge and reward student achievement. The SOAR program recognizes academic excellence, leadership, citizenship, personal responsibility, and involvement in the school community.

SOAR Goals

- Improve the academic and homework performance of students at Overlook Middle School.
- Improve the attendance and tardiness of students at Overlook Middle School.
- Improve the behavior of students at Overlook Middle School.
- Create a positive environment for students at Overlook Middle School.
- Create an awareness of and participation in extra-curricular and community service projects.
- Create a partnership between Overlook and area businesses to promote excellence in our school community.

Food Service

The Food Service Department serves a nutritious breakfast and a hot lunch with many choices. The price for a complete breakfast is \$1.50 and a reduced breakfast is \$.30. The price for a complete lunch is \$3.00 and reduced lunch is \$.40. Milk remains at \$.50 for the students.

A pre-payment system for lunch is an option that is available and greatly appreciated for the Food Service Policy adopted by the AWRSD School Committee on October 9, 2007 states that middle school students will be allowed to charge a maximum of one school meal.

Parents can use myschoolbucks.com to view and add to their student's food services account balance and track what their student purchased for breakfast and/or lunch. See the District's website for more information about food services. Chartwells maintains the records of students who utilize the pre-payment system.

The Food Service Director is always available to parents and may be reached at 978-874-1501.

Cafeteria

Lunch is 25 minutes. Students may buy a hot lunch or bring lunch from home and buy additional items. When they have finished lunch, students will take their tray or trash and dispose of it properly. Everyone at a table is responsible for the overall condition of the area. Any student who misbehaves in the cafeteria may lose cafeteria privileges. Students are to stay seated while they eat their lunch.

Below is a list of the cafeteria rules:

1. When finished eating, there are two choices: stay in the cafeteria or go outside on nice days.
2. Students must remain seated while in the cafeteria, except to throw away trash.
3. Students will be dismissed by table and are responsible for their own cleanup!
4. No cutting in line.
5. Walk at all times.
6. A pass must be obtained before leaving the cafeteria during lunch.
7. No food or drink is allowed outside the cafeteria.
8. Energy drinks are not allowed.
9. Be sure to get to and from lunch in a timely fashion, using the correct staircase. This allows for smooth transitions for all three grades.
10. Show respect at all times to teachers, cafeteria and custodial staff as well as other students.

Bus Information ~ please note due to the Covid-19 pandemic students will only be allowed to ride their assigned bus

Bus Company – 978-991-1050

Bus transportation to and from school is provided for all students living two (2) miles or more distant. Eligible students **MUST** ride their assigned bus.

All students riding buses are under the direct supervision of the bus driver. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible and appropriate manner and are expected to follow all school rules. Once boarded, students must remain seated until their bus stop.

Excessive noise, profanity or any behavior distracting the bus driver or endangering others will not be tolerated. Possession or use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs is prohibited on all AWRSD transportation.

Students violating school and bus safety rules may be denied bus transportation. Buses must not be defaced in any way. The bus driver has the same authority during your transit that your teachers do in the classroom. Continued problems on a bus may lead to assigned seating and/or loss of bus privileges.

Bus trips and Bus Stops are extensions of the school day.

Please refer all bus problems to the administration.

Students and parents should be aware that video cameras have been installed on the school buses and activities on the buses may be recorded to ensure the safety of our student riders.

Rules of bus safety and conduct

- Wait on the sidewalk until the bus stops.
- Don't crowd or push when entering or exiting the bus.

- When waiting for the bus at home or at school, don't approach the bus until it comes to a complete stop.
- When approaching or leaving the bus, look both ways before crossing the street. Cross in front of the bus.
- Do not lean out the window or throw objects out the window.
- Don't litter or eat on the bus.
- Never run between a line of buses.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Interscholastic Sports and Extracurricular Activities Eligibility

Academics are a priority at Overlook Middle School. Students must pass all of their classes to be eligible for participation in afterschool programs. Students receiving incompletes will not be allowed to participate until the incomplete is made up. Ineligibility will be reassessed at progress report time. If a student is passing all of their classes, they will be removed from the ineligible list.

