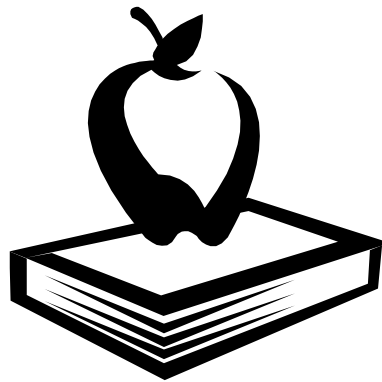


Northborough Public Schools



PARENT/ GUARDIAN-STUDENT HANDBOOK Pre-Kindergarten – Grade 5

This Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook is to be kept for reference throughout your child's elementary school experience.

The Northborough, Southborough and Northborough and Southborough Regional School Districts prohibit discrimination in its operations. The school districts provide equal employment and educational opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, gender identity, religion, marital status, age, sexual orientation, homelessness, national origin or disability. This applies to all persons affiliated with the Northborough, Southborough and Northborough and Southborough Regional School Districts including students prospective and existing personnel, contractors and suppliers of goods and services. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to the Superintendent of Schools or directly to the United States Department of Education Region I-Office for Civil Rights, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02110.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

REGISTERING NEW STUDENTS

Parents of students new to the Northborough Public Schools will register at their neighborhood school's main office while school is in session. During the summer when the schools are on break, all registrations will take place one week before school begins. Parents new to our schools should bring proof of residence (lease agreement, recent utility bill or a signed Purchase and Sale Agreement). An original form of the child's birth certificate (with embossed seal) and current health/immunization records are required. Registration forms can be found on our schools' websites. You can find school links on the district website. <http://www.nsboro.k12.ma.us/>

WITHDRAWING STUDENT FROM SCHOOL

If you are moving and are withdrawing your child from school, please provide a written statement of your intent to the principal as soon as you are aware of the withdrawal date. Original records are not permitted to be hand delivered; therefore, records will be mailed to the receiving school.

KINDERGARTEN

Children are eligible for Kindergarten if they will have reached five years of age on or before August 31 of the year of admission. Kindergarten programs are either half-day or tuition-based full-day. Kindergarten registration material will be mailed to the household of each age-eligible child as listed in the Town of Northborough census. Families new to town or who may not be included in the census are urged to contact the school as early as possible to ensure inclusion in the registration process. Required information to register a student in Northborough Public Schools includes Proof of Residency as listed above, an original birth certificate (with embossed seal), medical/immunological record and student, family and emergency contact information provided by the parents/guardians. Information about previous attendance at preschools or private kindergartens would be valuable.

Kindergarten orientation sessions for prospective kindergarten families will be held during the spring and fall. Our Kindergarten program is developmentally based with standards and expectations for growth and learning in accordance with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This means that social and instructional activities are carefully based upon long-standing research that defines those skills and behaviors for which students of kindergarten age have a level of physical and cognitive readiness. While we understand that children grow and learn at individual rates, our program takes this diversity into account and strives to provide a sound conceptual foundation for learning. The kindergarten curriculum is aimed at the whole child. Children learn to take risks and solve problems, develop relationships, explore new concepts, acquire academic skills and knowledge, and enhance their physical, social, and emotional competence. Early exposure to literacy is a curriculum priority and includes phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding and word recognition, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The kindergarten experience integrates balanced literacy strategies throughout the curriculum to meet the needs of children across a range of educational and developmental levels.

CLASSROOM TEACHER ASSIGNMENT

Each spring teachers begin the process of creating new classes of students for the following school year. This is one of the most important tasks our staff takes on as we consider the strengths and needs of our students both individually and collectively. Our overriding objective is to achieve well-balanced classes that meet the needs of all students. The principal and staff work to form classroom groups in a way that balances age, ability, talents, needs and temperament. This is a complex and time-consuming process that teachers and the principal take very seriously to obtain the very best class assignments. Parents often ask if they can have input to the selection of their child's teacher. The principal is open to receiving your comments about your child's learning style, social and academic needs, and any other pertinent information that would be helpful in determining his/her placement. Since parents know their children best, an opportunity to provide parental input will be possible in April as identified in your child's school newsletter. Comments must be submitted the principal in writing and should be directed to your child's learning style, needs or special circumstances. However, requests for specific teachers will not be honored. The principal approves all final placement decisions.

COMMUNICATION

Communication with your child's classroom teacher and the school staff is welcomed. Please feel free to call the school or send a note with your child or send your child's teacher an email. Appointments may be arranged with classroom teachers to discuss any issues, concerns or problems. Appointments can be arranged by calling the school office, or contacting staff members directly through voicemail or email. To reach a staff member by email, type the person's first initial and last name followed by @nsboro.k12.ma.us. For example, if the staff member you would like to reach is Jane Doe, she can be reached by sending email to jdoe@nsboro.k12.ma.us

Please note that not all staff members access email on the same schedule or during school hours. If something needs to be addressed in a timely manner, send a note with your child or call your child's teacher directly.

EMAIL GUIDELINES

Email communication is common practice for many people. School personnel have email accounts and do their best to check messages once a day. Teachers have little time during the school day to access and respond to email messages. Although this form of communication is convenient, quick and easy, it needs to be used carefully since the tone and intent of a message can be easily misunderstood due to the lack of facial or voice cues.

Parents are asked to keep the following guidelines in mind as they write email messages to school staff:

- Email sent through a public account is not considered private communication between parties and, as such, nothing of a personal or sensitive nature should be disclosed in email messages.
- Email should be brief, concise, and if warranted, should be a request for a personal contact (phone call or note) if feedback is necessary.
- Email is not a substitute for a conference, nor should it be a problem-solving tool, especially when children and their learning issues are the topic.
- Timely information should not be included in email messages as teachers may not be able to read or pass along, within the expected timeframe, information that has an impact on a child's daily routine.
- Email communication should be used as needed. It should not be a daily messaging tool used as a convenience.

Messages that violate these guidelines may not get a response. At times, teachers and teaching-teams may establish an email protocol with families that is mutually agreeable and which supports students.

It is important that we manage this technology so it remains a tool and not a replacement for individual conversations about students and their issues. The guideline offered for checking whether email messages are appropriate remains, "do not write anything you would not want to see printed on the front page of the newspaper".

