



# ROWE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

## Family Handbook 2021-2022

### STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

We believe that all students have an innate desire to learn in a supportive and stimulating environment. Our school staff nurtures this desire, providing positive support and constructive feedback throughout the year. We offer authentic and engaging project-based learning experiences, an array of social and emotional strategies to navigate relationships with peers, and a variety of tools that will enable our students to become continuous learners.

We strive to create a positive environment in which children are challenged to think for themselves, accept responsibility for their learning, and take part in decision-making. We encourage students to become self-disciplined, self-directed, creative learners with flexible mindsets, able to contribute to vibrant and cooperative classroom communities. We work with the Rowe School community to foster respect for the rights, dignity, and opinions of others, teaching our students to function effectively and productively in society.

**Our school year calendar, important links, as well as many portions  
of the handbook are available on the school web site:**

**[www.roweschool.org](http://www.roweschool.org)**

**Revised August 2021**

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August 2021

Dear Rowe School Families,

Summer is usually a quiet time at the school but this year was a little different. We have redesigned the school and reimagined the curriculum to best deliver education to our students in a safe, joyful, and engaging way, inside and out. We miss the sights and sounds of students and staff learning together, and are looking forward to hearing the happy sounds of children talking, laughing, playing...and learning.

Here is your copy of the 2021-2022 Family Handbook for the Rowe Elementary School. I hope the enclosed information on school policies, regulations, services, programs, and school dates will be helpful to you, including the **updated health, safety, and protocol information regarding our response to COVID-19 (see page 30)**. We also hope that you will better understand the place where your child will be spending an important part of the day. I understand that everyone is busy, and if you do not have time to read this handbook in its entirety at the beginning of the year, please take a moment to review the table of contents and the sections on expectations around masking and hand-hygiene, attendance, and transportation now. It is important that you understand our expectations and procedures in these areas from the start. Also included is a map of our parking lot. Please note the traffic flow pattern, and where families can stop briefly (but not leave their cars idling) to drop their students off.

Over the course of the year, if questions or problems relating to your child's school experience do come up, please check this handbook first. It will save time in trying to resolve the issue. In general, it is best to approach the staff member most directly involved with the problem first, usually your child's classroom teacher or the school nurse. If that does not resolve the issue, please speak with me. If you are unhappy with what I am able to do for you, the Superintendent of Schools and the School Committee are the next places to turn. It is a good idea to put the nature of your problem or concern in writing: this helps everyone track the progress made in resolving the issue. As the year progresses, it is our hope that the partnership existing between school and home will also progress. We encourage open communication and hope that when questions and concerns arise throughout the year, you will take the opportunity to share them with us. We will do the same with you. We also encourage your involvement.

The Parent-Teacher Partnership (PTP) plays a vital role in supporting the students, staff, and the school in general. It is our hope that through our combined efforts, your child will have a rewarding and successful year.

Sincerely,

Bill Knittle  
Principal

## ROWE SCHOOL STAFF LIST

The Rowe School Phone Number is (413) 512-5100, and the fax is (413) 339-8621.

Our website: **[www.roweschool.org](http://www.roweschool.org)** - General email: **[contact@roweschool.org](mailto:contact@roweschool.org)**

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## 2021-2022 School Year

### ROWE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

The three members of the Rowe School Committee are responsible for the overall direction of the school and meet monthly, generally on the second Thursday of the month. All meetings are open to the public and notices are posted at the school, Rowe Town Hall, and on the school website. Your attendance and input at these meetings are always welcome and necessary.

Members of the committee are:

Susie Zavotka - Chairperson

Matt Crowningshield

Mary Paige

### ROWE SCHOOL CENTRAL OFFICE

Rowe shares its central school administration with the North Berkshire School Union. The following administrators are in the Superintendent's Office. The phone number is 413-664-9292.

Superintendent of Schools	John Franzoni	jfranzoni@nbsunion.com
Business Manager	Jennifer Macksie	jmacksie@nbsunion.com
Director of Pupil Services	Stephanie Pare	spare@nbsunion.com
Technology Coordinator	Josh Arico	jarico@nbsunion.com
Superintendent's Secretary	Ronna Brandt	rbrandt@nbsunion.com

## ROWE SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER PARTNERSHIP/LOCAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Rowe School Parent Teacher Partnership/Local Education Council (PTP/LEC) is a vital component of our school. It is a support system for the Rowe School community as well as an advisory group of parents, teachers, and community members who meet with the principal to prepare an annual School Improvement Plan, for adoption by the School Committee, and address the needs of the school community. The PTP/LEC helps sponsor part of the cost of field trips and the ski program, purchases equipment and supports the teachers in various ways, helps bring the community and the school together, is the primary fund-raising group for the school, and is a source of communication and feedback between the staff, families and the community. The co-chairs this year are Wendy Norcross and Molly Lane

Specific Goals of the Rowe School PTP/LEC include but are not limited to:

- Fundraising for enrichment programs
- Researching areas for enrichment (people and activities) to enhance the curriculum.
- Taking advantage of programs run by area businesses.
- Showing appreciation to staff and students at appropriate times during the year.
- Involving at least one staff member at all meetings.

### SCHOOL HOURS

All Grades - Preschool to Grade 6     8:30-3:15, Mon.-Thurs., 8:30-12:30, Fri.

We are continuing with our bus, drop-off, and pick-up rules from last year. Please note the new morning schedule for students: students are expected at school between **8:25 and 8:30**. Please strive to have your student arrive on time, it helps with breakfast and lunch counts, and beginning the day in classrooms. While students are expected at the school at 8:30, they can be dropped off outside after 7:45, and will be supervised by school staff on the playground until school starts. They will need to be dressed to stay outside, but in case of rain or extreme weather they will be supervised in the gym, where they will be able to read or play quiet games, masked and separated into groups by classroom.

On the bus: Students must wear masks and remain in their assigned seats on the bus. Students will be dropped off by the bus and walk through the front door to their designated areas.

Students being dropped off: The school day **starts at 8:30**. Students arriving after 8:30 are considered tardy. We will again use the pick-up/drop-off lane around the circle, single file, beginning in the "staff" area of the parking lot. There will be another lane for through traffic. Parents will drive in the pick-up/drop-off line and stop where indicated to drop their students off. Please do everything you can to have your students at the school on time. It will help us all, including your students. If your student is going to be late, please let Laurie know, and also let her know if they are having home or school lunch.

There will not be early release days in the middle of the week as in past years, even though Mohawk is continuing that process. Students will be dismissed each Friday at 12:30. We are scheduled to have three professional development days for teachers during the school year, on which students would not attend school. Please refer to the school calendar for the exact dates.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

At Rowe Elementary School, Preschool through sixth-grade classes are arranged in a multi-grade setting. We have five classrooms: a Preschool classroom for three-year-olds (P1), a combined PreK/K classroom for four and five-year-olds (P2), and combined classrooms for first and second grade (P3), third and fourth grade (3/4) and for fifth and sixth grade (5/6). The arrangement of grades within a classroom may vary with population shifts. Rowe School is a school of choice. Admission is open on a seat-available basis which is advertised in May of each year.

Kindergarten enrollment for the fall may only occur when a child's fifth birthday occurs on or before September 1st for the upcoming school year. Special education and other services including speech and language services, physical therapy, occupational therapy, and counseling services are provided to students as needed.

### **STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

In a supportive and stimulating environment, we believe that all students have an innate desire to learn. Our school staff nurtures this desire, providing positive support and constructive feedback throughout the year. We offer authentic and engaging project-based learning experiences, an array of social and emotional strategies to navigate relationships with peers, and a variety of tools that will enable our students to become continuous learners.

We strive to create a positive environment in which children are challenged to think for themselves, accept responsibility for their learning, and take part in decision-making. We encourage students to become self-disciplined, self-directed, creative learners with flexible mindsets, able to contribute to vibrant and cooperative classroom communities. We work with the Rowe School community to foster respect for the rights, dignity, and opinions of others, teaching our students to function effectively and productively in society.



## **OUR GOALS**

Our students will:

- Respect individual differences and the rights of others
- Assume responsibility and independence
- Make intelligent decisions using a growth mindset
- Read and listen with understanding
- Express themselves clearly in speaking and writing
- Demonstrate competent mathematical skills
- Develop skills and attitudes that promote physical health
- Understand and appreciate the arts
- Apply scientific concepts to their environment
- Appreciate people and their cultures, past and present

Our staff will:

- Foster an appreciation of literature and reading for enjoyment
- Recognize the individual needs of students
- Provide strategies to navigate complex social situations
- Allow students to take an active role in their learning
- Model appropriate communication skills for effective collaboration
- Teach mathematical skills and problem-solving skills
- Provide multiple opportunities for students to discover and develop talents, skills, and experiences in all subject areas to establish a foundation for later learning

## **ROWE SCHOOL CORE VALUES**

- Kindness
- Community
- Responsibility
- Perseverance

## CONTENT AREAS

### Language Arts

The Rowe Elementary School staff is committed to meeting the reading and writing needs of each individual child. A variety of approaches to teaching reading and writing allows us to do so effectively. Using the Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading approach, we provide literature at each child's instructional level, using different methods to help individual students achieve a critical set of objectives. Our aim is for students to become competent readers and writers. We hope that reading will become a pleasurable and meaningful activity and to make writing a useful means of communication and expression. Parents/guardians are encouraged to read with their children and to nurture a love of reading at home.

### Mathematics

The three aims of the Rowe Elementary School math curriculum, Everyday Mathematics, are as follows. First, students must master math facts. The facts are not learned in an isolated way. Students must develop a strong number sense. Second, students will be able to apply concepts, processes, and facts from their math work in their everyday life. Finally, students will understand math as a process of logical thinking and problem-solving wherein the learner decides what the problem is, identifies which information available is essential or non-essential to the solving of the problem, and which math procedures will be necessary to arrive at a solution. To reach these aims, the curriculum works as a spiral, so that major topics are introduced and then reappear later on in more difficult and complex ways. It provides opportunities for cooperative learning, invites students to explain the math processes that they are using, and offers concrete and manipulative materials for guided discovery.

### Science

We believe an engaging and hands-on approach to teaching science will allow students to take risks without fear, think independently, and explore cooperatively. In turn, they will develop an understanding of local and global environments, learning to see themselves as responsible stewards of our planet. Our science curriculum is designed to introduce students to three major areas of ever-increasing complexity: life science, Earth and planetary science, and physical science.

### Social Studies

Our social studies curriculum prepares students to actively participate as citizens of our world. We have established three overarching goals as guidelines for our curriculum. First, teachers will incorporate place-based teaching practices throughout the year. Second, our curriculum will promote an awareness of social, economic, and political change. Finally, we will model appreciation for cultural diversity, as well as an understanding of the struggles of all people for equality throughout history.