Athletics

Overlook Middle School presently has several interscholastic sports available to its students. Interscholastic sports offered include:

- Cross Country,
- Boys' Soccer, Girls' Soccer,
- Field Hockey,
- Boys' Basketball, Girls' Basketball,
- Spring Track,
- Baseball
- Softball

Dances

The Overlook Middle School Spirit Council plans dances each year. These grade level dances are open to all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students who are not on academic or social probation. All school rules apply. Admission is charged for these dances with the profits going to school activities. Tickets are sold the week of the dance at all lunches. Under certain circumstances, tickets are sold at the door but are needed for admission.

Special Activities

Special activities such as field trips and field days can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in real life experiences that enrich the curriculum for students. The School Committee also encourages special activities as an integral part of the instructional program at Overlook.

Extracurricular activities sponsored by the district are nondiscriminatory in that the school provides equal opportunity for all students to participate in intramural and interscholastic sports. Extracurricular activities or clubs sponsored by the school do not

exclude students on the basis of race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.

The Overlook Middle School will ensure that:

- Special activities are properly supervised;
- Safety precautions are observed;
- Reasonable accommodations are made to promote participation by students with disabilities.

Students participating in special activities must meet certain standards in order to be eligible for such participation. Since academics are a very important aspect of the educational process and special activities are designed to enrich the curriculum, behavior is what will determine student participation. Students who have displayed a polite and respectful attitude, a sense of responsibility, and who are positive representatives of Overlook's student body will be allowed to participate in special activities.

A committee of teachers, a school counselor and the administration will review the discipline records before each field trip to determine which students will be allowed to participate. Students and their parents will be notified of their eligibility prior to each special activity.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Office

Overlook Middle School
10 Oakmont Drive
Ashburnham, MA 01430

Telephone: 978-827-1425

FAX: 978-827-1423

Mrs. Christine Martellio, Principal

Mr. Lonnie Simmons, Assistant Principal

Mrs. Kim Dolan, Administrative Assistant

Telephones

Phone use is limited to emergency situations and students are to be at the phone only with an authorized pass. Students will not be allowed to use administrative or departmental office phones except in extreme emergency and only with permission of office personnel. We request that parents/guardians avoid calling the school to give messages to their children during the school day unless it is an emergency.

Visitors ~ Please note due to the Covid 19 Pandemic we will be minimizing all visitors to the OMS campus.

Students wishing to bring a guest to school must obtain permission from the administration 24 hours prior to the visit. Written requests from the visitor's parent and

school must be submitted 24 hours in advance of the visit. Unless there are extenuating circumstances, guests will be limited to persons who have legitimate business with the school, i.e., those students who are looking at Overlook as a future school choice. Visitors should in no way interfere with the school's program or disrupt the educational process. No visitors will be allowed in September, on days preceding a vacation period, on release days or in June. Overlook will not accept visitors when the visitor's school is in session. Visitors and their sponsor are to report to the Main Office to complete the sign in process and receive a visitor's badge. Visitors who have not checked in with the Administrative Office may be asked to leave the school immediately.

Parent Observations in Classroom ~ Please note due to the Covid 19 Pandemic we will be minimizing all visitors to the OMS campus.

The Overlook Middle School believes parents are important partners in educating students. To that end, we open our classrooms to parents, or their designee, who want to observe the child in the classroom context. The following criteria below shall be followed when an observation is requested:

- A. All observations must be scheduled through the building principal;
- B. The parent or designee and principal will discuss the parameters of the observation prior to the observation taking place;
- C. The observation must be scheduled on a mutually agreed-upon date with the parent, principal and teacher(s);
- D. The parent or designee must report to the school office (as do all visitors) as part of our safe schools program. Parents or their designee will be directed to the classroom by the administration;
- E. The parent or designee must sign a confidentiality statement so that both the School District and other classroom parents have assurance that information concerning other students' education remains in the classroom and is not discussed in public;
- F. The parent or designee may only observe a classroom in which the parent's child is enrolled and in attendance that day or in a specific program proposed by the School District for the child;
- G. The parent or designee must be a silent observer at all times and not interrupt or disrupt the educational process of the class;
- H. The parent or designee must refrain from using the observation to critique or evaluate teacher performance;
- I. Given the inherently disruptive nature of observations, more than one observation each quarter is strongly discouraged.

No School Announcements

If school is to be cancelled, radio stations WTAG (580 AM) Worcester, WSRS (96 FM) Worcester, WBZ (1030 AM) Boston; as well as channels 4, 5, 7 and Fox 25 in Boston, will broadcast this information. The Superintendent of Schools will utilize the ONE CALL phone system to announce a cancellation or delay of school. Please do not call the school department.