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Formal Parent conferences are scheduled in November and in March. Conferences are scheduled for afternoon and evening, by appointment only. Information regarding conferences is sent home prior to scheduling. Informal conferences may be scheduled with teachers as the need arises. Parents sometimes have a need to discuss their child's progress between conferences. Parents should send a written message or phone call to the teacher requesting a conference at a mutually agreed upon time. All staff members have voicemail and email for your convenience. Arriving at the classroom unannounced to discuss a child's progress, raising concerns during volunteer time, or attempting to discuss a child's growth during a field trip or school event can be disruptive to class preparation time, and to the student's learning. In addition, these are NOT confidential discussions nor do they permit the teacher to collect information or work samples.

REPORT CARDS

Report cards of each child's growth and development are sent home on the following schedule:

K-5: January and June. Report cards for art, music and physical education, as well as student support services, are sent home on the same schedule.

PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS

Sometimes your child may come home and share a concern about something that the child may find troubling, an incident on the playground, for instance, a difficulty in the classroom, or an incident of teasing or bullying. As a first step, listen to your child and help him or her talk it out. Even without knowing the story from all sides you may be able to help your child see the situation more fully by your supportive questions and responses.

If you think your child will be unable to deal with the situation or it will disrupt the learning process, then your next step should be to **communicate the problem directly to the classroom teacher**. Please send a note with your child, communicate by telephone, email, or call to set up an appointment to meet with the classroom teacher. The classroom teacher can immediately address the concern and/or locate the appropriate means of support for your child.

When problems arise, they need to be addressed in a timely manner. Our goal is for our school staff, parents, and child to work together in a way that helps the child to understand alternative problem solving strategies, including how to communicate problems and concerns to the appropriate adults. At times, different staff members participate in discussions with students to resolve conflicts. This may include staff members present during an escalating conflict, the classroom teacher or teachers and staff members supervising recess or lunch, the school psychologist, the behaviorist, or the principal. Through collaboration, staff members support students as conflicts are resolved.

Problem resolution protocol:

- ❖ Help your child talk it out to fully understand the problem
- ❖ Communicate the problem directly to the classroom teacher
- ❖ If the matter remains unresolved, communicate the problem to the school principal
- ❖ If the matter still remains unresolved, communicate the problem to the Superintendent of Schools.

In the case of a school-wide issue you may wish to contact the school principal.

ELECTRONIC BACKPACKS

On a weekly basis, notices from the school or from administration will be distributed. These weekly packets are sent directly to families via email. Please keep your contact information up to date. If your email address changes, please contact your school's office right away. The yearlong history of electronic backpacks can also be found on the school website. Electronic backpack mail is our primary way to communicate with families.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The school newsletter is your in-depth source for keeping in touch with the school and community events. The newsletter will be distributed monthly via email. In addition, a lunch menu is sent home just before a new month begins and is also posted on the school's website.

If families do not have immediate access to a computer or the Internet, they may request paper copies of communication documents. Please contact the principal if you would like to receive paper copies. Families with access to the Internet will be provided with an electronic-copy.

EMERGENCY EARLY DISMISSAL AND CLOSING OF SCHOOL



When school closings need to be announced, the Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough will make use of several different communication tools for notifying students and their families: our web site, One Call Now, and local television and radio stations. If school is released early for any reason, you will be contacted using telephone numbers and email addresses supplied by you at the beginning of the school year as part of your emergency contact information. **For this reason, please advise the office of ANY changes in your emergency contact listing.** You may also wish to establish a plan with your child/children, neighborhood friends or relatives in the event of an early dismissal. In

extreme circumstances, if families are unable to make arrangements for their child, the police department will be notified.

1. The Web Site of the Public Schools of Northborough and Southborough

Cancellations and early dismissals will be posted first on the front page of the district web site, <http://www.nsboro.k12.ma.us/>. This will be the earliest notification of school closings, posted at the very top of the front page.

2. Phone and/or Email Notification via One Call Now

Through One Call Now, a message will be sent out to all households of school-attending students. The Superintendent or designee will send these messages out early in the morning. Cancellation phone announcements made prior to schools opening in the morning will be made to households only. Closing phone call and/or email announcements made during the school day will be made to all phone numbers on file for a student, including home, work and cell phone numbers.

How does One Call Now work? As an example, at 5:00 AM on a snowy school morning the Superintendent or designee makes the decision to cancel school. Within minutes, the message from One Call Now will go out to every household of children attending school in our district. Additionally, if school needs to be cancelled in the middle of the day due to dangerous weather conditions, the superintendent may determine that students must be sent home early. Families will be contacted via One Call Now. In this way families can make arrangements for students' safe arrival at home or daycare. When schools close early, students will be bussed from their school to their regular afternoon after-school destination, unless you have given your child's school office different instructions specifically for early closings.

If school is closed or dismissed early, ALL after school and evening programs will also be cancelled (including NEDP).

3. Announcements via Local Television and Radio Stations

We will continue to post cancellation announcements through local media, as we traditionally have done in the past. Have a favorite morning news show you tune in to as you wake up on a snowy morning? You can continue to follow announcements of school closings on TV and radio. News channels 4, 5 and 7 will report Northborough Public School information on closings.

We encourage you to use a combination of the web, phone, television and radio to ensure that you are aware of weather-related closings in a timely manner.



ATTENDANCE, TARDINESS, ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Chapter 76, Section 1, Massachusetts General Law

All children between the ages of 6 and 16 must attend school. A school district may excuse up to seven full day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions in any period of six months. A "CHINS" (Child in Need of Services) petition may be filed by a supervisor of attendance if a child between the ages of 6 and 16 persistently and willfully fails to attend school or persistently violates lawful and reasonable regulation of his or her school. The court's authority pursuant to a CHINS petition includes the power to place the child in the custody of the state agency known as the Department of Children and Families.

Parental Responsibility: Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring that a child under their control attends school daily. It is a crime for a responsible parent or guardian not to cause a child to attend school. If a child fails to attend school for over seven full day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any six-month period, the supervisor of attendance may file a criminal complaint against the responsible parent or guardian.

ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES

Your child's success in school can only be gained through regular and timely attendance. School is a child's workplace. It is important for the continuity and constancy of education that absence from school is kept to a minimum. All students are expected to attend school every day that school is in session. We do acknowledge that some children are absent for legitimate reasons. Absences due to student illness, religious observance, legal proceedings or family emergency are excused absences. Absences for recreational and vacation purposes are strongly discouraged and are considered unexcused. Parents are requested to schedule appointments for physicians, dentists, or special lessons after school hours. Please refer to the school calendar when scheduling family vacations and trips. Unless the child is absent for reasons of illness or emergency, teachers are **NOT** required to provide work to cover the period of time the family will be away. School experiences are impossible to duplicate outside of the classroom.