### Art

In art class, students complete hands-on activities that allow them to build an awareness of the visual environment. Students shall learn appropriate techniques for different materials in order to artistically communicate their feelings and ideas. Emphasis is placed on creative problem solving as students plan and complete their projects. Art is integrated throughout all content areas.

### Library

Students learn to use the library in weekly class visits during which they explore, check out books, and read. Books are due back two weeks from the time of check out. Families' cooperation is requested to help with the return of library materials. Families are responsible for the replacement costs of lost library materials.

### Music

In a safe, supportive, and creative environment, we believe that all students can enjoy and appreciate every aspect of music. Our program introduces students to the basic elements of musical notation and performance. Students will practice cooperation in vocal and instrumental ensembles, developing their musical skills by playing, singing, and listening to diverse music from around the world.

### Spanish

Rowe School students participate in Spanish classes each week. The language is learned and practiced in an authentic and engaging context. Our Spanish curriculum builds year after year as students deepen their language skills.

### Physical Education

In physical education, students participate in a variety of games and activities in order to achieve age-appropriate goals. Lower elementary classes are focused on the development of body awareness, including fine and gross motor control. Upper elementary classes play team and individual sports with an emphasis on skill development and good sportsmanship.

### Cultural Study

Each year, Rowe School studies a different country of the world using an interdisciplinary approach. This cultural study is related to the content of study in each grade, and provides an opportunity to compare and contrast our culture with that of the chosen country.

## **SPECIAL PUPIL SERVICES**

Rowe School offers special support services to students who have needs that cannot be met in the regular classroom alone. Four specific programs address these needs:

### **Special Education**

The purpose of this program, operated under state and federal laws, is to provide special help for students whose needs go beyond accommodations. These needs may be specifically identified learning disabilities, physical handicaps, or behavioral disorders of a serious nature, which prevent the child from making progress.

State guidelines for entrance into special education are quite specific. Once a child is screened and accepted into this program, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed for each child who is involved in the program by the appropriate members of a special education team. This team includes the special education teacher, school psychologist, the classroom teacher(s), the principal, the parents/guardian, and any other specialists that are deemed necessary.

If the school feels that your child could benefit from this program, you will be contacted for permission before any testing is done. Parents/guardians may request a pre-referral if they see a serious need. If you think your child may have a special need, please contact the school principal. You may also wish to consult our Director of Pupil and Personnel Services, Stephanie Pare, at 413-664-9292.

### **Leveled Literacy Intervention**

Leveled Literacy Intervention is a research-based system designed to prevent literacy difficulties rather than correct long-term failure. It is designed to bring students in grades K-5 to grade-level performance through short-term intervention, an average of fourteen to sixteen weeks. It is designed to supplement, not substitute for, small-group instruction that our students receive, and is also designed to work with our Guided Reading program. It focuses on deep comprehension of text, fluency, and early writing strategies.

### **Psychological Services**

Students are referred by teachers, parents/guardians, or the special education team for these services. Our school psychologist will meet with students as required in their IEP. The psychologist or adjustment counselor is available to meet with children who are experiencing difficulties at school due to academic, emotional, or behavioral reasons. The team may also establish short or long-term group meetings for students who share a common problem or concern. These services are available to all students, with parental consent.

### Speech and Language

All kindergarten children are screened for speech, language, and hearing problems. If appropriate, children are recommended for oral communication or language assistance with a speech and language specialist, either as part of class activities or as a separate program.

### Child Support Team

Each week, members of the teaching staff, the school nurse, the special education teacher, the Principal, the speech pathologist, the school psychologist and adjustment counselor meet in a group called The Child Support Team. The goal of this team is to assist children who are showing signs of academic, social, or emotional difficulty in school as reported by teachers, families, or any other staff member at school. Concerns are shared, and if necessary a plan of action is formulated. Follow-up meetings are also scheduled. Families are encouraged to initiate a meeting by contacting the Principal or classroom teacher if they have concerns about their child.

### Homework

The Rowe teachers will not be assigning homework as in past years. Students will be expected to read each night, and students may be assigned engaging, hands-on project work from time to time. We also want to reinforce that ALL children, no matter how old, enjoy having someone read to them. Please continue reading to your children even if they are independent readers. We are willing and able to recommend appropriate books, either for students to read or which parents/guardians may read to their students.

### Standardized Testing

If it is offered this year, Rowe students in grades 3-6 will take the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System testing for Math, ELA. Students in 5<sup>th</sup> grade will take the MCAS for Science and Technology. Students in grades K-6 are administered the Benchmark Assessment System test three times per school year. These assist teachers in determining each student's instructional and independent reading levels, making sure they receive small group reading instruction directly at their tested level. All new students are given an informal reading and math inventory to aid in their placement. The information from these tests is used with the child's past record to assist the teacher in planning a youngster's program.

### Reporting Student Progress

The Rowe School reports on student progress two times each year, in early January and at the end of the school year. In addition, there are two Family Conferences: in November and in March. Please check the school calendar for this year's conference dates.

Do not hesitate to call your child's teacher whenever you have a question about his/her progress. Teachers are best contacted by email, or by phone before 8:30 and after 3:15. If you cannot call at those times, please leave a message at the office asking for a return call.

### Retention Policy

The classroom teacher, the Principal, the Child Support Team, or a parent/guardian may recommend a student for retention. The recommendation may be made based on deficiencies in one or more of the following areas:

- Academic achievement assessed through testing
- Social skills
- Physical development affecting school achievement
- Low academic achievement due to excessive absence or a history of transience
- When applicable, status as a special needs student

A child being considered for retention will be carefully monitored in the fall and winter. During the spring Family Conference, the teacher will discuss the situation with the parents. A final recommendation will be made in writing by April 15<sup>th</sup>.

A student will not normally be retained more than once. Under special circumstances, however, a full evaluation should precede any consideration for a second retention. Retention should also occur as early in the child's schooling history as possible.

An alternative to traditional retention is our Readiness (or "transitional") program in the primary classroom is offered when the need arises. The Readiness program is specifically designed to meet the needs of children who need another year based on developmental needs. It is based on a developmental philosophy with the goal of providing children who need more time. It is a program that presents challenging materials and experiences to match what is appropriate for each child's developmental level.

### Student Education Records

A cumulative record folder is maintained for each student who attends Rowe School. This file contains the student's registration forms, copies of report cards, standardized test results, and other information relating to the progress of the student. Parents/guardians who wish to review their child's records may do so by calling the school and making an appointment. A copy of the "Massachusetts Regulation Pertaining to Student Records and Standardized Testing" is available from the office, or can be accessed from the Massachusetts Department of Education's website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/advisory/cmr23qanda.html?section=summary>, or the Federal Government's laws with The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) website: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

If a parent/guardian requests an amendment be made to education records it should be done so in writing to the attention of the principal. A meeting with the student's teacher, the parents/guardians and the principal will determine if any change to the record will be made.

There is more information on the US DOE website regarding the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) at: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ppra/index.html?exp=0>

### Behavior Code

In order to maintain a productive, orderly and safe environment, which is conducive to learning, the Rowe staff has developed a behavioral code with specific consequences for misbehavior. This code is explained to the children at the beginning of each year and periodically throughout the year as the need arises. It consists of five basic expectations:

- Show respect for others in what you say and what you do.
- Show respect for the work of students and teachers.
- Treat your own property with care; and treat the property of others, including school property, as though you were responsible for keeping it safe.
- Clean up after yourself, and help keep your classroom and the school neat and clean.
- Work and play safely.

The Rowe staff reserves the right to make exceptions to the code if the school or the child's welfare warrants such a change. Individual Classroom Rules may build on this code.

Inappropriate actions will be met with a reminder, a "time out", or a referral to the principal. Upon referral to the principal, the student will be involved in creating a concrete plan for changing the behavior in question. This letter may go home to the parents/guardians for discussion, and if requested, a signed copy should be returned to school. We strive to provide children's misbehavior with logical consequences, ones that are appropriate to the misbehavior, and instruct, rather than shame, the child.

Students, who demonstrate a pattern of misbehavior that could put their safety or that of others at risk, may be excluded from some or all field trips by the principal. Parents/guardians will be notified in writing in advance should this become necessary.

There is a district-wide policy in place for special education students. The Individual Education Plan or 504 Plan for every student with special needs will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or if a modification is required. If a modified discipline code is required it will be written into the plan.

### Mediation Program

To help students engage in working out their difficulties in a constructive and non-punitive manner, Rowe School provides a Peer Mediation program. The mediators are sixth-grade students. They are provided with training in mediation: the work of non-judgmentally listening to two aggrieved parties, restating facts and feelings, and helping the parties listen to each other. Mediators are available in pairs on a rotating basis.

Student disputes are taken to mediation only if both parties agree. If a dispute is successfully mediated, and no serious physical harm has been done to persons or property, no further disciplinary action is usually taken. Should either party, for whatever reason, refuse mediation, the normal behavior code takes effect. Mediators meet weekly with their faculty supervisor, to review their work and enhance their skills.

### Suspension Policy

If the principal determines that a violation of a rule is serious enough, a student may be suspended from class or school. Suspension or ISS (in-school suspension) is treated as a serious issue and generally results from (but is not limited to) infractions of the following kind:

- Physical violence, fighting, vandalism;
- Repeated insubordinate and/or rude behavior directed at a staff member, or systematic harassment of another student;
- Possession of a controlled substance or weapon;
- Repeated disruptive classroom behavior.

The law guarantees students who are to be temporarily suspended from school guaranteed certain rights as follows:

- An oral or written notice of the charges against him/her;
- An explanation of the evidence against him/her;
- The opportunity to present his/her side of the story to an impartial decision-maker (who may be a school administrator).

ISS will be held in the office or designated area. Schoolwork will be assigned and completed by the end of the day. Every attempt will be made to contact the parents/guardians regarding the details of the infractions.

If the severity of the student's misbehavior warrants a more serious consequence or includes possession of a controlled substance or weapon, out-of-school suspension will result. The principal will immediately notify parents/guardians by phone and by letter of the details. All attempts will be made to arrange a meeting between all parties concerned; to include the parents/guardians, the principal, the student, and the staff member involved. The purpose of the meeting will be to resolve any issues that may have contributed to the student's misbehavior.

Notice of the suspension and the hearing (as outlined above) must occur before the student is asked to leave school, except when a student presents an immediate threat to school officials, other students, him/herself, or clearly endangers the school environment. In this case, the hearing may be delayed but must be held within a 24-hour period.