Parent Notification System

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional Schools will use ONE CALL to facilitate school-to-parent communication in order to notify parents of school events and activities, and to disseminate accurate, time-sensitive critical information in a crisis situation. The system is not intended for use in notifying parents of homework assignments, project due dates, classroom tests or weekly status updates. Parents should notify Overlook as soon as possible if there is a change in their contact information.

Parking

The parking lot is located at the front of the building. No vehicles may be parked in front of school from 7:20-7:40 am or from 1:30-2:00 pm because of bus schedules. Please do not park in the fire lanes.

Safe Schools Notice to Parents

Schools and parents share a common concern and responsibility for the safety of students. Each school year schools encounter problems where students are left remaining after hours unsupervised in school buildings. Students remaining on school grounds must be in a supervised activity. All other students must leave the campus promptly after the dismissal bell. Students are not allowed to wait for other students who are in supervised activities, nor should older students be designated to supervise other students. This practice is unsafe. Furthermore, students exiting one campus should not trespass onto any other school campus. We appreciate your cooperation in keeping all our students safe.

Lockers ~ Due to the Covid 19 Pandemic we will not be utilizing Lockers until further notice

You will be assigned a locker for your coat, books and school materials. Only you, your homeroom teacher and the main office will know the combination to your locker. Don't give your combination out and check to be sure that your locker is closed and locked and cleared before leaving. Lockers are school property and should be treated as such. Combination locks are assigned for gym lockers. If you lose your lock or if it is stolen, you'll have to pay a \$5 replacement fee.

Passes

Students will not be allowed to leave any classroom or activity period without a signed pass from the teacher in charge. Students are to report as quickly as possible to the destination specified on the pass. Failure to adhere to this rule will result in disciplinary action. Any student who abuses the pass system may have that privilege revoked by the administration.

Lost and Found

The school will not assume responsibility for lost or stolen items under any circumstances; lockers and desks are provided as a convenience and are used at the student's own risk. However, lost or stolen items should be reported to the Administrative Office. Items found around the school building are brought to a "lost and found" area. Students may check for lost items in this area; articles not claimed will be disposed of periodically.

Conflict Resolution

One of the main goals that we all share is to provide every student with a quality education. At times we may not agree on the processes used to attain that goal. If, as a parent/guardian, you have a concern that relates to your child and his/her teacher, please use the following guidelines to obtain a resolution:

1. Contact the teacher at school by phone or in person to discuss the problem;
2. In the event that the problem cannot be resolved by Step 2, then the parent should contact the school administration;
3. At this stage, if resolution has not been reached, then the next contact is with the superintendent of the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District.

Use of School Facilities

We believe that Overlook is a community resource as well as an institution for learning. We would encourage outside groups to sign up and use the facility. We will do our best to provide a fair and equitable process in assigning facility use. Building use policies are on file at Overlook and the Superintendent's office.

PTO Information

The purposes of the Overlook PTO are to stimulate, inform, and encourage the active participation of parents, teachers, and citizens of Ashburnham and Westminster. The PTO supports the school in creating a learning environment that meets the needs and abilities of all students. It also provides a forum to facilitate communication between parents and teachers. Monthly meetings are held. Check the website for the times and location of monthly meetings.

School Council

Chapter 71 of the School Reform Law of 1993 requires the establishment of school councils in all the public schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The purpose of the school council is to:

- Assist and advise the principals in adopting educational goals for their school;
- Assist and advise the principals in the identification of the educational needs of the students;
- Assist and advise the principals in the review of the annual school budget;
- Assist and advise the principal in the formulation of a school improvement plan.

Membership:

Principal

Co-Chairperson

Assistant Principal

4 Teachers Grades 6-8 elected by Ashburnham-Westminster Teachers Association

4 Middle School Parents (2A, 2W) elected by Overlook Parent Teacher Organization

1 Community Representative -- Westminster

1 Community Representative -- Ashburnham

Publication of Student Names

Periodically, Overlook Middle School publicizes student names for awards, achievement, honors, etc. in the local media. In addition, student work and achievement may be recognized on Overlook's website (www.awrsd.org/oms). According to District policy, group photos and side profiles may be published on our web page; however, no names shall be linked to a photograph. Work shall be identified by first name and last initial only. Student work shall be understood to be (though not limited to) writing, artwork, and musical pieces. If a parent/guardian does not want his/her child's name or photograph in the media or achievement to appear on our web page, please complete the "Notification Regarding Student Identification" found at the bottom of the page on the Student Emergency Health Record Form.