REPORTING ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL

If a child is to be absent for any reason, the parent/guardian should notify the school attendance phone line of the reason for the absence within the first thirty minutes of the school day. If you know your child will be absent, send an advanced note explaining the expected absence. If a child does not appear for school and no previous notice has been received, a member of the school staff will call a parent to confirm the child's absence. The staff will use the parent/guardian's day phone number or emergency number. The information contained on the student's emergency information form will be used for this purpose. In the event that a parent/guardian cannot be reached, the Northborough Police will be notified.

TARDINESS AND PARENT REQUESTED EARLY DISMISSAL

Your child's success in school can only be gained through timely attendance. School is a child's workplace. It is important for the continuity and constancy of education that tardiness and early dismissal from school are kept to a minimum. Students arriving at school after the start of the school day are considered tardy and must report to the school office for an admittance slip to class. The tardiness and early dismissals will be recorded in attendance records.

For reasons other than illness, early dismissal from school will be granted on a parent's request (written or through a verbal request to the office). Please do not email teachers, as they do not typically check email until later in the day, after they have prepared their classroom for students. Parents are requested to schedule appointments for physicians, dentists, or special lessons after school hours. Students must not leave the school without first reporting to the main office where they must be signed out and met by a parent, guardian, or adult member of the family. Students are not to leave the school or its grounds under any circumstances without the knowledge of the school office staff.

Changes in typical dismissal plans must also be reported in writing from the parents/guardians. The note must provide specific information about the dismissal plans (including the first and last name of the individual the child can be released to). Dismissal changes made after 12:00 p.m. can interfere with office and classroom routines.

Pupil Absence Notification Program

Upon a child's 5th unexcused absence from school in a school year or when a child misses 2 or more classes for five (5) days during the year due to absence or tardiness, the principal will meet with the parent(s) to develop action steps for to address the student's attendance. These action steps will be developed jointly and agreed upon by the principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

COMPLETION OF SCHOOL WORK AND HOMEWORK

It is the responsibility of the student to complete academic work assigned while absent. Teachers will work cooperatively with parents and students to provide assistance during excused absences as well as after the child returns to school to minimize educational loss to the student. Parents who take their children out of school for unexcused reasons are assuming the responsibility for their children's educational program. It should be realized that teachers realistically cannot provide work to take the place of instruction missed during absences.

HOMEWORK POLICY

Homework is a necessary part of our educational program that fulfills both academic and non-academic purposes. It refers to work assigned by a teacher to be completed by the student outside of class time and is not limited to that which can be written. Homework is intended to provide an opportunity for integrating home and school experiences. It should help foster the concept of learning as a life-long process.

Consistent with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, we believe homework should serve many purposes:

- Improve academic performance
- Help students organize and budget their time
- Extend learning and critical thinking beyond the school day
- Develop individual responsibility, decision making skills and independent study skills
- Provide additional time for the application and reinforcement of new skills and concepts
- Encourage innovation and creativity
- Develop diverse interests that might enhance later experiences in life
- Keep parents involved in and informed about curriculum, skills and strategies being developed

Guidelines

Suggested time guidelines are as follows:

- K an average of 10 minutes per day
- 1-2 an average of 10-20 minutes per day
- 3-4 an average of 30-40 minutes per day
- 5 an average of 45-60 minutes per day

Naturally, some students may require more or less time to complete assignments. In general, students will receive homework on a daily Monday through Thursday. At times, homework assignments may involve weekend and holiday work as well. Teachers should take into account student commitments when assigning long-term projects that encompass a holiday or vacation.

A successful homework program depends on a successful partnership of student, teacher, and parent.

School Committee Policy I-190 (6000), Last updated, November 2002



HOMEWORK EXPECTATIONS

Nightly reading at home with a parent or independently is strongly encouraged in addition to nightly homework.

As parents, we hope that you will encourage reading for fun and pleasure for and with your child. Practice makes perfect ... just like a sports practice!

Homework assignments:

- ❖ Provide practice in needed skills
- ❖ Develop good study skills
- ❖ Provide opportunities for increasing self direction
- ❖ Enrich and extend classroom learning
- ❖ Help children learn to budget time

- ❖ Bring students into contact with out-of-school learning resources
- ❖ Promote responsibility

Students' responsibilities:

- ❖ Know homework assignments before leaving school
- ❖ Record assignments in Agenda Book, which is to travel back and forth between home and school
- ❖ Take homework assignments and all necessary supplies home
- ❖ Seek help from parents if needed
- ❖ Submit finished homework to the teacher, neatly done and on time

Teachers' responsibilities:

- ❖ Ensure homework assignments are clear and directions are complete and age appropriate
- ❖ Ensure homework supplements the curriculum and is meaningful
- ❖ Remain flexible to parental concerns about unusual circumstances, or a student's special needs

Parents' responsibilities:

- ❖ Make agreements with your child regarding homework routines (when, where, how)
- ❖ Arrange a quiet time and study area including proper lighting
- ❖ Show confidence in your child's ability; never do your child's homework for him/her
- ❖ Spend a few minutes each evening monitoring your child's progress on required homework, and check finished product
- ❖ Check assignments as recorded in the student's Agenda Book
- ❖ Let the teacher know if homework is consistently too difficult or takes too long

For further details, please refer to the Northborough Public Schools Homework Policy in the Appendix of District-Wide Policies.

HEALTH, WELLNESS AND NUTRITION

A registered nurse is available during school hours. All nurses are licensed by the MA Board of Registration and by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Nurses provide first aid for injuries, intervention for chronic health problems, referrals to physicians and health professionals, and act as liaisons for community health concerns. Nurses maintain a medical record for every student, which is kept on file throughout the student's school career. Nurses are members of the school's Crisis Team, the Child Protection Team, and the Student Support Team. They work closely with administrators to ensure a healthy and safe school community.



A Health Emergency Contact form is sent home at the beginning of school. Please use this form to indicate any significant medical conditions, including medications taken at home. It is important to inform the nurse about any changes in your child's medical history, or medication updates throughout the school year. Also included are Emergency Contacts, who will be contacted in the event of a medical emergency should parents be unavailable.