By law, any student possessing a dangerous weapon at school must be reported to the superintendent of schools, the local police, and the Department of Social Services. These agencies are required to take action in concert with the school to provide counseling and to determine if any other steps are appropriate. The Massachusetts courts have established a broad interpretation of what constitutes a dangerous weapon. Please remember that we have many young children here at school: don't send your child to school with a toy or tool that could be seen as a dangerous weapon. The Individual Education Plan for every student with special needs will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code of the school or if a modification is required. If a modified discipline code is required it will be written into the I.E.P. or 504 Plan.



When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate to 10 days in a school year, a review meeting – to which parents/guardians are invited – will be held to determine whether or not the student’s misconduct is related to his/her disability. If it is related, an amendment will be written to change the I.E.P or 504 Plan to better meet the student’s needs.

If it is decided that the misbehavior is not related, an amendment will be written to provide special education services during the period of the exclusion. This amendment will go into effect only after the 10-day limit has been reached. As with all amendments a parent/guardian must sign before it can be implemented. In suspension/exclusion cases the Massachusetts Department of Education must also approve the plan.

#### Absences, Tardies, and Dismissal

According to state law, student absences must be excused by a note, email, or a call from home. Children who have been out for three consecutive days must have a doctor’s note upon return to school. It is important that students be in school for as many instructional days as possible. If it is absolutely necessary for children to be out of school during regularly scheduled times, parents/guardians will let their child’s teacher know so s/he can arrange appropriate class assignments or homework. Parents/guardians are urged to make medical and other appointments after school hours, or on early release days.

The Rowe School Committee has established the following guidelines for excessive student absences, totaling more than seven full or fourteen half days in a six month period, based on Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Section 2:

- After seven absences in a six-month period, excused and/or unexcused, a letter of notification will be sent home to parents/guardians.
- After ten absences, excused and/or unexcused, a 2nd letter will be sent requiring the parents/guardians to meet with the Principal, with a copy of the letter sent to the office of the Superintendent, Rowe School District. Another copy of the letter may be sent to the designated Rowe School District Attendance Officer.
- After fifteen absences, a 3rd letter will be sent home and a referral of the situation may be sent to the designated Rowe School District Attendance Officer and copy to the office of the Superintendent, Rowe School District.
- After twenty absences, a 4th letter will be sent home and a referral may be sent to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families for investigation, with a copy sent to the office of the Superintendent, Rowe School District.

The Rowe School District has established the following guidelines for excessive student tardiness, totaling more than three days of tardiness in a one month period:

- After three days of tardiness in a one-month period, a letter of notification will be sent home to the parents/guardians.
- After six days of tardiness in a one-month period, a 2nd letter will be sent requiring the parents/guardians to meet with the Principal, with a copy of the letter sent to the office

of the Superintendent, Rowe School District. Another copy of the letter may be sent to the designated Rowe School District Attendance Officer.

- After ten days of tardiness in a two-month period, a 3rd letter will be sent home and a referral of the situation may be sent to the designated Rowe School District Attendance Officer and copy to the office of the Superintendent, Rowe School District.
- After fifteen days of tardiness in a three-month period, a 4th letter will be sent home and a referral may be sent to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families for investigation, with a copy sent to the office of the Superintendent.

#### Bus Transportation

##### **PLEASE SEE THE UPDATED BUS/DROP-OFF/PICK-UP INFORMATION ON PAGE 58**

All Town of Rowe school children attending the Rowe School have the opportunity to ride publicly financed bus transportation. Bus transportation may be available to Choice families, please contact the school for more information. This is a service that is provided by Kuzmeskus Bus Co. located on the Mohawk Trail in Shelburne (413-489-3194, ext. 10). Bus routes, listing stops and times, will be sent home and be published on the school website.

From roughly Thanksgiving to the end of March, weather conditions can disrupt bus routes and schedules. While all buses have two-way radios onboard, our hilly terrain may keep a bus out of direct contact with central dispatch for periods of time, keeping us from knowing immediately when problems do arise. We will do our best to notify families on affected routes of significant delays in service. You can help by contacting the school at once if you know of or suspect a delay.

Students of families who have requested to ride the bus will be notified of their pick-up time. This year, students will have assigned seats. Parents/guardians should be aware that ridership on these buses is contingent on good behavior and observance of safety rules, and that the school behavior code extends to school buses. Children who violate rules and cause disruption may be denied the privilege of riding based on a ticket system since their misbehavior threatens the safety of all the children on the bus. These rules are reviewed yearly with the children and copies will be sent to new families. We ask that parents/guardians also discuss and review these rules with their children regularly.

We would like to remind parents/guardians that if they wish their child to go to a stop other than their usual stop, they need to **make the request to the school with a note, email, or phone call** stating the change at least one day before the change. The change will be accommodated if possible, but new COVID-based restrictions might preclude the change in schedule. **Students are not allowed to attempt a change in transportation during the school day.** Please help us provide for the safety of your children.

#### School Cancellation

In severe weather, school may be canceled. This decision is usually made by 5:30 AM by the Principal. This announcement is then made over local radio and television stations, posted on the school's website and a system-wide phone call will be made. Please be sure we have your current home, cell, and work phone numbers as well as a current email address to receive such

information. In the event of a school cancellation, students may be sent home (in advance, or directly after the missed day of school) with high-quality remote-learning work to be accomplished during the cancellation. This work will be prepared for students at individual grade levels, and with differentiated instruction in mind. This will allow the day to be counted as a school day, not a snow day. If conditions are bad but improving, the decision may be made to delay all bus routes by one or two hours.

At any time if parents/guardians believe the road and/or weather conditions not to be safe for the transportation of their children to school they should remain at home and call the school to report their decision. The decision will result in an approved absence.

#### Emergency Release

When weather or other conditions are such that it is necessary to close school after school has begun, the school will notify parents/guardians. The school will make calls to each parent or guardian. Please review with your children the procedures they should follow if school is dismissed early due to poor weather or other conditions.

This announcement may also be made over local radio and television stations, posted on the school's website, and over the system-wide phone call network.

#### Front Door Policy

All doors in the Rowe School building will be locked during the normal school day from 8:30 – 3:15. Should the door be locked, an intercom system has been provided and a staff member will answer as soon as possible. Unless it's an emergency, parents/guardians will not be allowed in the building this year. Please see the pick-up/drop-off section for details. All approved visitors entering the building must sign in and out, and have visitors pass assigned while in the building.

#### Telephone Policy

The main school number is 413-512-5100. We ask for parent/guardian cooperation in helping to make sure that their children's after school plans are completed at home **before** they come to school.

We shall always deliver phone messages from parents/guardians to their children at an appropriate time, but we will not page children to come directly to the phone. We will not deliver messages to children from people unknown to us without parent or guardian permission. Students will not be allowed to take or place phone calls to or from parents/guardians without prior arrangement with the teacher or Principal.

Teachers are always happy to speak with parents/guardians on the phone but it is not always possible to do so during school hours. Ordinarily, if a parent/guardian calls a teacher, we will take the message, and the teacher will return the call at their earliest convenience. Teachers are usually available between 8:15-8:30 am and/or 3:15-3:30 pm.

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#### School Breakfast, Lunch

It is our policy to provide free breakfast, morning snack, and lunch to all students in the school who wish to receive it. Breakfast is provided each morning from approximately 8:30 –

8:50. Your student can choose to have breakfast when they arrive at school. Lunch is scheduled at 11:50 for the P1 and P2 classes, 11:55 for P3 Class, 12:00 for the 3/4 Class, and 12:05 for the 5/6 Class. Lunch will be served to the classes in their learning space. The lunch menu is published weekly in the newsletter and monthly on the school's website.

It is school policy that any food brought from home not be shared with other students. This year, we will not be able to accept all class or school snacks brought from home. If you have questions, contact your student's teacher or the School nurse.

#### Pupil Photographs

The school arranges an inexpensive school photograph session for all students. Information on these photographs is available at the school soon after the beginning of each school year.

From time to time photographs of students in school are used in the weekly newsletter, the school website, or the Rowe School Community Facebook page. Please let us know if you would prefer that your child not have their picture shown here.

#### Computer Policy

The Rowe Elementary School District Internet Use Policy is sent out at the start of each school year to ensure that parents/guardians are aware of, and give their permission for, their children to use computer resources such as email and the Internet for classroom assignments.

#### Problems and Complaints

Over the course of the year, if questions or problems relating to your child's school experience come up, please check this handbook first, it will save us all time in trying to resolve the issue. In general, it's best to approach the staff member most directly involved with the problem first. If this does not resolve the issue, you should speak with the principal. If you are unhappy with what the Principal is able to do for you, the Superintendent should be contacted next, followed by the School Committee. It's a good idea to put the nature of your problem or concern in writing. This helps everyone track the progress made in resolving the issue.

#### After School Hours

Though we are unsure whether there will be after-school events such as performances, plays, pot-luck dinners, etc., it is important for parents/guardians to understand that when school is not in session – **the school rules still apply**. We require your assistance in monitoring your children's behavior to ensure a safe and comfortable place for everyone in attendance. It is not the duty of the school staff during these times to monitor your children.

#### Parent, Guardian, and Community Volunteers

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, parents/guardians will not be allowed to visit classes this year, we will update families if the guidelines change.

## SAFE SCHOOL POLICY

### A. Statement Of Purpose and Compliance

1. The Rowe School District is committed to ensuring a safe school environment for all Students, Parents/Guardians, Staff, and community members. The Rowe School District has safety standards and procedures that conform with the standards of classroom safety adopted by the Massachusetts Board of Education pursuant to the M.G.L. c. 69, 1B and meet the requirements set forth by M.G.L. c. 71, 37H. These standards and procedures address such events as building emergencies, intruders, bomb threats, and natural disasters.

### B. Standard Of Safety

1. The School Committee, Administration, and Staff of the Rowe School District shall encourage the creation of and maintenance of a safe, secure learning environment in our school building and at school-sponsored events. The creation of a safe learning environment will be enhanced by the provision of sufficient resources, expert consultation, adequate staff training, established policies and procedures, and ongoing support for the procurement and maintenance of appropriate safety devices.
2. Administration, Staff, and students shall strive to create an educational environment that is safe and secure in order to facilitate learning and teaching. The school plan will include strategies for the prevention of injuries and violence.

### C. Procedures To Meet Standards

1. Administrative Action
  - a. The Superintendent will assess current safety standards and procedures not less than once every three years.
  - b. The assessment of current standards and procedures will be accomplished by the Superintendent, the Principal, and other District personnel who shall review and update current practices with representatives of the police and fire departments in each town, the District's insurance carrier, and the District's counsel, in addition to [School Attendance \(and Exclusions ... - West Berkshire Council\)](#) other parties whom the Superintendent and Principal determine to be critical to the process.