Media Permission

At the beginning of the school year a Student Emergency and Health Record Form will be sent home with each student. Parents must indicate under the section entitled "Notification Regarding Student Identification" whether they **GRANT** or **DENY** permission for the child to be filmed, taped, photographed, videotaped or published on the website. If a parent/guardian fails to complete this section, the district will treat the act as a **DENIAL**, until otherwise notified in writing by the parent/guardian. A student list of "denied access by parents" will be kept on file at the school.

Movies/Videos/Video Games

Movies, videos and video games can enhance and enrich the curriculum. The administration will approve the use of the video, movie or video game. If there is a need to use a movie or video rated P-13 or above or a video game rated Teen, teachers will send home a permission note prior to the viewing. The permission slip will include:

- Description of the content of the movie,
- The movie's rating,
- How the movie is connected to the unit being studied.

Web Page Publishing Policy

Our district has chosen to adopt the following regulations with respect to all of our school web pages.

Supervision of web pages.

Responsibility for the content of a school's website will rest solely with the building's principal. The principal, at his or her discretion, may select a person, or persons (hereafter referred to as the webmaster) to maintain the school website in a fashion that is consistent with the regulations set forth in this policy.

Quality of Content

Each school webpage will be designed and maintained in such a way as to meet the following criteria:

1. Anything that is on the school webpage will be grammatically correct and free of spelling mistakes;

2. The webpage should be well organized, professional in appearance, and offer ease of use for those who visit the site;
3. The only links (quick connections to other sites on the World Wide Web) which will be posted on the webpage are those which have been thoroughly checked out by the webmaster and deemed to be of educational value;
4. The webpage will not contain ANY links to staff or student homepages.

It must be clearly understood that any material submitted for publication (by a student, staff member, or community member) may be accepted or rejected by the building principal on its educational merits and the needs of the school at that point in time.

Copyright Issues

When student or staff work is published on any school webpage, the webmaster will post a copyright notice prohibiting the copying of this work without written consent.

If a webmaster chooses to incorporate material; (text files, graphics, and audio files) from another source on the school webpage, s/he must first obtain a permission form from the copyright owner. The district will furnish each webmaster with a Copyright Permission Form that can be used to garner said permission. Once permission is granted and the material is used, a notice must be placed at the bottom of the school webpage crediting the original producer.

Policy Review

The School Committee will periodically assess the appropriateness of the language contained herein and make any changes to stay current with any technological advances.

Computer Use Policy

There is a district wide computer use policy (see appendixes). It is important that students have a clear understanding of this policy. Please discuss the document with your child. Students will bring home an "Overlook Student Handbook and the Overlook Computer Use Contract" acknowledgement card which must be signed by both the student and parent. Any violation of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in disciplinary action. This action includes but is not limited to cancellation of computer privileges, and if appropriate, legal action.

Electronic Devices

No personal electronics are to be used during the school day unless they are being used for educational purposes. This includes tablets, MP3 players (iPod) and cellular phones. Picture or video capable cell phones are prohibited from use anywhere in the school building. The use of this technology for purposes that violate school procedures or personal freedom will result in disciplinary action. All personal electronics are to be stored in lockers and turned off during the school day. Personal electronics in student possession during the school day will be confiscated and returned to the student after school. Subsequent offenses will produce further disciplinary action requiring parental contact. These devices are often the target of theft. The school does not assume any responsibility for the loss or damage to personal electronic devices.

Fire Drill/ Building Evacuation

The purpose of a fire or building evacuation drill is to safeguard students in the event of an actual fire or evacuation. In each classroom instructions are prominently displayed regarding the route to be used in leaving the building during drills. All students are expected to observe the following:

- No talking. Stay with your class;
- Walk swiftly in single file;
- Be attentive. Obey all directions immediately;
- Outside the building move quickly to your assigned location and find your teacher - check in for attendance;
- On the return signal, return to the building in an orderly fashion. Return at once to the room that you left on the fire drill/evacuation signal.

False Alarms: This is a very serious offense. Deliberately causing a false alarm is illegal. The penalty is \$200 plus restitution and suspension from school.