Immunization and Physical Exams

Massachusetts State Law mandates written documentation of up-to-date immunizations before entrance into the Northborough-Southborough Public School district. A copy of a recent physical exam is required before students enter kindergarten, fourth grade, seventh grade and tenth grade, and for all new students.

Medication at School

Under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 105 CMR-1171, our nurses must have a medication order from a licensed prescriber in order to administer any medication, whether it is a prescription drug or an over-the-counter medication. The following policy applies in the Northborough-Southborough Public School District:

- A. Students are prohibited from carrying medications of any kind on their person or having them in their possession without prior approval of the school nurse.
- B. No medication will be administered in school without a written order from a licensed prescriber. This written order must be signed and dated for a closed period of time and include instructions for dispensing.
- C. In addition, a written dated request signed by a parent/guardian must be submitted to the nurse concerning the dispensing of medication.
- D. Prescribed medications, over-the-counter medications, and inhalers to be administered under the conditions stated above must be brought to the nurse by the parent or guardian in the original properly labeled container.
- E. For short-term prescription medication, those requiring administration for ten (10) school days or fewer, the pharmacy labeled container may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order. If the nurse has a question, she may request a written order from a licensed prescriber.
- F. Each school calendar year requires a new written order from the licensed prescriber, and written parent/guardian request for the dispensing of the medication. Written parent/guardian consent forms and licensed prescriber order forms may be obtained from the school nurse.

Screenings

Massachusetts mandates the following screenings be completed:

Vision – Grades K-5, 7 and 10

Hearing – Grades K-3, 7 and 10

Postural – Grades 5-9

Body Mass Index (BMI) - Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10

Results of Vision, Hearing and Postural screenings are reported to parents when outside referrals appear necessary.

Parents who want their child excused from the above screenings must submit a written note to the Health Office for each screening.

Guidelines for student absences

Fever: A temperature higher than 100.4°F is considered a fever. Students should be fever-free, without the use of fever reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.

Vomiting and Diarrhea: Student should be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.

Strep throat - A sore throat in conjunction with a fever, headache, stomach ache, or dizziness may indicate strep throat. Strep is verified medically. Upon verification, please notify the Health Office. Students must complete 24 hours of medication and be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication before returning to school.

Conjunctivitis (pink eye): The signs and symptoms of conjunctivitis include redness in the eye area, itchy eyes, and yellow or green crusty discharge. Contact your pediatrician for a proper diagnosis. Students may attend school within 24 hours of treatment.

Chicken Pox: If a pediatrician has confirmed Chicken Pox, it is imperative that the Health Office be contacted immediately, according to Department of Public Health Guidelines.

A healthy body maximizes success in school. Please contact the Health Office with any medical questions throughout the year.

The main objective of the Health Office is to assist each student in achieving and obtaining optimal health so that maximum physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth can occur. We hope to build a lasting relationship with you and your children, and we want to work with you to make that goal a reality. Please feel free to call the Health Office with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the health of your child.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT CONSUMPTION OF FOOD

The number of students with life-threatening allergies, especially food allergies, has increased substantially in recent years. Allergic reactions vary among students and can range from mild to severe and life-threatening anaphylactic reactions. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body, the most dangerous of which are breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock, which are potentially fatal. Some students, who are very sensitive, may react to just touching or inhaling the allergen. The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to:

- Foods (most commonly: peanuts, tree nuts, milk, dairy products, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish);
- Insect stings (yellow jackets, bees, wasps, hornets);
- Medications; and
- Latex.

Parents will be notified in writing if their child is in a classroom where there are allergy-related concerns.

SHARING OF FOOD IS PROHIBITED

Children are not permitted to share their food. Please reinforce this with your child. Students may bring to school only what they intend to eat. Food brought into the building should be intended for individual consumption at all times of the school day. During the school day there is no food for celebrations and no food/treats used as rewards. Food is not used during classroom learning experiences, except in instances where experiments are conducted but the food is not consumed.

Adult events and after-school meetings are exceptions to these guidelines. When parents are accompanying their children to the school for an after school or weekend PTO-sponsored event, the child's parent present at the event will make decisions around what children can/cannot eat.

Adults are expected to support these guidelines through their own modeling and through their adherence to these practices.

As we work to build lifelong healthy habits in our school community, the Northborough Public Schools strive to promote wellness within our school environment each day. We are keenly aware of the prevalence of childhood obesity and the increase of food and environmental allergies, and the impact these issues can have on our school community. We will promote making healthy choices regarding nutrition, exercise and stress reduction.

Exceptions to this policy can be made for curriculum-related activities. Permission from the principal is necessary. Written permission (in the form of a permission slip) from parents/guardians will be required.

SNACKS

Students should bring their own snack to school each day. Students are not allowed to share snacks. It is suggested that parents send in a nutritious snack. Snack times are set by classroom schedules.

SCHOOL LUNCHES

The Northborough Public Schools serve hot and cold lunch at all five schools every day except early release days. Children with a lunch from home may purchase milk for \$.60. Juice is available for students who are unable to consume milk for dietary and/or allergy reasons. A doctor's note must be provided for children to have access to juice purchases. The lunches are nutritionally balanced and follow the state guidelines for their Plan A lunch menus. Lunch may be pre-paid weekly, monthly, or annually or paid for on a daily basis. Visit the school's website to pre-pay for lunches through the Online School Payment Center. The turn-around



time for payments made to the online system is two business days. Please reference the lunch menus online for prices.

CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

- No fast foods (i.e. Burger King, McDonald's, take-out pizza)
- No glass bottles
- No flip-top cans
- No soft drinks/soda
- No changing lunch orders once they have been placed

Children who have forgotten to bring money for lunch or milk will be given a lunch and will be expected to pay for their lunch the following day. Lunches cannot be charged on a regular basis.

If a student forgets his or her lunch money 1-2 times, the cafeteria will:

- Provide student with the lunch of his/her choice;
- Send home the notice from the principal and/or cafeteria manager.

If a student forgets his or her lunch money more than two times, the cafeteria will:

- Have pre-made PBJ and cheese sandwiches available;
- Notify the principal who will then contact the parents for repayment;
- Work with families to settle outstanding charges.

Parents are invited to eat lunch with their child(ren) anytime. Any parent wishing to purchase a school lunch should notify the school by 9:30 a.m. We ask your cooperation in not bringing fast food or soda from outside the school for lunch, as eating in the cafeteria is an experience in nutrition education. Adults are reminded that sharing of food is not allowed with other students.