- c. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall collect, review, and disseminate the assessment report to the District Safety Committee, building-based safety committees, and the School Committee.
- d. Those groups and individuals receiving the assessment report will promptly review it. The District Safety Committee and each building-based safety committee will subsequently meet and make recommendations to the Superintendent and the School Committees for the purpose of making the necessary improvements to the existing safety and security practices.
- e. The Superintendent and Principal shall annually, as part of the budget process, identify safety and security needs, and request appropriations for security personnel, devices, equipment, and updated training for all Staff.
- f. The Principal in consultation with the Superintendent will provide pertinent safety information to parents/guardians based upon a careful review of each circumstance.

## 2. School Committee Action

- a. The School Committee shall review the Superintendent's final report and discuss its contents with the Superintendent and other district Administration prior to making any changes to existing policies or procedures.
- b. Prior to adopting recommendations for changes to the existing policies, the Committee shall receive from the Superintendent estimated costs associated with the implementation of any recommendations.
- c. Upon adoption of amended or new safety policies, the School Committee shall forward a copy of the policies and standards to the Massachusetts Board of Education and local law enforcement and safety officials.

**BULLYING PREVENTION PROCEDURE**  
**Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Retaliation Policy**

A. Bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation are prohibited. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O and Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, defines these terms as:

**1. Definitions:**

- a. **Bullying** 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 victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to her/himself or of damage to her/his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.
- b. **Cyberbullying** is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.
- c. **Retaliation** is any action taken against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

**B. INCIDENT REPORTING**

1. Students are expected to report all incidents or suspicions of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation to the Principal or a member of the school staff in a timely manner. Verbal reports will need to be documented on the form contained within the student handbook, which will also be available on the School website and at the school office.
2. Confidential/anonymous reports can be emailed to: [contact@roweschool.org](mailto:contact@roweschool.org)
  - a. (Note: No disciplinary action will be taken against a student based solely on an anonymous report.)

#### **C. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE**

1. Principal interviews the alleged victim and completes the Bullying Incident Report, which opens an investigation.
2. Principal interviews the alleged perpetrator and any witnesses.
3. Principal creates preliminary Student Safety Plans for the alleged victim and the alleged perpetrator and informs the students' families.
4. Principal completes the investigation and makes a determination.
5. If a determination is made that bullying has occurred, the Principal shall take appropriate disciplinary action with the student, inform the involved families, and, as appropriate, notify the local law enforcement agency if criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator.
6. If the Principal determines that a student has knowingly made a false bullying accusation, appropriate disciplinary action may be initiated.
7. Principal, in consultation with the classroom teacher and Psychologist, creates a more permanent student Safety Plan subject to review and revision as needed.

#### **D. RANGE OF DISCIPLINE**

1. Based on the particular circumstances of the bullying determination, the Principal shall impose reasonable, respectful, and realistic consequences up to and including expulsion.



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ROWE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**Incident Report Form for Bullying, Cyber Bullying, or Harassment**

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Reporter:    Student   Staff   Parent/Guardian   Other

Student/s being targeted: \_\_\_\_\_

Student/s participating in the bullying, cyberbullying, or harassment: (Please provide as much descriptive information as possible.)


Provide a detailed summary of your concerns: (Please consider these questions: What happened? When did it happen? Where? How often? Who else knows? Has it happened before?)

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\*Confidential Reports can also be submitted via e-mail to: [contact@roweschool.org](mailto:contact@roweschool.org)

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## HEALTH SERVICES

The Health Office is staffed by a Nurse. The school nurse:

- Collects and maintains health records for all students which include at a minimum medical history, immunizations, physical examinations, screening results, and emergency information.
- Assesses and evaluates students' health.
- Provides first aid to students, staff, and visitors for health-related emergencies due to injury or illness.
- Administers medications.
- Performs treatments and procedures.
- Performs mandated screenings: vision, hearing, body mass index, and postural.
- Acts as a health resource for students, parents/guardians, and staff.
- Coordinates health services with health care providers, community health programs, and community resources.
- Helps to identify health care needs, social needs, and behavioral needs making appropriate referrals as indicated. Attends 504 and IEP meetings and helps develop individualized care plans.
- Provides preventive services.

### **Exclusion from School Due to Illness procedure**

Symptoms of illness can appear suddenly; they progress rapidly in children and infections spread easily in school settings. Some children are very susceptible to viruses.

In an attempt to minimize the spread of illness, we are requesting that you keep your child home if he/she exhibits any of the symptoms described below. If you are unsure as to whether or not your child's symptoms are indicative of an illness, we are requesting that you keep your child home for the day. Unusual behavior changes or sleep patterns may also be indicative of the onset of illness. **If your child is sent home due to illness, or becomes sick at home, keep him/her home and call their physician. See Covid-19 procedure guidelines for any COVID symptoms and follow physician's recommendations.** The time frame of keeping a child home may vary depending on the diagnosis/illness/test results/quarantine of the child and the pediatrician's recommendations. The school will need a copy of the physician's recommendation. A child sent back to school too soon will usually be more susceptible to other illnesses, and may put other students at risk.

### **SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS REQUIRING YOUR CHILD TO STAY HOME OR BE REMOVED FROM SCHOOL OR CONSULT WITH A PHYSICIAN**

- Fever:** Temperature 100 F and higher especially if other symptoms are present.
- Diarrhea:** Two or more episodes of watery or loose stools.
- Vomiting:** One or more times in a 14-hour period.

**Body Rash:** Rashes are frequent occurrences in children. However, if the rash is accompanied by a fever, or causes severe itching or discomfort, your child should remain at home until the symptoms disappear, or are treated by a physician who gives you a written clearance for the student to return to school.

**Eye Discharge:** Thick mucus or yellow/green drainage from the eye, crustiness along eyelids which appears after cleaning, or “pink eye”.

**Earache:** Children can experience much pain with an earache and are more comfortable at home and may need to consult with a physician.

**Sore Throat/fever/swollen glands:** Severe sore throat, especially accompanied by fever and /or swollen glands may be strep throat. Strep throat requires treatment with antibiotics. The child **MUST** be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning to school. Please do not hesitate to keep your child home longer if the complaints are not greatly improved after only 24 hours.

**Runny nose/cough:** Runny noses and coughs are frequent during the winter and the spring. If your child coughs continuously, has thick yellow/green nasal or mucous drainage, or requires frequent wiping of nasal mucous drainage, please keep the student home. Should these symptoms develop at school we will request that you pick your child up from school.

**Irritability/Excessive sleepiness:** Excessive sleepiness, irritability, or unusual behaviors, especially in younger children may be indicative of the onset of illness. Children are uncomfortable, unhappy, and do not benefit from the classroom at these times.

To maintain the health and safety of our students, it is essential that we receive current information on a child who is returning to school after a period of absence.

In the event that a student is absent for three or more consecutive days, is hospitalized, has a need to go to the Emergency room, or has a change in their functional status, due to illness or injury, please provide the school nurse with documentation from the physician noting any change in medications or restrictions including start date, date of return to school, or change in activity. For injuries, please provide specific instructions from the physician regarding any restrictions or accommodations related to physical activity, therapy, or equipment use that should be implemented at the school. The physician should also include a specific time frame for the restrictions. Without this note, the student may not be able to participate in their regularly scheduled activities, including therapies.

We recommend in all such situations that a parent call the school nurse prior to the student returning. All documentation can be sent in with the student or faxed to the school at 413-339-8621 prior to the student's return.

## Immunization Requirements:

### Massachusetts School Immunization Requirements 2021 - 2022

#### Preschool:

**Hib: 1 - 4 doses;** the number of doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series began.

**DTaP: 4 doses**

**Polio: 3 doses**

**Hepatitis B: 3 doses;** laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

**MMR: 1 dose;** must be given on or after the 1st birthday; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

**Varicella: 1 dose;** must be given on or after the 1st birthday; a reliable history of chickenpox or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

#### Grades Kindergarten - Grade 6:

**DTap: 5 doses;** 4 doses are acceptable if the 4th dose is given on or after the 4th birthday. DT is only acceptable with a letter stating a medical contraindication to DTaP.

**Polio: 4 doses;** fourth dose must be given on or after the 4th birthday and > 6 months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4th birthday and > 6 months after the previous dose.

**Hepatitis B: 3 doses;** laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

**MMR: 2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given > 28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

**Varicella: 2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given > 28 days after the first dose; a reliable history of chicken pox or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

#### Grade 7 - Grade 12:

**Tdap: 1 dose;** and history of DTaP primary series or age-appropriate catch-up vaccination. Tdap given > 7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11-12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule. Td or Tdap should be given if it has been 10 years or greater since last Tdap.

**Polio: 4 doses;** fourth dose must be given on or after the 4th birthday and 6 months or greater after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4th birthday and 6 months or greater after the previous dose.

**Hepatitis B: 3 doses;** laboratory evidence of immunity is acceptable. 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable.

**MMR: 2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given 28 days or more after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

**Varicella: 2 doses;** first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given 28 days or more after the first dose; a reliable history of chicken pox or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable.

**Meningococcal: Grades 7-8; 1 dose MenACWY.**

**Meningococcal: Grades 11-12; 2 doses MenACWY.** Second dose must be given on or after the 16th birthday and 8 weeks or more after the previous dose. 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16th birthday.

Immunization exemptions are granted if documentation is provided that states that immunizations conflict with religious beliefs or that there is a medical contraindication. The school nurse can provide you with the appropriate forms to complete.

### **Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

If your child is sick or has an accident of sufficient seriousness to warrant it, the school will get in touch with the parent/guardian to take the child home and arrange for needed medical attention.

If your child will be absent, it is required by law that you call the school.

Please notify the school nurse if there are any changes in your child's health, if your child will be out of school for an extended period of time, or if your child has a contagious disease (we may need to take precautions to protect the health of others).

Please complete and return the Annual Medical Update form that is sent home at the beginning of each school year with this handbook. It is extremely important that this form be completed fully and returned to the school nurse. This information is essential to the nurse so that she/he has an accurate and current picture of your child's health status and so that she/he can also contact you and/or your designee in the event that your child is ill or injured.

### **Medication Policy**

Prescription medications can be given during school hours if the school nurse has a health care provider's order and a signed permission form. Please ask the school nurse for the appropriate forms.

Medication must be delivered to the school in a pharmacy- or manufacturer-labeled container by a parent/guardian, or a responsible adult. Students are not allowed to bring medication to school.

All medications are to be kept in the nurse's office unless a student is authorized to "self-administer" and carry medication on his/her person. In order for a student to "self-administer" medication at school the following conditions must be met:

- The health care provider provides written permission.
- The parent/guardian signs a consent form.
- The nurse agrees that it is safe for the student to self-administer. The final decision rests with the nurse.