Building Security Alert

In the event of a building security concern a loudspeaker announcement from the administration will be made. Instructions will be given to secure the classrooms.

Teachers will make sure that students are secure in their classrooms with the doors shut and locked and students not visible from doors. Any students in the corridor will be taken into adjacent classrooms upon the alert. Teachers will await further instructions from the administration. If evacuation is necessary, follow existing procedures.

Administrative Search Policy

The school administration retains control over lockers loaned to students. The administration therefore has the right and duty to inspect and search students' lockers if the administration reasonably suspects, upon information received from law enforcement officials or other sources, that drugs, weapons, dangerous, illegal or prohibited matter, or goods stolen from school or from members of the staff or student body, are likely to be found therein. The administration also has the right and duty to search a student if there is a high degree of suspicion that drugs, weapons, stolen goods, dangerous, illegal or prohibited material are likely to be found on the student. It is the school's duty to enforce school discipline and to protect the health and safety of the student and/or student body. The items of such search may be turned over to law enforcement officials for inspection or examination and may be the subject of criminal or juvenile court prosecution, or of school disciplinary proceedings.

APPENDIXES

Required Applicable State and Federal Statutes

Massachusetts General Law - Chapter 71: Section 37H3/4. This section covers suspension or expulsion on grounds other than those set forth in Secs. 37H or 37H1/2

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.

Massachusetts General Law - Chapter 71: Section 37H½. Delinquency complaint against student; suspension; hearing; expulsion upon conviction; appeal.

Section 37H ½ 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.

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

Massachusetts General Law - Chapter 71: Section 37H

(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) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school

district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

Massachusetts General Laws -- Chapter 269

Hazing as described by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 269, Section 17 is prohibited. Participants will be suspended from school for 5 school days. Organizers of the incident will be suspended for 10 school days. All such incidents will be reported to law enforcement authorities for further action.

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

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or 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 any other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage or drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

Chapter 269: Section 18. Failure to report hazing.

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 or not more than one thousand dollars.

Chapter 269: Section 19. Copy of secs. 17--19; issuance to students and student groups, teams and organizations; report.

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

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

An Act Providing For Drug Free Schools

Effective July 1, 1989, anyone convicted of dealing drugs within 1000 feet of an elementary, vocational or secondary school will face a two-year mandatory prison sentence. It will not matter whether the dealer knew he/she was near a school, whether it is a public or private school or in session at the time of the offense. The law will pertain to drug distributors, manufacturers or persons possessing a controlled substance with intent to distribute it. A fine of up to \$10,000.00 may also be imposed but not in lieu of the two-year term of imprisonment.

Massachusetts General Law - Chapter 76: Section 5

Approved by School Committee Vote January 9, 1996

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.

Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 76, Section 5

Approved by School Committee Vote May 7, 2013

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District's Policy of non-discrimination will extend to students, staff and the general public and with whom it does business; and will apply to race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.

Non-Custodial Parents: Access to School Records

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record, consisting of information concerning his or her child, including, but not limited to report cards and progress reports, the results of testing, notification of a referral for a special needs assessment, notification of enrollment in an English Language Learner program, absences, illnesses, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, or withdrawal from school, 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 or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 2. the parent has been denied 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, or
 4. there is an order of a Probate and Family Court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
- b) The school shall place in the student's record any documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).
- c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
- d) Upon receipt of the request, the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and in 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 all electronic and postal address and telephone number relating to either work or home locations of the 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, § 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.

The Ashburnham Westminster Regional School District and Overlook Middle School comply with the following state and federal laws

- **[Title I of the American Disabilities Act](#)**: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment

- **Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas educational programming and activities
- **Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on race, color, and national origin
- **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex Recent landmark pieces of legislation, Chapter 622 of the 1972 Education Amendment, are laws prohibiting discrimination. These are based on the sound premise that in a knowledge-based society, equal opportunities in education are fundamental to equality in all other forms of human endeavor. It is the policy of Overlook Middle School not to discriminate on the basis of sex, color, race, religion, handicap or national origin as in accordance with Chapter 622 of the Massachusetts General Laws, Title IX, of the 1972 Education Amendment and
- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability
- **Mass. General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 5**: Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, national background, religion, sex, gender identity, disability, economic status, political party, age, handicap, sexual orientation, homelessness and other human differences.
- **Mass. General Laws, Chapter 265, Section 37**: No person whether or not acting under the color of the law, shall by force or threat of force, willfully injure, intimidate, or interfere with, or oppress or threaten any other person in the free exercise or enjoyment of any right or privilege secured to him by the constitution or laws of the Commonwealth or by the constitution or laws of the United States.
- **Mass. General Laws, Chapter 71A**: The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School Committee requires that all teachers, professional staff, and paraprofessional staff demonstrate English language fluency and literacy in classrooms where English is the language of instruction.