PRE-PAID LUNCHES

Pre-paid lunches are available on the school website.

<https://unipaygold.unibank.com/Default.aspx?customerid=723>

Parents may pre-pay as many lunches as they wish for the school year.

FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH

Applications for the free and reduced lunch are sent home at the beginning of each school year. Applications may also be completed at any time during the school year if there is a change of status. This process is completely confidential. Parents should contact the school office for an application.

SPECIAL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Each week students attend Art, Music, Physical Education and Library classes. Specialists in their fields teach these subjects. The specialists work with the classroom teachers to integrate educational experiences for students.

TESTING

Northborough Public Schools follows statewide testing policies for those grades identified by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. This includes participation in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) for grades 3, 4, and 5 as scheduled by the Massachusetts Department of Education. Grade 3: Reading and Mathematics; Grade 4: English Language Arts Long Composition, English Language Arts and Mathematics; and Grade 5: English Language Arts, Mathematics and Science & Technology/ Engineering.

The testing schedule/dates will be published on the Massachusetts Department of Education website and on our school district website. Individual schools will publish specific testing schedules. This information will be posted in newsletters to families and posted on the individual schools' websites.

Additionally, Northborough Public Schools provides Kindergarten Screening for in-coming Kindergarten students and Phonemic Awareness Screening for Kindergarten students. Literacy Assessments and Mathematics Assessments for all students take place in the early part of the school year to provide a baseline measure of skills and are repeated over the course of the year to document growth. Intermittent Writing Samples provide a range of samples to record progress in this area.

INCLUSION

The Northborough/Southborough School Districts are committed to providing quality education to all students regardless of their strengths or weaknesses. Respect for the diversity and dignity of individuals and groups is one of the district's essential core values. Inclusive education means that all students are entitled to the opportunities and responsibilities that are available in each of our schools. The district takes pride in including all students in meaningful instruction within neighborhood classrooms and ensuring that every child feels part of his/her school community. Service providers such as reading specialists, school psychologists, occupational & physical therapists, speech & language pathologists, behavior specialists, special education teachers, and adaptive physical education teachers support students in and out of the classroom.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

In accordance with the M.G.L. c.71B and the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Northborough offers a wide-ranging continuum of supports and services designed to identify and serve children with disabilities. Eligibility for special education is determined by the presence of a disability, which impacts a child's effective school progress and for whom specialized instruction is required. Our schools are inclusive schools and place a high priority on meeting the needs of children within the context of the general education program and classroom. This inclusion fosters social as well as academic growth and allows all children to be full members of our school community. Prior to referring a child for a special education evaluation, parents are encouraged to work with the building-based Student Support Team. The Student Support Team consists of a group of educators who work to address each child's unique needs through creative options and planning along with targeted intervention using research-based methods and assessment all within the general education program.

SECTION 504 SERVICES

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1993 is designed to protect individuals who have, have a record of, or are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against disabled persons and requires schools to conduct an evaluation, convene a team, and when appropriate, develop suitable accommodations. Section 504 is not an aspect of Special Education. It is a responsibility of the comprehensive general public education system in cases where it has been determined that a substantial limitation exists to a major life activity. Building Administrators oversee the implementation of the 504 process in the Northborough Public Schools.

TITLE 1 PROGRAM

Some Northborough schools may be awarded Title One funding for the school year. This federal grant, as reauthorized under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*, provides resources to local school districts to help students meet the challenging state and local academic standards. The focus of the program is to provide instructional support services in reading and/or math. Schools are ultimately selected through a combination of federal and State Department of Education data on census and demographic information. School staff identifies students who may or may not have individualized educational plans through special education but who, through teacher recommendation and other assessment criteria, are likely to benefit from the additional available support.

Title I Parent Information meetings will be conducted in the fall to provide additional information regarding the program, discuss parents' role in improving their children's achievement, and to gather input on the program's development and delivery. The federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* requires school districts that receive Title I funding to notify parents

of their right to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct their child. As a recipient of these funds, schools will provide parents with this information in a timely manner, if they request it.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM – ELD

According to General Law c. 71A, an English Language Learner “is a child who does not speak English or whose native language is not English, and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English.” English Language Development (ELD) services are available to provide direct instruction in speaking, listening, reading, and writing English. English Language Learners spend most of their day in the classroom. Mandated assessments, such as the ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) test help determine student progress with the long-term goal of program exit. As students reach grade-level standards, as determined by ACCESS and other formative and summative assessments, to work effectively in the regular classroom, they will no longer participate in ELD academic instruction.

TECHNOLOGY & COMMUNICATION

INTERNET USE

Technology integration is part of the district curriculum and is an integral part of the educational process. The district has taken considerable precautions to eliminate any access to controversial or objectionable resources and materials. However, due to the nature of technology, the district is unable to totally ensure that no students could possibly access such material in the foreseeable future. Accordingly, the district is not responsible for materials acquired on the Internet.

The Student Acceptable Use Policy commits students to accessing only approvable resources with the recognition that a violation may result in loss of access privileges or other disciplinary actions.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic communication devices are discouraged for use on school property and/or on the school bus. Such devices include, but are not limited to, cell phones, iPods, and hand held electronic games.. We caution the use of these devices. The school is not responsible for items that are lost, damaged, or stolen. If an electronic device is being misused the item will be confiscated. The student’s parent/guardian will need to retrieve the item from the principal.

EMAIL GUIDELINES – see page 6

VISITS TO AND VOLUNTEERING IN SCHOOL

Parents/Guardians are always welcome to visit schools. There are many parent programs throughout the year for this purpose. Please review the District’s uniform procedures for the scheduling and handling of visitations and observations throughout the District.

“Visitation” is defined as a general visit to an identified area of a school for purposes such as completing school-related business, attending a scheduled meeting with the child’s teacher(s), attending a school event, and dropping off a student lunch or other belongings.

“Observation” is defined as a parent/guardian or designee being present during the delivery of educational services to the child for the specific purpose of observing or assessing those services or instruction.

To ensure the safety of all students, all visitors and observers shall abide by the established

Visitation and Observation Procedures.

CORI CHECKS

Almost all adults and teens who interact with children in schools should have a CORI on file with Northborough Public Schools. Due to processing time, CORI forms should be completed at least two weeks before you are planning to volunteer or attend a field trip. CORI checks are valid for two years. Parents should contact the office if they believe their CORI is expired. You will not be notified if your CORI has expired.