### **Student Health Exams:**

In accordance with M.G.L. c.71, s. 57 and regulations thereunder, every student in the Rowe School District will be screened to identify potential health concerns, as below. Evidence or certifications required under these provisions shall be provided by parents/guardians or guardians to the child's school Principal or the Principal's designee.

### **Physical Examinations: 105 CMR 200.100: Physical Examinations Required by Primary Care Provider or School Physician.**

The parent/guardian of each child enrolled in the District shall present certification that the child has passed a physical examination performed by a licensed physician or primary care provider.

An in-person physical examination is required for the following group of students:

- For students entering school for the first time (typically pre-kindergarten or kindergarten) and for a student transferring from another school system conducted one year before or within 90 days of school start.
- For students seeking to participate in athletics conducted annually prior to a student's participation in competitive athletics.
- Preschool students annually.
- Kindergarten entry.
- Grade 4.

In addition, physical examinations are required:

- For children referred to the School Nurse because of frequent absences because of unexplained illnesses.
- For children referred to the School Nurse because of known physical conditions that require repeated appraisal.
- For children referred to the School Nurse as a result of a teacher/nurse conference because the child is not making expected progress in school or because of signs of illness noted by the teacher or nurse. Parents/guardians are encouraged to have the required physical exams performed by the child's primary care provider.

### **Vision and Hearing Screenings:**

The vision of each student shall be tested by the School Nurse using the Massachusetts Vision Test or other comparable method approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Such screenings shall occur:

- Annually in grades Preschool through Grade 6. Stereopsis screening will be conducted annually for students in grades Preschool through Grade 3.

The hearing of each student shall be tested by the School Nurse using some form of discrete frequency hearing test, such as the Massachusetts Hearing Test or comparable method approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Such screenings shall occur:

- Annually in grades Preschool through Grade 6.

With respect to any student who does not pass a vision or hearing screening, a referral letter will be sent to that student's parent/guardian for appropriate follow-up. With the consent of the parent/guardian, the student's primary care physician may be furnished with a copy of the record of screening tests performed in the school.

### **Growth and Development Screenings:**

The height and weight of each student, in addition to each student's BMI (Body Mass Index) will be ascertained by the Rowe School Nurse in accordance with guidelines of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health:

- Annually in grades Preschool through Grade 6.

Every reasonable effort will be made to provide prior notice of the screening to each child's parent/guardian, who may request, in writing, that their child not participate in this screening.

The BMI and comparison percentile will be reported directly and confidentially to each student's parent/guardian, along with informational and explanatory materials provided or approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health on BMI and the importance of healthy eating and adequate physical activity. A copy of the student's BMI score shall be maintained in the student's school health record. With the consent of the parent/guardian, a copy shall be provided to the student's primary care provider. It is the responsibility of the District School Nurse to obtain the referral information from the student's parents/guardians. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health shall be provided annually with student BMI by the District Nurse Leader as specified in the guidelines of the Department.

### **LEGAL REF: M.G.L. c. 71, s. 57**

**Students without complete documentation of the required immunizations and physical exam will be excluded from school.**

### **COVID-19 Policies and Procedures**

Goals for North Berkshire School Union reopening, with guidance provided from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and oversight by our town's Board of Health, include: protecting the health and safety of students and staff; ensuring student academic success and social well-being; staying current with new virus information and guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), state, and local agencies.

The coronavirus disease, or COVID-19, is a highly infectious respiratory disease. COVID-19 has caused a worldwide pandemic that has affected schools, businesses, and all aspects of daily life.

Key infectious attributes of COVID-19 as noted by the CDC include:

- The virus is thought to spread mainly from person-to-person:
  - \*Between people who are in close contact with one another.
  - \*Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. These droplets can land in the mouth or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.
  - \* COVID-19 may be spread by people who are not, or not yet, showing symptoms.
- Transmission is less of a risk from surface contact. COVID-19 typically degrades within hours.
- More infectious during the 48 hours prior to symptoms than when the illness becomes apparent.
- Good air/ventilation flow matters. Being outside is safer.
- As the primary route of transmission for COVID-19 is respiratory, masks/face coverings are among the most critical components of risk reduction and the spread of the virus, along with handwashing.

#### I. Definitions:

**COVID-19 Symptoms** include:

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

**Isolation** is used to separate people infected with the virus (those who are sick with COVID-19 and those who are infected but have no symptoms) from people who are not infected.

**Quarantine** is used to keep someone who might have been exposed to COVID-19 away from others. Quarantine helps prevent spread of disease that can occur before a person knows they are sick or they are infected with the virus without feeling symptoms.

**Close contact** is defined as:

- Being within 6 feet of a COVID-19 case while indoors, for at least 15 minutes during a 24 hour period. At-risk exposure time begins 48 hours prior to symptom onset (or time of positive test if asymptomatic) and continues until the time the COVID-19 positive individual is isolated..

**Higher risk groups for severe COVID-19 disease:** cancer, chronic kidney disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, serious heart disease, sickle cell disease, type II diabetes, immunocompromised state from a solid organ transplant, obesity (BMI>34), people over 65 years of age.



## II. Health and Safety:

### A. Masks/Facial Coverings:

- All students in Grades PreK and above are **required** to wear masks/facial coverings which cover their nose and mouth when indoors. **Bandanas and balaclava masks** are not acceptable mask/facial coverings.
- All adults who work in the school district are **required** to wear masks/facial coverings when indoors.
- Exceptions to wearing a mask/facial covering are adults/students who have medical conditions, disability impact and other health and safety needs. Medical condition exemptions are extremely rare and will be decided on an individual basis.
- Masks/facial coverings are required unless students are eating or taking a mask break even if spaced 6 feet apart.
- Masks/facial covering breaks **need** to occur every 60-90 minutes throughout the day. Mask breaks should occur where students can be 6 feet apart and ideally outside or with windows open in classrooms. Masks will be kept at the student's desk.
- Masks/facial coverings **will be provided by the student's family/caregivers** but extra disposable face masks will be provided by the school for students who need them.
- Masks/facial coverings are required on school buses.
- A clean mask is required daily if using reusable masks. A new mask is required daily if using a single-use mask.

### B. Physical Distancing:

- There are no physical distancing requirements even during meals. However, it is recommended that individuals distance as feasible when masks are removed indoors during mealtimes. It is also recommended that classes/staff remain within their own physical space as much as possible to minimize crossover between staff/students. Activities involving class/staff/student crossover will occur outdoors as much as possible.

### C. Prior to School Entry:

- Parents/Caregivers/Guardians **will be responsible** for checking their students for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 each day before they leave for school.
- School health services will provide information to families to support them in conducting the symptoms check.
- Students should not be sent to school if they exhibit COVID-19 symptoms at home.
- No screening procedures are required by the school nurse at the point of entry into school.
- All staff need to observe students who show signs of COVID-19 and refer them to the health office. Teachers and staff **cannot** diagnose students nor make recommendations.
- Temperature checks are not recommended as a screening tool for reentry.

### D. Hand hygiene/Hand washing/sanitizing:

- Handwashing with soap and water is the best option.

- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer (at least 60% ethanol or 70% isopropanol) may be used when hand washing is not available.
- Students and adults are required to exercise hand hygiene upon arrival at school, before eating, entering the classroom from another area, before putting on and taking off masks/facial coverings, after using the bathroom, and before dismissal.
- Hand washing: individuals should use soap and water to wash all surfaces of their hands for at least 20 seconds, wait for visible lather, rinse thoroughly, and dry with a disposable towel.
- Hand sanitizer: should be applied to all surfaces of the hands and in sufficient quantity that it takes 20 seconds of rubbing hands together for the sanitizer to dry.
- Hand sanitizer should be placed at key locations: entrances, cafeteria, classrooms.
- School nurses will demonstrate appropriate hand hygiene as needed throughout the school year.
- School nurses will place hand hygiene posters throughout the school.

#### **E. COVID-19 Information and Isolation:**

- School nurses will provide educational information to families, students, and staff regarding the transmission of the virus and any other literature related to COVID-19.
- Schools do not need to maintain a dedicated medical waiting room, however schools should consider maintaining a medical waiting room for the purpose of separating students or staff who have tested positive for COVID-19 while at school or who are symptomatic on the bus or at school. All individuals in a designated medical waiting room must be masked with a disposable facemask. If the individual has been wearing a cloth mask it must be removed and placed in a sealable plastic bag for transport home. If multiple individuals must share the designated medical room at the same time they must remain masked and 6 feet apart at all times. Any hard surfaces in designated medical waiting rooms must be cleaned and disinfected after the individuals leave the room.
- Any adult working within the district schools who exhibits COVID-19 symptoms **will be** dismissed from their duties immediately by the school nurse/building principal.

#### **F. COVID-19 testing:**

- At this time, in-school testing may be available.
- Students' families should discuss testing with their health care provider.

#### **G. Vaccines:**

- School nurses will work with parents to ensure that students are current on all standard vaccinations before they return to in-person school.
- Health care providers strongly recommend all individuals eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine receive it.
- Health care providers strongly recommend all students and staff receive the seasonal influenza vaccine.

**H. Return to School after exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms:**

- Your medical provider has determined a different illness other than COVID-19 and cleared student/staff return to school/work

**OR**

- Have tested negative for COVID-19, have improvement in symptoms, and have been without fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (Tylenol/Ibuprofen)

**OR**

- If not tested - at least 10 days from onset of clinical symptoms.

**I. Return to School if identified as a Close Contact and choosing testing:**

- All close contacts should be tested but must self-quarantine for 7 days from date of exposure.
- May return on day 8 provided they have remained asymptomatic.
- Receive a negative COVID test (PCR or rapid antigen) on day 5 or later.
- Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14, and self-isolate if symptoms develop.

**J. Return to School if identified as a Close Contact and choosing not to be tested:**

- Quarantine at least 10 days from the date of exposure.
- May return on day 11 provided they have remained asymptomatic.
- Conduct active monitoring for symptoms through day 14 and self-isolate if symptoms develop.

**K. Close contacts exempted from testing and quarantine response protocols:**

- **Asymptomatic, fully vaccinated close contacts.**
- **Classroom close contacts:** An individual who is exposed to a COVID-19 positive individual in the classroom while both individuals were masked so long as the individuals were spaced at least 3 feet apart.
- **Bus close contacts:** Individuals who are masked on buses when windows are open.
- **Close contacts who have COVID-19 within the past 90 days:** An individual is exempt if the exposure occurred within 90 days of the onset of their own illness AND the exposed individual is recovered and remains asymptomatic.

**L. Return to School for individuals who test positive for COVID-19:**

- After 10 days, have improvement in symptoms, and have been without a fever for at least 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications (Tylenol/Ibuprofen).