ASHBURNHAM-WESTMINSTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ANTI BULLYING POLICY

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District will create an Anti-Bullying Policy as well as Bullying Prevention and Intervention Regulations as required under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, in consultation with state agencies, school personnel, local law enforcement, advocacy

organizations, parents, and other interested parties. The Plan's format will parallel the states Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

I. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

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 district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

II. Priority Statement

The Ashburnham Westminster Regional School District expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

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

We understand that members of certain student groups, such as students with disabilities, students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender, and homeless students may be more vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing. The school or district will take specific steps to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

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

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (“Plan”) is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan.

OBSERVATION OF EDUCATION PROGRAMS BY PARENTS AND THEIR DESIGNEES FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES

The legislature amended section 3 of M.G.L. c. 71B, the state special education law, to require school committees, upon request by a parent, to grant timely and sufficient access by parents and parent-designated independent evaluators and educational consultants (both of whom are referred to in this guidance as "designees") to a child's current and proposed special education program so that the parent and named designees can observe the child in the current program and any proposed program.

Ashburnham-Westminster and parents and their designees have successfully collaborated to achieve timely and sufficient access to programs for observations that have helped parents and their designees better understand the school programs that serve students with disabilities. Parents should request the observation in writing by providing the name of the child or program to be observed, the name(s) of the observer(s) and contact information. No specific form is required. Observations are not intended as an opportunity to speak to or interact with staff or students (including the child specifically being observed).

If the request is from a parent designee and the school has no prior consent to share information with the designee, the school will confirm with the parent that the designee is acting on his or her behalf. If the designee will review the student's records, as is often the case, the school **must** obtain **written** permission from the parent for the record review consistent with section 23.07(4) of the Student Records Regulations.

The timely access requirement does not mean that a school district must allow observations on demand, or that parents or designees may unilaterally set a schedule for observations. Principals may take a reasonable period of time to inform school staff and plan the logistical aspects of an observation. Typically, a minimum of 48 hours notice is required. However, the principal may require additional time due to building or staffing needs. Additionally, certain periods of the year, such as during MCAS testing in the child's classroom or the first or last couple of weeks of school, have been designated as times in which observations are not generally scheduled.

The school will permit access to programs that is of "sufficient duration and extent" to accomplish the purpose of the visit, i.e., evaluation of the child's progress in the current program and/or the proposed program's ability to allow the child to make adequate progress. The school may limit the frequency of such observations. While on occasion more than one observation may be warranted per school year, the principal will approve additional observations based upon the stated purpose of the additional observation. Except under extraordinary circumstances, as determined by the principal, no more than four observations will be allowed per student per year in order to protect the integrity of the program during observations.

Parents and designees are generally knowledgeable about and sensitive to issues of student confidentiality and privacy. While this is so, the district will inform observers that in the event that they obtain personally identifiable or confidential information during the course of an evaluation/observation, they will not disclose it (except when it is the information of the student being evaluated, in which case it will be used consistent with the parent's authority and direction).

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

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

Principals may exercise their discretion at any time to reschedule or terminate an observation in the event of a building emergency or a disruption that impacts the physical or emotional well-being of the children in the school or the program being observed.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Eligible parties may peruse any records kept on students at Overlook at any time. There is nothing in the permanent or temporary record, which would not or could not have already been seen by a parent/guardian or student. These records include report cards, midterm reports, letters of commendation, attendance, health records, etc. Upon graduation or leaving Overlook, students may obtain a copy of any record pertaining to said student.

Students are requested to sign a statement, which allows Overlook to maintain information in their folders, which could be of value to the student in the future, beyond the five-year limit of this act. Without this permission, school activities, health records, MCAS scores, etc. could not be kept. Whenever a party feels the records are inaccurate that party may, in writing, add their version of the inaccuracy to the record. Additional information regarding these state regulations may be obtained from the Guidance Office.

Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA)

(Management plan notification in accordance with AHERA regulations 40 CFR 763)

The Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District must notify building users, in writing, that the AHERA Management Plans of each school will be available for review in the office of the Head Custodian between the hours of 8:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. Monday through Friday by appointment.

MIAA Regulations: Taunting Rule

Taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race,

gender, ethnic origin, or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters.

Examples of taunting include but are not limited to: "trash talk ", defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including " in the face " confrontation by one player to another and standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player.

In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant un-sportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from that contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing MIAA Expulsion Rules. A warning shall be given to both teams by game official prior to the contest.

At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, appropriate management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators are subject to ejection.

Overlook Computer Use Contract

I understand and accept that my access to school computers and the Internet is dependent on my commitment to use these resources appropriately as outlined below as well as in the Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District Acceptable Use Policy. Inappropriate use of school computers will result in my loss of computer access and/or further disciplinary action.

I understand and accept that the purpose of school computer resources is educational. Specifically, I will not use school computers:

- in furtherance of any illegal act, including violation of any criminal or civil laws or regulations, whether state or federal;
- for any commercial purpose;
- to send threatening or harassing messages, whether sexual or otherwise;
- to access or share sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate materials;
- to infringe any intellectual property rights;
- to gain, or attempt to gain, unauthorized access to any computer or network;
- for any use that causes interference with or disruption of network users and resources, including propagation of computer viruses or other harmful programs;
- to intercept communications intended for other persons;
- to distribute chain letters;
- to access chat rooms, instant messaging, game sites, online gambling sites or other non-educational sites;
- to libel or otherwise defame any person; or
- to plagiarize work found on the Internet.
- for any use that causes interference with or disruption of network users and resources, including propagation of computer viruses or other harmful programs;
- to intercept communications intended for other persons;

- to distribute chain letters;
- to access chat rooms, instant messaging, game sites, online gambling sites or other non-educational sites;
- to libel or otherwise defame any person; or
- to plagiarize work found on the Internet.

I will follow all copyright regulations and will not copy programs, pirate software, engage in hacking, or take or waste computer supplies provided by the school.

I understand that the school district uses software that is designed to restrict access to controversial and inappropriate sites. I will not attempt to disable or otherwise circumvent this Internet filtering software.

I will be polite when writing email messages to others. I will not use inappropriate language. I will not harass or disrupt other users. For my safety I will not give my full name, home address, telephone number or other personal or school information to others.

I recognize the rights of all computer users to privacy. I will not publish personal information about others. I will not use other students' or faculty members' disks, their passwords, or access their private files.

I will not use floppy or zip disks, CD-ROMs, flash drives or other removable media without first obtaining my teacher's permission. I will not attach any peripheral equipment to Overlook equipment without permission.

I understand and agree to Overlook's contract for computer use. I understand that should I break this contract my access to computers will be revoked and disciplinary actions taken.

Ashburnham Westminister Regional School District Acceptable Use Procedures for Technology and Electronic Resources for Parent Access to the Rediker Parent Portal

ACCESS TO YOUR CHILD'S BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION, ATTENDANCE, DISCIPLINE AND GRADES VIA Rediker IS BEING PROVIDED TO PARENTS AS A MEANS OF COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATION. PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES REGARDING THIS ACCESS:

ACCEPTABLE USE GUIDELINES:

1. YOU MUST ADHERE TO THE FOLLOWING PROTOCOL IN THE ORDER LISTED FOR CONCERNS REGARDING YOUR CHILD'S GRADES:

- a. SPEAK TO YOUR CHILD FIRST.
- b. HAVE YOUR CHILD SPEAK TO HIS/HER TEACHER FOR CLARIFICATION.
- c. PARENT/GUARDIAN MAY SEND ONE EMAIL OR CALL THE TEACHER AND EXPECT A RESPONSE IN A TIMELY MANNER.

2. EVEN THOUGH YOU ARE ABLE TO CHECK GRADES 24 HOURS A DAY / 7 DAYS A WEEK, TEACHERS WILL BE EXPECTED TO UPDATE THEIR GRADEBOOKS IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHOOL HANDBOOKS.