M.G.L. c. 71, § 38R requires all schools to conduct criminal background checks on current and prospective employees and volunteers, including those who regularly provide school related transportation to students, who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. CORI must be obtained at least every two years during an individual's term of employment or service. The law also allows schools to conduct CORI checks on subcontractors or laborers commissioned to do work on school grounds that may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. This includes school bus or van drivers employed by a transportation company under contract with the district to provide transportation services to students.

Please stop by your school's main office to fill out a CORI form. The CORI applicant must be present to fill out CORI paperwork. Please bring your driver's license with you. We will need to make a copy of it.

COMMUNITY GROUPS AND ORGANIZATIONS

SCHOOL COUNCILS

A school council is a representative, school building-based committee composed of the principal, parents, teachers, and community members established by each school pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 59C. The council assists the principal in identifying educational needs of the students, reviewing the annual school budget, and formulating a school improvement plan. The council and the principal are responsible for the adopting of educational goals for the school and formulating a plan to advance such goals and improve student performance. They also address professional development for the school's professional staff, the enhancement of parental involvement in the school, safety and discipline, extracurricular activities, and other issues agreed upon by the principal and the council. Parents and community members interested in serving on their school council should contact the building principal directly.



Parents interested in serving on the council can express their intent through communication sent home in the fall.

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (PTO)

Our schools have a tradition that welcomes parent involvement in our schools. Parents are active supporters of many of our programs and countless activities within individual classrooms. The school has an active parent organization, which provides support from one family to another family as well as the community. All families are urged to be active participants in the PTO. The main functions of the PTO are to organize parent led events, to network with parents, to bring arts and enrichment performances to the school community, and to provide support to many school efforts. The PTO has established a grant program, which is funded from many highly successful fundraisers. The grants funded through the PTO enrich our school and we are very grateful for the continued support of the PTO.



The PTO has elections in the spring for co-chairpersons, or chairperson and vice chairperson, treasurer and secretary. There are also chair people and committees for separate events and tasks like school pictures, membership, enrichment programs, book fair, pot-luck dinners, publicity, etc.

NORTHBOROUGH-SOUTHBOROUGH SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENTS ADVISORY COUNCIL (NSPAC)

NSPAC offers parents of students with special needs the opportunity to share concerns, offer mutual support, and exchange information and ideas. PACs were established by state law to work at the community level to enhance service and programming for special needs children in the public schools. They augment the regional Advisory Councils and state Advisory Commission of Special Education. PAC membership includes parents, professionals, and community representatives. The PACs advocate for children with special needs and also support school staff, advising special education administrators, school departments, school committees, parents, and the community about issues affecting special education. The PAC is co-chaired by parents and holds meetings and programs throughout the year.

BEFORE & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS

The Town of Northborough's Office of Family and Youth Services, located in town hall, provides executive, supervisory and administrative management for the Northborough Extended Day Program (NEDP).

NEDP is an after school program for grades K through five. The program has been recognized by the Massachusetts Office for Children as a model after school program. It is designed to be safe, stimulating and attentive to the social, emotional and physical needs of children. Afternoon programs are provided. Morning programs are available at some schools based on need. Additional information, including registration may be obtained through the Office of Family and Youth Services at the Town Hall or by calling 508-393-7020.

CODE OF CONDUCT

POSITIVE BEHAVIORAL INTERVENTION: A PROACTIVE APPROACH

We have implemented a differentiated approach to discipline, utilizing positive behavioral intervention strategies to help students take ownership of their mistakes and to learn from them. This approach is used in conjunction with the core values established at each of the schools.

The reasons to take a differentiated approach with discipline are the same as the reasons to differentiate instruction:

- a) One size does not fit all.
- b) The response to the behavior happens in a timely manner as optimal time spent learning is a school-wide goal.
- c) Each student mistake is treated as a learning opportunity.
- d) Students are empowered around the mistakes they make and are involved in the process of 1. "Owning" the mistake, 2. "Fixing" the mistake, and 3. "Learning from" the mistake.
- e) Students are reflective and thoughtful about the mistakes they make.

Research has shown us that positive behavioral interventions are typically more beneficial than punitive approaches to student behavior. There are always reasons *why* students make the choices they make, and helping them understand those reasons helps them understand how to avoid making the same mistakes again. The use of punitive approaches to discipline has proven largely ineffective and is often counterproductive. Effective positive behavior interventions ensure the safety and dignity of students and staff, preserve the integrity of the learning environment, and address the causes of a student's misbehavior in order to improve positive behavioral skills and long-term outcomes.

Positive discipline strategies focus on increasing desirable behaviors instead of simply decreasing undesirable ones through negative consequences and/or punishment. Through the process, there are more opportunities for relationships with caring adults, which will prevent discipline problems in the future. When students have a secure relationship with their teachers they are more comfortable taking risks that enhance learning or asking questions when they are unsure and need guidance. Listening to student concerns, responding gently to poor choices and with explanations rather than harsh punishments, and showing positive emotions strengthen the teacher-student relationship, and help students in the long run.

Teachers have made an effort to go out of their way to show a personal interest in all students and to truly "connect" with them, complimenting positive behaviors, showing interest in students' lives outside of school, listening to student problems, and collaborating with them to help them.

Through positive behavioral interventions, discipline is fair, corrective, therapeutic, and individualized based on students and their needs. Students also tend to feel less alienated because they are involved in the process. Part of the process involves determining possible consequences. Aside from the natural consequences that result in a poor decision (i.e. missing a class or classes, meeting with parents, completing a reflection sheet), students are also asked for their input around other consequences that might be necessary. The learning process is long and can be difficult for students, but the overall outcomes are meaningful for students, and they learn from their mistakes.

1. Respect yourself
2. Respect others as you would respect yourself
3. Respect the physical environment of the school

4. Respect the learning environment of the school
5. Respect that being successful takes effort and hard work

Teachers exemplify these expectations by

- Modeling the behavior expected of students,
- Providing enriching educational experiences,
- Knowing and enforcing the citizenship code in a manner geared to prevent disciplinary issues.

Parents exemplify these expectations by

- Participating with the school and its staff in developing and supporting suitable behavioral guidelines,
- Participating appropriately with the school to resolve problematic disciplinary issues.

Students exemplify these expectations by

- Interacting respectfully with all school personnel,
- Supporting their classmates,
- Cooperating with teacher directives,
- Contributing to the learning environment through their positive actions.