## **SAFE STUDENT TRANSPORTATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

### **A. Routing and Location of Bus Stops**

1. Bus routes will be established with consideration given to the concentration of students, the road conditions, location of schools, safety and economy of operation, and so that students are transported in the most efficient manner. Elementary students will ride the bus no longer than one hour. All bus routes will follow public roads.
2. The District will comply with all applicable state laws for minimal standards of service. Students in Rowe living more than one mile from the school, as measured by commonly traveled roads, will be provided service. The District has the right to establish bus stops up to 1 mile from a student's residence.
3. In some cases, parents/guardians may be contracted to provide transportation.
4. Students will ride their assigned bus unless they provide parental/guardian permission slips to the school office to ride a different bus. They may only ride another bus when seats are available. Students may not stand on the bus.

### **B. Due Process**

1. Parents/guardians dissatisfied with transportation service may appeal to the Principal. If still dissatisfied, Parents/guardians may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. Finally, if the concern stems from school district policy, further appeal may be made to the School Committee. Or, if the concern stems from the three-district policy, further appeal may be made to the Three-District Transportation Subcommittee.

### **C. Student Conduct**

1. Parents/guardians and students will sign an annual agreement regarding rules for bus riding, which will be kept on file in the schools.

### **D. Special Needs Transportation**

1. Children with special needs will be transported on separate vehicles in accordance with their Individualized Education Plan when special transportation requirements are specified in the IEP.

#### **E. Service on Major Highways**

1. When embarking or disembarking from a bus on a state highway or other heavily traveled road, elementary students will not be required to cross the road.

#### **F. Time of Arrival**

1. Bus transportation will be arranged so that students arrive in time for the beginning of school. The district has the right to establish time of arrivals and/or start times of school as long as any changes do not adversely impact other districts without prior approval from the affected district(s). However, supervision is provided for students until 7:45 a.m. Students should not arrive earlier than 7:45 a.m.

#### **G. Transportation of Students Off-Campus**

1. Students participating in off-campus curricular and extracurricular activities under the direction and supervision of school personnel shall be transported to and from such activities by vehicles operating under contract with School Committee or by volunteers.

#### **H. Transportation of Choice Students**

1. The School Committee is responsible for formulating and administering a policy regarding access of transportation to choice students. Consideration will be given with the following provisions:
  - a. there must be sufficient room
  - b. it will not cause a bus to deviate from its existing route
  - c. it does not result in additional cost to the District.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:7A  
 Adopted: August 1994  
 Revised: July 31, 2013 - Rowe

## I. School Bus Regulations

1. Bus operators are in charge of the bus and the passengers. They are responsible for the safety of the pupils and for their conduct on the bus. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied temporarily or permanently if a pupil's behavior warrants it. The operator reports to the bus company all violations of rules, and a pupil may become ineligible for transportation if his/her behavior creates a problem on the school bus. It is necessary for students to observe the following rules:
  - a. Be at the stopping places on time and ready to get into the bus with the least possible delay, in order to keep the bus on schedule.
  - b. Do not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
  - c. Remain at least five feet from the bus when it stops to pick up, and move toward the bus only when the door opens.
  - d. Students having to cross the road when boarding or leaving are to cross in front of the bus, NOT IN THE REAR, upon the driver's signal. All students are to use extreme caution by looking at traffic both ways before crossing the road.
  - e. After boarding the bus, take a seat as quickly as possible. The driver may assign you a specific seat.
  - f. No students will be allowed to board or leave the bus at any other place other than their regular stop without written consent in advance from their parent/guardian, and approval from the school..
  - g. Obey the bus driver at all times while under his/her supervision.
  - h. Do not bring animals, firearms, explosives or any dangerous objects on the bus.
  - i. Maintain an acceptable manner of conduct at all times. Vulgarity and loud, boisterous, or other improper conduct will not be permitted.
  - j. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
  - k. Do not extend arms or head out of the bus windows at any time.
  - l. Keep aisles clear of lunch boxes, musical instruments, books, etc.
  - m. Assist the bus driver in keeping the bus clean by not eating or drinking while on the bus.
  - n. Remain absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
  - o. Do not play any electronic devices without headphones while on the bus.
  - p. Do not tamper with operating mechanisms on the emergency door.
  - q. Do not operate the service (front) door; this is the responsibility of the driver.
  - r. Do not damage or deface any part of the bus. Parents/guardians can be held responsible for the cost of the repairs.

**J. School Bus Safety Rules and Procedures**

1. Use crosswalks if they are available.
2. When walking on the road, walk on the left side of the road (so that you will face the oncoming traffic).
3. Remain seated if the bus is delayed on the road.
4. Use the emergency door only if there is an emergency.
5. Be helpful and of assistance to children who are smaller than you.
6. When you leave the bus, do not stop in the roadway, and NEVER try to pick up anything that is under the bus.
7. Go home promptly after you leave the bus.

**K. Warning Ticket System (Note: This system is in addition to any other disciplinary consequences contained in this handbook.)**

1. 1st Ticket – Warning
2. 2nd Ticket – Riding privilege suspended for three school days.
3. 3rd Ticket – Riding privilege suspended for five school days.
4. 4th Ticket – Riding privilege suspended indefinitely.
5. If it is deemed necessary by the Principal or Superintendent of Schools, riding privileges may be suspended without using the above system.
6. If a ticket is issued, the student must do the following in order to ride on the bus:
  - a. Have the ticket signed by the parent/guardian.
  - b. Give the signed ticket to the bus driver.
    - 1) If a warning, the next morning
    - 2) If a suspension, on the morning riding privilege are reinstated (note date on the ticket)
  - c. If the ticket has not been signed, the student's first attempt to ride the bus will be allowed, however, the student will be brought to the Principal's office for parent/guardian notification. If the student does not return the signed ticket the following school day, the student will not be allowed to ride the bus.
  - d. If a student refuses a ticket(s) she/he must report to the Principal or the bus company for a new one before she/he will be allowed to ride the bus again.
  - e. If a student rips up, loses, or in any way destroys a ticket issued to him/her, she/he must report to the Principal or the bus company for a new one before she/he will be allowed to ride the bus again.
  - f. A parent/guardian or student may appeal to the school Administration for a hearing if they have any questions.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION: IDEA**

**A. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. The Rowe School has programs for children ranging from those who need a minimum of support services to those who require the full-time service of a special needs teacher. For further information, please contact the school Principal or the school system's Director of Pupil Services.

**B. Discipline for Students with an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 Plan**

1. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) OR 504 Plan for every student with special needs will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if a modification is required. If a modified discipline code is required, it will be written into the IEP.

**C. Suspension of Special Education Students**

1. Students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and those whose program is described in an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan of accommodations.
2. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students:
  - a. 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.
  - b. The IEP or 504 Plan for every special needs student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if the student's handicapping condition requires modification. Any modification will be described in the IEP or 504 Plan.

The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a special needs student and a record will be kept of such notices.

- c. When a suspension constitutes a change in placement of a student with special needs, the team will convene a meeting to review the IEP or 504 Plan, and all



relevant information in the student's file, including teacher observations, information from the parent/guardian, and all formal evaluations that have already been completed, within 10 days of the decision to suspend, and determine the appropriateness of the Student's placement or program, and whether the behavior is a manifestation of his or her disability.

The team will consist of the Principal, the Director of Pupil Services, the parent/guardian, the Special Education Teacher, the Classroom Teacher, the School Nurse, and other members deemed relevant, (such as the school psychologist, parent/guardian invitees). The team will make a finding, a "Manifestation Determination", as to the relationship between the Student's misconduct and his/her handicapping condition.

If the team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, then the suspension or expulsion may go forward consistent with policies applied to any student without disabilities. The district must still offer services to enable the student to participate in the general education curriculum, and as appropriate, complete a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and behavioral intervention services and modifications to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

If the Team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, the team will complete an FBA and behavioral intervention plan if it has not already been done. The Team will then recommend to:

- 1) Design a modified program for the student, and/or;
  - 2) Write an amendment to provide for the delivery of special education services during the suspension and any needed modification of the IEP or 504 Plan, relative to discipline code expectations.
- d. Except when the student has been placed in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) in the following instances, the student returns to the original placement unless the parents/guardians and district agree otherwise, or the hearing officer orders a new placement.

Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES), as determined by the team, for up to 45 school days:

- 1) on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons, 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 for unique circumstances; or
- 2) 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.

- e. 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 period for the disciplinary action whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.
- f. 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:
  - 1) The parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing; or
  - 2) The parent/guardian had requested an evaluation;
  - 3) 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 parents/guardians had 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.
- g. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent/guardian requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district will conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
- h. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

**LEGAL REF: Federal Requirements 34 CFR 300.530-537**

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

A. Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. The School Committee is committed to the following:

1. Promoting the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encouraging positive experiences in human values for children, youth, and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial, and ethnic groups.
3. Working towards a more integrated society, and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Using all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Careful consideration, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspect of all segments of society.
6. Initiating a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

B. The School Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, or disability, their complaint should be registered (using the attached form) with the Title IX compliance officer in the office of the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

ROWE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
**Discrimination Report Form**

Discrimination Type: (check all that apply)

Race	Color	Sex	Gender Identity	Religion
National origin		Sexual Orientation		Disability

Complainant \_\_\_\_\_

Person filing report (if other than complainant) \_\_\_\_\_

Date of report \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Incident \_\_\_\_\_

Location of incident \_\_\_\_\_

Time of incident \_\_\_\_\_

Home contact information of complainant \_\_\_\_\_

**Description of Discrimination: (attach other pages as necessary)**

Witness(es) \_\_\_\_\_

What was your response to the incident?

Who have you contacted regarding this case? Please list name, position, and date contacted.

This complaint is filed on my honest belief that an incident of discrimination occurred. I certify that the information I have provided in this complaint form is true, correct, and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Received by \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX**

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, is committed to safeguarding the right of all persons associated with the District, including students, employees, School Committee members, and volunteers to work in an educational environment that is free from all forms of sex discrimination. The School District does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex and condemns and prohibits all forms of sex discrimination on its premises, or in connection with any educational programs wherever they may occur.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee shall designate an individual to act as the school system's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

## **POLICY ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT FOR STUDENTS**

### **A. PURPOSE**

To create for all students of the Rowe School District a study environment free of sexual harassment.

The Rowe School District is committed to safeguarding the right of all persons associated with the District's schools, including students, employees, School Committee members, and volunteers to a work and educational environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Therefore, Rowe School District condemns and prohibits all sexual harassment on its premises.