3. ACCESS TO THE DISTRICT'S ELECTRONIC STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM IS PROVIDED ONLY AS AN EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS. THE INFORMATION PROVIDED VIA THE STUDENT

INFORMATION SYSTEM'S PARENT PORTAL IS NOT AN OFFICIAL RECORD. FOR OFFICIAL RECORDS, PARENTS SHOULD CONTACT THE CHILD'S SCHOOL/GUIDANCE COUNSELOR.

4. USERNAMES AND PASSWORDS ARE TO BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL. THE DISTRICT ACCEPTS NO RESPONSIBILITY IN THE EVENT THAT A USERNAME OR PASSWORD IS SHARED, GIVEN, STOLEN OR, IN ANY OTHER WAY, BECOMES THE POSSESSION OF ANOTHER PARTY. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT PASSWORDS ARE NOT SHARED WITH YOUR CHILD; STUDENT LOGINS CAN BE SET UP BY THE PARENT IF STUDENT ACCESS IS DESIRED.

5. PARENT ACCESS TO THE DISTRICT'S ELECTRONIC STUDENT INFORMATION SYSTEM WILL BE MONITORED. LOGS LIST THE DATE AND TIME OF LOGIN AND THE DURATION OF LOGIN.

TERMS OF USE

1. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS PROVIDING THIS ACCESS AS A PRIVILEGE, AND IF ABUSED THIS ACCESS MAY BE SUSPENDED OR REVOKED.

2. I UNDERSTAND THAT THE SCHOOL DISTRICT IS NOT LIABLE FOR ANY DAMAGES TO PERSONAL EQUIPMENT INCURRED WHEN CONNECTED TO THE PARENT PORTAL.

3. IN CONSIDERATION OF USING THE ASHBURNHAM WESTMINSTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT NETWORK AND HAVING ACCESS TO MY STUDENT'S GRADES AND ATTENDANCE, I HEREBY RELEASE THE ASHBURNHAM WESTMINSTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT FROM ANY CLAIMS AND DAMAGES FROM MY USE OF THE SYSTEM.

**ASHBURNHAM-WESTMINSTER REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION REPORTING FORM**

SCHOOL

DATE

Name of reporter: _____ Role _____

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

Please provide your contact information/telephone number _____

Incident Information

Date(s) of Incident: _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (be specific): _____

Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used.)

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

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other

Name: _____ ☐ Student ☐ Staff ☐ Other

Signature of person filing this report: _____ **Date:** _____

Administrator receiving report: _____ **Position:** _____

Signature of administrator receiving this report: _____ **Date:** _____

OVERLOOK MIDDLE SCHOOL CHROMEBOOK USE AND CARE CONTRACT

The rules below are designed to help us keep the school's Chromebooks in good working order so future classes can enjoy their use. Please read the information below, sign the contract, and return to your teacher.

CHROMEBOOK USE AND CARE

- No food or drinks are allowed near the Chromebooks
- Carry the device with TWO hands at all times. The lid should be closed.
- Only use flat space (your desk or a table) that has been cleared off first.
- Never leave it on the floor or use it in the hallway.
- Never throw, slide, or press hard on the device.
- Do not touch the screen with your fingers, pencil, etc. If it needs to be cleaned, please ask your teacher to help you.
- Do not attempt to change any physical structure of the device (keys, cover, label on top which identifies the device, etc).
- Do not change any settings.
- Sound should be muted. Use headphones when you need the sound.
- Make sure the Chromebook is put back in the correct slot and plugged in each time you return it. The charging port should be facing out.
- If you need to plug something into the USB ports, please be gentle.
- Stay on the app or website your teacher has assigned you.
- Report any problems with the device to your teacher immediately.

CONSEQUENCES

1st offense: Warning is given (and documented by the teacher)

2nd offense: Loss of Chromebook privileges for 3 days.

3rd offense: Loss of Chromebook privileges for 5 days.

4th offense: Loss of Chromebook privileges for a time determined appropriate by the teacher and administration.

*If an offense is significant in nature (i.e. dropping the device, changing settings so others cannot log on, etc.) a teacher/administrator reserves the right to give a higher level consequence than originally anticipated. For example: If you drop a Chromebook you may lose privileges for 5 or more days regardless of whether or not you have already received an offense previously.

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

I have read the contract and agree to use the Chromebooks appropriately. I understand that if I do not, the above consequences will be issued.

Student Name (please print): _____

Student Signature (required): _____