The successful implementation of this guideline requires that each of us presumes that all parties involved have worth and dignity and they are contributing members of this educational community. We must interact with each other always remembering these precepts.

To assure that we reach these positive goals, it is necessary that we delineate those behaviors which are unacceptable in our learning environment and make clear the consequences of such actions. Misbehaviors fall into three categories.

Level 1 - those that are monitored by the individual teacher and relate to classroom management or minor level building-wide offenses

Level 2 - more serious offenses that are referred to the building-wide disciplinary system (or repeated Level 1 misbehaviors)

Level 3 - infractions that are of such a serious nature that immediate and severe action by the Administration is warranted (or repeated Level 1 and/or Level 2 misbehaviors)

THE PROCESS

It is our practice to include our students in the development of specific behavior rules. During the first weeks of school students, working with their teachers, will develop specific behavior expectations. These expectations are posted in each classroom and shared with parents. We believe that all children have the right to a safe, comfortable school environment. Although our students are well behaved and have a high regard for the safety and consideration of each other, state regulations require that we formally address behavior which can cause disruption to the school environment. The following code of behavior has been established to assist students, teachers, parents and administrators to promote patterns of behavior, which enhance an orderly learning community within our schools.



This code classifies unacceptable behavior into three levels, based on the degree to which it disrupts students and the learning environment. Because it is neither easy nor helpful to list all unacceptable behaviors and the appropriate reaction to each, examples of behavior in each level are provided. These examples are not exhaustive but illustrative. Administrators will work to preserve the safety and well being of all students. Appropriate bus behavior and responses to behavior are addressed in this handbook under Bus Behavior.

LEVEL 1 - MISBEHAVIORS

Level 1 misbehaviors are those that interfere with the orderly learning environment of the school, classroom, and common areas. Students learn through their mistakes. To this extent, responses to the daily misbehaviors, which occur in school, should be instructive and positive, teaching children what is expected and how they should behave.

Examples: Listed below are the types of misbehavior that are included in Level 1. The list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated tardiness without a note;
- Failure to prepare for class;
- Possession of a prohibited item;
- Running in the hallways; and
- Disturbing the work or play of others.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The disciplining of students for misbehavior at Level 1 is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific misbehavior. The disciplinary actions at Level 1 usually are administered by teachers, with the occasional informal involvement of the Principal. Some examples are:

- Discussion of misbehavior with the child;
- Verbal reprimand;
- Reinforcement of alternative positive behavior;
- Community service to the classroom/school that is related to the event (i.e. logical consequence);
- Loss of privileges; and
- Parent contact.

LEVEL 2 - MISBEHAVIORS

Level 2 misbehaviors are those which seriously interfere with the orderly environment of the school and are potentially dangerous to the safety and well being of the students and staff.

Examples: Listed below are the types of misbehavior that are included in Level 2. The list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated instances of Level 1 misbehavior, which have not been improved with intervention;
- Misbehavior which is dangerous to self or others (such as shoving, pushing, hitting);
- Intentionally damaging school or personal property;
- Stealing;
- Use of profanity;
- Bullying
- Derogatory reference to another person's race, gender, gender identity, religion, physical condition, handicap, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation; and
- Disrespectful language or behavior toward a member of our school community.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The disciplining of students for misbehavior at Level 2 is dependent upon the severity and frequency of the specific misbehavior. The disciplinary actions at Level 2 usually are administered by the Principal in collaboration with the teacher and include the formal notification of parents. Some examples are:

- Opportunity for corrective behavior (i.e. note of apology, verbal apology)
- Loss of privileges;
- Community service to the classroom/school that is related to the event (i.e. logical consequence);
- Parent conference;
- Implementation of a behavior management plan.

LEVEL 3 - MISBEHAVIORS

Level 3 misbehaviors are considered the most serious violations to the school behavior code. These misbehaviors endanger the immediate health, safety and personal well being of the students and adults who attend our schools. They represent a direct threat to the orderly operation of the school environment.

Examples: Listed below are the types of misbehavior that are included in Level 3. The list is not exhaustive.

- Repeated or serious instances of Level 2 misbehavior which have not been improved by intervention;
- Fighting or intentionally causing physical/emotional harm to others;
- Discriminatory or prejudicial activities or actions toward another person or group involving race, gender, gender identity, religion, physical condition, handicap, ethnic origin, or sexual orientation;
- Possession of illegal or dangerous materials or items;
- Repeated acts of bullying.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Misbehavior at Level 3 will involve exclusion from classroom activities or suspension from school and are always administered by the Principal of the school.

- Exclusion from classroom activities for up to ten days; This response will accompany the first incidence of Level 3 misbehavior or Level 2 behavior of significant severity.
- Parent meeting prior to student return to classroom;
- Denial of privileges;
- Implementation of an extensive behavior/safety plan;
- Level 3 misbehavior may result in disciplinary action including possible extended suspensions or expulsion from school.

BULLYING IN SCHOOL

The Northborough Public Schools have addressed bullying in varying forms for the past ten years, but legislation passed in May 2010 entitled *An Act Relative to Bullying in Schools* has increased our responsibilities as well as our required documentation around this issue.

Parents are important role models for their children, not only in modeling respectful and appropriate behavior, but also in taking the initiative to put a stop to bullying. We are asking for your help to continue the efforts to make our schools physically and emotionally safe for all students. To be truly successful, we must have a partnership between families and schools.

Unfortunately, many bullying incidents are not witnessed by adults or reported by students, so parental involvement is essential. If you become aware of bullying behavior please contact your child's teacher or principal. Whether your child is the victim or a concerned bystander, help from a trained adult is often necessary to change the environment that has allowed the bullying to occur.

Training to help students and staff members understand what constitutes these negative behaviors will be ongoing. Information about reporting, and education about preferred behaviors will also take place in classrooms and assemblies throughout the year. Additionally, the School Committee adopted a Bullying Prevention Policy in light of the new legislation.

Every child has the right to learn in a safe and secure environment – safe both physically and emotionally. We appreciate your support in addressing these important issues. Please visit our schools' websites for important Bullying Prevention and Intervention materials as well as reporting forms.