All individuals associated with the District, but not necessarily limited to the School Committees, the Administration, the Staff, students and members of the public while on campus, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community or while on school property will be in violation of this policy. Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken in any instance where an employee violates this policy. Sexual harassment by a student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Sexual harassment by others will result in their being excluded from School premises or if it is required that they enter the premises, they will be accompanied by a School District representative at all times.

If the sexual harassment is criminal in nature, the offense shall be reported to the police department as well as the Title IX Coordinator. If the sexual harassment requires the intervention of State social service or protective agencies, the proper authorities will be contacted. In these circumstances, the School's attorney will be immediately contacted to give advice and guidance on how to process these actions with the appropriate authorities.

Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should make a complaint to any administrator, the Title IX Coordinator, or directly to the Superintendent, so that appropriate action may be taken at once.

Management representatives are charged with the responsibility of discouraging any sexually harassing behaviors within or outside of their areas of supervision. This includes directly confronting the harasser when a management representative observes harassing behavior, and immediately reporting the activity to the Title IX Coordinator.

The Title IX Coordinator will investigate complaints promptly, and corrective action will be taken where appropriate. No person will suffer retaliation or intimidation as a result of using the internal complaint procedure.

A copy of this policy and its accompanying regulations are posted in appropriate places, and made available to individuals upon request.

The Title IX Coordinator for the Rowe School Districts is:

Stephanie Pare  
98 Church Street  
North Adams, MA 01247  
(413) 664-4655

Legal References: Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights Act 1964 as amended  
45 Federal Regulations 746776 issued by Chapter 622/EEOC Title IX of  
1972 Education Amendments

## **B. SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINITION**

Sexual harassment consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature where:

1. Submission to such conduct is either explicitly or implicitly made a term or condition of a student's education; or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for education decisions affecting such student; or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's educational performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Assault, inappropriate touching, intentionally impeding movement, comments, gestures, or written communications of a suggestive or derogatory nature.
2. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome. (Reciprocal attraction between peers is not considered sexual harassment.)

3. Implying or actually withholding grades earned or deserved, suggesting that a poor performance evaluation will be prepared, or suggesting that a scholarship recommendation or college application will be denied.
4. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence, or affect the educational opportunities, grades, and/or the learning environment of a student.
5. Offering or granting favors or educational benefits, such as grades or recommendations, in exchange for sexual favors.

Other sexual harassing behavior directed towards students, whether committed by management, staff, or students, is also prohibited. Such conduct includes but is not limited to:

1. Unwelcome sexual flirtations, advances or propositions;
2. Sexually explicit language or gestures;
3. Touching that an individual interprets as sexual in nature;
4. Any unwelcome physical contact;
5. The presence of sexually provocative photographs, pictures or other material, and the telling of sexual stories or jokes;
6. Verbal or nonverbal behavior about an individual's body that is interpreted as sexual in nature.

## **C. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

### **1. INFORMAL PROCESS FOR STUDENTS**

In determining whether an alleged incident constitutes sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure outlined below, unless the Title IX Coordinator is the subject of the complaint.

- a. Any student of the District who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment is to report the incident(s) to any administrator, Title IX Coordinator, or directly to the Superintendent. The administrator and/or Superintendent are to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator. A written record of the complaint will be made by the party receiving the complaint. A separate file system will be maintained, apart from the student's personal record, regarding these complaints and as to all matters relating to the complaints.
- b. If the alleged harassment involves the Title IX Coordinator, the Superintendent of Schools will act as the Title IX Coordinator.
- c. If the alleged harassment involves the Superintendent of Schools, the Secretary of the School Committee will act as the Title IX Coordinator.
- d. The Superintendent and the Title IX Coordinator will look at the totality of the circumstances and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. They will attempt to resolve the problem by conferring with both parties in order to obtain a

clear understanding of the facts. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible.

- e. Students may be accompanied, at any phase of this process or subsequent hearing before the Committee, by a parent/guardian or representative of their choosing. Parents/guardians will be immediately notified by the Title IX Coordinator of the existence of a student's report of sexual harassment.
- f. The Title IX Coordinator will explain each phase of the Informal and Formal Complaint Process to a student who wishes to file a complaint and will assist the student in the processing of the complaint. In addition, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the student of additional forums for resolution of the complaint such as the Office of Civil Rights (O.C.R.) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.).
- g. Under normal circumstances, the Title IX Coordinator's investigation will be completed within five working days of the initial complaint. Upon completion of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator shall issue his/her findings in writing to the student and the alleged harasser.

#### **D. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

##### **1. FORMAL PROCESS FOR STUDENTS**

- a. A complainant may file a formal complaint immediately or may do so after the Superintendent's and the Title IX Coordinator's efforts to reach a settlement under the informal process have proven unsuccessful.
- b. The complaint will state clearly and concisely the complainant's description of the incident and it will also indicate any remedy sought. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. The Superintendent's office will send the respondent a copy of the complaint within five working days after it is received. A separate file system shall be maintained as to all matters relating to the complaint. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent possible.
- c. The respondent will have ten working days to respond in writing. This statement will contain full and specific references to each claim in the complaint, admitting, denying, or explaining the complainant's allegations. The respondent must sign his or her statement which will then be appended to the original complaint. Within three working days, the Superintendent's office will forward both statements to the complainant and the respondent.
- d. There will be two modes of resolution for formal complaints. A complaint may be settled through mediation or through a hearing. If the complainant and respondent agree to pursue mediation, a date mutually acceptable to both parties will be set within ten working days. If the mediation results in a mutually acceptable agreement, copies of the agreement will be forwarded to both parties. If the mediation does not result in an agreement, the case will be forwarded to the



Superintendent for a hearing unless the Superintendent is the alleged harasser in which case the hearing will be before the Pittsfield School Committee.

- e. When a hearing is requested, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the Superintendent or the School Committee, as the case may be, and the case will be heard at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the School Committee pursuant to the provisions of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law and/or before the Superintendent pursuant to M.G.L., c. 71, § 42.

#### **E. FORMAL HEARING**

1. The purpose of the Superintendent or School Committee Hearing is to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated, and, if so, to determine the appropriate consequences for the violation.
2. Both parties will be given a full and fair hearing. The proceeding, although formal, is not a court proceeding and the Superintendent or School Committee is not bound by the procedures and rules of evidence of a court of law. In most instances, complainants and respondents will be expected to speak for themselves, although, if desired, each party may be accompanied by counsel or an advocate.
3. The presiding officer of the hearing may have counsel present for purposes of assisting in the orderly conduct of the hearing and the questioning of witnesses. The complainant and the respondent will be asked to clarify the issues and to define the areas of disagreement. To encourage a fair and focused hearing, at the start of the proceedings the points of agreement and disagreement will be reviewed. The Superintendent or the Committee, as the case may be, will hear testimony and consider whether the School Committee Policy on Sexual Harassment has been violated, and, if so, will recommend appropriate consequences.
4. The presiding officer will:
  - a. ensure an orderly presentation of all evidence;
  - b. ensure that the proceedings are accurately recorded by means of a tape or stenographic recording; and
  - c. see that a decision is issued no later than ten working days after the conclusion of the hearing or, when written arguments are submitted, ten working days after their submission.
5. The Superintendent or the Committee, as the case may be, will:
  - a. conduct a fair and impartial hearing which ensures the rights of all parties involved;
  - b. define issues of contention;
  - c. receive and consider all relevant evidence which reasonable people customarily rely upon in the conduct of serious business;
  - d. ask relevant questions of the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses if needed to elicit information which may be of assistance in making a decision; and

- e. ensure that the complainant and respondent have full opportunity to present their claims orally or in writing, and to present witnesses and evidence which may establish their claims.

#### **F. DECISION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OR THE COMMITTEE**

1. After all the evidence, testimony, and written arguments have been presented, the committee will convene for deliberations to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated. If the Committee finds after a roll call vote that the policy has not been violated, that fact will be registered in the records of the hearing, and the written decision will be forwarded to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after completion of the hearing.

In hearings before the Superintendent, if the Superintendent finds that the policy has not been violated, the Superintendent will issue a written decision to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing.

2. If the Committee finds after a roll call vote that the charge of violating the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been substantiated, the hearing Committee will prepare findings and will determine a penalty for the respondent and relief for the complainant. The Committee will issue such decision to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing.

In hearings before the Superintendent, if the Superintendent finds that the charge of violating the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been substantiated, the Superintendent will prepare findings and will determine a penalty for the respondent and relief for the complainant. The Superintendent will issue such decision to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after the completion of the hearing.

The findings of fact as well as the penalty and relief will be based solely on the testimony and evidence presented at the hearing.

3. The penalty should reflect the severity of the harassment. The penalties may include, but will not be limited to, any one or combination of the following: verbal admonition, written warning placed in the respondent's personnel file or student record, probation, suspension without pay, dismissal, demotion, or removal from administrative duties within a department; students may be subject to suspension or expulsion proceedings following a finding that the policy has been violated. The Committee or Superintendent may also make appropriate recommendations, such as professional counseling, and may recommend relief for the complainant which reinstates and restores, as much as possible, the aggrieved party.

### **PROHIBITION OF TOBACCO ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

- A. Smoking and the use of tobacco products by students, staff, volunteers, and visitors are prohibited on all school property at all times in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H, effective June 4, 1993. District policy prohibits student possession of tobacco products or paraphernalia on school property and at school-sponsored trips or events. School property includes school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, school parking lots, and school buses, any property controlled by the School Committees.

### **DANGEROUS WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

- A. In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Education Reform Act of 1993, it is the policy of the Rowe School District to prohibit the possession of or use of firearms on school property including school buses or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, at any time.
- B. Any student who is determined to have brought a firearm to school will automatically be expelled for a minimum of one year subject to modification by the Superintendent on a case by case basis. The student will also be referred to the Police Department for further action.
- C. Other dangerous weapons such as knives or other objects that can be construed as a weapon are not permitted. Any dangerous weapon found in the possession of a student will be confiscated.
- D. Any student who in the judgment of the Principal, as verified by due process, is determined to be in violation of this policy shall be suspended from attendance (out of school) and at the discretion of the Principal, may be referred for an expulsion hearing according to M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H.

### **INTERNET USE POLICY**

#### **A. Acceptable Use Policy**

1. The following explains the Rowe School District policy for acceptable use of the school's and district's technology. The use of computer networks and the Internet, including wireless access, are revocable privileges dependent upon compliance with school/district policy and these procedures.
2. A user's failure to comply with the policy shall result in limited network/Internet access, suspension of access, and/or other disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

#### **B. Students, Administrators, Staff, and Faculty shall not:**

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material.
2. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs or racial

epithets; or discriminates on the basis of gender, national origin, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, religion, handicap or age.

3. Degrade, damage or disrupt equipment or system/network performance (for example excessive bandwidth use that disrupts the network for other users).
4. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
5. Permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.
6. Use an account of any other person or vandalize another user's data.
7. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
8. Download, install, load, or use programs without written permission of the technology coordinator/administrator.
9. Use the Internet for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
10. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul, or abusive language.
11. Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, threatening or anonymous messages, objectionable information, images, or language.
12. Forward chain letters.
13. Forward email messages of broad interest—including virus alerts and jokes—to the entire school community
14. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software licensing agreements.
15. Engage in the practice of "hacking" or knowingly engage in any other illegal activity using the network.
16. Engage in any other inappropriate use of the system.

**C. Students, Staff, and Faculty must:**

1. Use the Internet and other electronic resources only for legitimate educational purposes.
2. Respect commonly accepted practices of Internet etiquette including, but not limited to, the use of appropriate language.
3. Be aware of potential security risks at all times and take all reasonable steps to minimize risks by, at minimum, logging off the network when a computer is unattended and reporting all unauthorized use of one's account to a technology administrator.
4. Avoid bulk e-mailing
5. Forward all e-mails of broad interest, such as virus alerts, to a technology administrator for appropriate distribution to the entire school community.
6. Treat all computer areas and equipment with the utmost care and respect

## **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT/GUARDIAN POLICY**

- A. A non-custodial parent/guardian who wishes to receive information concerning his/her child, including but not limited to progress reports, the results of testing, notification of a referral for a special needs assessment, notification of enrollment in a transitional bilingual program, absences, illnesses, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, withdrawal from school, must submit a written request to the school Principal.

Upon receipt of the above, the school shall immediately notify the custodial parent/guardian of the request by registered and first-class mail. The notice shall inform the custodial parent/guardian that the information requested shall be provided to the non-custodial parent/guardian after 21 days unless the school receives evidence that the parent/guardian 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 the parent/guardian has been denied visitation or the parent's/guardian's access to the student 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 there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent/guardian.

- B. At any time the school is presented with a court order which prohibits the distribution of information to the non-custodial parent/guardian, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent/guardian that provisions of the information shall cease.
- C. The information provided to the non-custodial parent/guardian shall be marked to indicate that it may not be used to support the admission of the child to another school.
- D. The above information shall be provided in a timely and appropriate manner to all parents/guardians of children enrolled in school.

M.G.L. c. 71, Sec. 34H

## **POLICY ON PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

- A. Although no member of the community will be denied the right to bring complaints to the School Committee, they will be referred through the proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the committee. Exceptions will be made when the complaints concern School Committee actions or School Committee operations only. The School Committee believes that the complaints are best handled and resolved as close to their origin as possible and that the professional staff should be given every opportunity to consider the issues and attempt to resolve the problem prior to involvement by the committee. Therefore, the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials will be as follows:
  - 1. Teacher
  - 2. School Principal
  - 3. Superintendent
  - 4. School Committee
- B. Any complaint having to do with the condition of the school facilities will be first presented to the Principal.
- C. If a complaint, which was presented to the School Committee and referred back through the proper channels, is resolved, a report of the disposition of the matter will be made to the School Committee and then placed in the official files.
- D. Matters referred to the Superintendent and/or School Committees must be in writing and should be specific in terms of action desired.
- E. The School Committees expects the professional Staff to receive complaints courteously and to make a proper reply to the complainant. No employee of the School Committee shall take any retaliatory action or allow any such action to be taken in response to complaints or concerns raised by parents/guardians.

## **PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

- A. Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant should submit his/her complaint in writing.
- B. Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Committee as a whole or to a committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school Administration for review and possible resolution.
- C. The Superintendent will develop procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedures will require that an employee who is the object of a complaint be informed within a reasonable time period and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as (s)he sees them.
- D. If it appears necessary, the Administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the School Committee for a formal hearing. Statutory restrictions on executive session will be observed.
- E. The School Committee may hear the complaint, however, under the Education Reform Act of 1993, personnel actions may only be taken by school administration unless the position is directly hired by the School Committee.

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Session

## **COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

- A. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, the school will not be available to families or groups as it has been in the past. The policy of the Rowe School District is to make its facilities and resources available to the Rowe School families and members of the Rowe community. Community groups will make an application for use of facilities to the School Principal. The APPLICATION FOR USE OF FACILITIES or APPLICATION FOR USE OF EQUIPMENT forms are available in the school office or on the school's website. In scheduling the use of facilities, school-sponsored activities have priority over non-school-sponsored functions.
- B. Groups using school facilities must comply with the use regulations (KF-R) and pay any applicable rental fees. Groups wishing to use school facilities on a regular and sustained basis may negotiate a separate agreement with the Principal or Superintendent.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

Parents/guardians and students are guaranteed the right to inspect, as well as, seek addition to or deletion from all records, which are kept or requested to be kept by the School Department, concerning individual students. The records include the student's transcript and any other recorded information, which is identified by the student's name. A signed log is kept in each cumulative record for all students.

- A. Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §§ 34D & 34F, and the regulations promulgated thereunder, no third party, other than authorized school or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education personnel, shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific informed written consent of the eligible student or the Parent.
- B. Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena, or upon receipt of a request from a Court or the Department of Youth Services for information regarding a student, the school, prior to compliance, shall notify the eligible student or Parent of the order, subpoena or request in such reasonable time that he/she may seek to have the process quashed.
- C. Except for certain limited and specifically defined individuals, i.e., certain court officers, health officials, and authorized school personnel, no individual or agency may have access to school records of the student(s) without “the specific informed written consent” of the student or his/her Parent. This means that if a parent or student wishes transcripts or records forwarded to school, colleges, or prospective employers, a written release must be delivered to the Principal of the school or appropriate custodian of the student’s school records.
- D. Schools may release for publication a student’s name, class, information about participation in officially recognized activities and sports, honors, and awards.
- E. Complete copies of the state regulations concerning Parents’ and students’ rights to records may be obtained in the building Principal’s office.

#### **NO IDLING POLICY (MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS)**

- A. No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons:
  - 1. traffic conditions
  - 2. queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students
  - 3. turbocharged diesel engine cool down or warm-up
  - 4. maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen-minute period or one minute in any fifteen-minute period for other motor vehicles
  - 5. for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below-referenced regulations.
  - 6. The term “school grounds” shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground.



- B. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the District to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle.
- C. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such an air intake system, unless the Rowe School District has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety, or are not cost-effective.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 41:35

### **DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

- A. The Rowe School District is committed to providing safe and healthy school environments in which our students can learn. The use of drugs and alcohol can negatively impact a student physically, emotionally, socially, academically, and legally. Scientific studies have shown that drugs and alcohol have particularly harmful effects on developing adolescent brains. Therefore, the district provides drug and alcohol education as part of their comprehensive health curriculum and has created this policy to define the district's position on drugs and alcohol use on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities. The regulations of the drug and alcohol policy provide written guidelines for handling incidents of consumption, possession, and/or distribution of alcohol and drugs.
- B. In accordance with M.G.L. c.71, Section 37H and c. 272, Section 40A, drug and alcohol use by students, staff, and visitors are prohibited on all school properties at all times. District policy prohibits any person from ingesting, possessing, being under the influence of or distributing drugs and alcohol on school grounds or at school-sponsored functions at any time. Possession or distribution of drug paraphernalia is also prohibited. School property includes school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, school parking lots and school buses, and any property controlled by the school committee.
- C. Definitions:
  - 1. Ingestion - Ingestion is the eating, drinking, inhaling or absorbing of drugs or alcohol into the body. Ingestion may or may not have occurred on school property or at a school-sponsored function.
  - 2. Possession - Possession is the unlawful custody of alcohol or a controlled substance.
  - 3. Distribution - Distribution is the unlawful transfer of alcohol or a controlled substance from one person to another. The transfer does not require the knowledge of the receiver nor does it require a transaction by sale.
  - 4. Drugs - The term "drug(s)" as used in this policy includes any narcotic substance, hallucinogen substance, any substance taken for the purpose of "getting high" or becoming intoxicated, and all chemical and controlled substances as defined by state or federal law, including, but not limited to substances commonly known as marijuana, LSD, cocaine, crack, heroin, amphetamine and methamphetamine, and barbiturates. The term "drug(s)" also includes all prescription medicines, except when used or possessed in accordance with the school medication administration policy.

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS and PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)**

- A. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal Law, requires that Rowe School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personal identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Rowe School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of this directory information is to allow the Rowe District to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain publications. Examples include:
1. A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
  2. The annual yearbook;
  3. Honor roll or other recognition lists;
  4. Graduation programs; and
  5. Sports activity sheets, such as wrestling, showing weight and height of team members
- B. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965(ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three information categories-names, addresses, and telephone listings-unless parents/guardians have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without prior written consent.

## **BUS, DROP-OFF and PICK UP - 2021-2022**

We are continuing the bus, drop-off, and pick-up rules we began last year in order for us to be able to get students in and out of the building safely. Expect some delays in the first few days as we work out the kinks in the plan, thank you in advance for your patience. Any changes to your bus/pick-up/drop-off plans should be made with Laurie by email ([llaffond@roweschool.org](mailto:llaffond@roweschool.org)) or phone (413-512-5100).

### **Beginning of the day/drop-off:**

#### Bus students:

- Students must wear masks and remain in their assigned seats on the bus.
- Students will be dropped off by the bus and walk through the front door to their designated areas.

#### Student Drop-off:

- Students must arrive at the school by 8:30. Cars will follow the pick-up/drop-off lane around the circle (see map). The lane will be single file and will begin in the “staff” area of the parking lot, and extend through where the parking spots are around the outside of the circle. There will be another lane for through traffic. Parents will drive in the pick-up/drop-off line and stop where indicated to drop their students off.

### **End of the day/pick-up:**

#### Bus students:

- Students will line up on the ramp at dismissal, supervised by a staff member. Each child will have a designated spot on the ramp. They will line up in the order of last off the bus, first in line. Once all riders are ready, they will board, in the order of last off the bus on first, and take their assigned seats. Once all riders are accounted for, the bus will leave.

#### Student Pick-up:

- Students will wait in their classrooms to be called for dismissal. Students will be ready to be dismissed by 3:15. Families will be asked to arrive by 3:10. Students will be brought out to the cars as soon as reasonably possible.
- A pick-up/drop off lane will be created around the circle. The lane will be single file and will begin in the “staff” area of the parking lot, and extend through where the parking spots are around the outside of the circle. There will be another lane for through traffic. When a parent/guardian arrives, they will drive through the pick-up lane until they reach the next available parking spot. Cars will continue to line up in the pick-up lane.