It is important that you read the following information about bullying. After reading, if you believe that your child has been the target of bullying, you may file a written report. Written reports are considered serious allegations that will be addressed through school administration. Please be aware that M.G.L. c.71, §37O *Bullying in Schools* law also requires that legal action be taken against those who file false reports or who make unfounded accusations. We encourage open

communication between parents and school staff. Anonymous reports will be investigated, but follow-up may be impossible.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

In the state of Massachusetts, student behavior must meet the following criteria to be considered bullying:

“BULLYING” is the **repeated** use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- (i) Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- (ii) Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property;
- (iii) Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- (iv) Infringes on the rights of the target at school, or;
- (v) Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

One-time incidents may be deliberately mean or cruel, but are not bullying. Still, one-time incidents may be subject to school discipline.

WHAT IS CYBER-BULLYING?

“CYBER-BULLYING” is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but 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.

WHAT IS A HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT?

HOSTILE ENVIRONMENT is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Bullying may involve but is not limited to:

- o Unwanted teasing
- o Threatening/intimidating behavior
- o Stalking or cyber-stalking
- o Cyber-bullying
- o Physical violence
- o Theft or destruction of school or personal property
- o Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- o Public humiliation
- o Social exclusion, including incitement and/or coercion
- o Spreading of rumors and/or falsehoods

SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF CONFLICT

Rough Play	Fighting	Bullying
Usually friends; often will do the same things again	Usually not friends; typically not repeated	Not friends but will be repeated
Not about hurting	Trying to hurt each other	Bully is trying to hurt, humiliate
Effect is friendly, mutual	Effect is negative, angry	Effect varies between the target and bully

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

The situation	Your Role	What the School Can Do	What the School Cannot Do
Your child is afraid to see another child at school, or generally afraid to go to school because of any incident.	Get as many specific details as possible about why this is occurring.	They can create a Safety Plan for your child.	They cannot discuss with you any details or actions taken with other children, including the aggressor.
Your child reports an incident that occurred at school.	Be sure to get very specific, detailed information from your child about the incident.	They can take steps to ensure the safety of the children involved.	They cannot discuss with you the steps they take that involve any other child.
Your child reports that he/she has heard a rumor about a future incident that may occur at school.	Get as many specific details as possible.	Investigate the plausibility of the future incident and take appropriate actions.	They cannot discuss with you the details regarding other children and/or parents.
Your child or a credible source reports that another child is being bullied at school.	Get as many specific details as possible.	Investigate the situation.	Report back to you any outcome of the investigation..
If you have a serious disagreement about a disciplinary action taken by the school.	If this is the case, begin by pursuing a private conversation with the school administration. Challenging the school's authority publicly to make such decisions will only, in the long run, lead to more disciplinary problems among children who will perceive that the adult community does not respect the school administration.		Educators are bound by policy. They may not be able to change an action if doing so violates the policy set by the school committee.

FILING A REPORT

There are several methods for reporting suspected bullying incidents:

- You can contact a teacher/school administrator by phone.
- You can make a report in person.
- You can complete the **Bullying/Harassment Form**
 - This form can be downloaded from the school's website, printed and returned to the school.
 - Copies are available at each school upon request.

Bullying reports may be made anonymously; however no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

When the Northborough Public Schools (NPS) receive a report of bullying, the following steps will be taken:

- Listen to parent, teacher, and/or students to gather information – initial reporting stage.
 - Have staff member/parent/student complete the Northborough Public Schools Harassment/Bullying Form (*if not completed already*).
 - Involve administrators (*if they are not yet involved*).
 - Interview all parties involved (including the aggressor, target, and witnesses), focusing on the incident(s).
 - Discuss behavior with guidance counselors, school psychologist, special education liaison (*if appropriate*), and teachers to assess the situation.
 - Determine if bullying behavior has occurred. (**Other inappropriate behavior that does not constitute bullying will be handled as indicated in the handbook.*)
 - Decide on consequences for unacceptable behavior (*if any*).
 - Follow-up with the aggressor.
 - Follow-up with the target.
 - Follow-up with the parent who reported, the parent of the aggressor, the parent of the target, and the parents of the witnesses (*when appropriate*).
- Administrators will acknowledge receipt of a report within three school days.
 - If warranted, an investigation will be conducted and completed within 10 school days.
 - Parents of the target and bully will be notified of the results of the investigation and the school will take appropriate action.

All reports of bullying are dealt with respectfully and confidentially. We treat each student as an individual and use each case as a learning opportunity. When appropriate, a range of disciplinary consequences may be utilized as noted in the student handbook including (see *School Behavior* and *Bus Behavior*), but not limited to, loss of privileges, removal from part or all of the school community, and suspension from school.

Please be aware that M.G.L. c.71, §370 , also requires that legal action be taken against those who file false reports or who make unfounded accusations.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT BULLYING

A leading researcher, Dr. Dan Olweus, identifies three critical aspects of bullying:

1. *Power*: The power relationship is inherently unequal. Frequently the bully gains more power and influence among others from his behavior.
2. *Frequency*: Bullies target children for a number of reasons, often because they can. However, they generally do not stop this behavior with particular children unless adults intervene. It is a recurring, often constant problem for the target.
3. *Intent*: Bullies mean to do what they do; generally, they intend to harm, embarrass, or victimize.

Bullying can take many forms; boys and girls tend to bully differently, for example, and generally their methods target whatever the aggressor's group values the most. Boys are often physical and threatening; girls will attempt to alienate the target from their social groups.

CAUSES

In general, bullies are using behavior that they have determined will gain them status and feelings of control. They usually seek out victims they can successfully bully. Victims do not "ask for it" but there is a group of victims who are not socially successful, and may annoy others, perhaps in an attempt to gain attention from their peers. Bullies use this annoying behavior to justify their own actions. To many bullies, their victims were "asking for it."

For more information on Bullying, please visit the following websites:
 Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center MARC: www.bridgew.edu/MARC/
 Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: www.olweus.org
 Stop Bullying Now: www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids
 Ryan's Story: www.ryanpatrickhalligan.org/

**For additional information on bullying, please visit our schools' websites.*

BULLYING INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Feeling safe in school is the first step towards learning. When there are things happening between students that feel unsafe or uncomfortable, it is important that adults know. Everyone has a right to a safe school environment. If you are worried about how you are being treated by a classmate or peer in school and are not sure about what to do, this information will help you figure out how to take a next step and get support from school staff and parents.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying behaviors include:

- Unwanted teasing
- Threatening/intimidating behavior
- Stalking or cyber-stalking
- Cyber-bullying
- Physical violence
- Theft or destruction of school or personal property
- Sexual, religious, or racial harassment
- Public humiliation
- Social exclusion, including incitement and/or coercion
- Spreading of rumors and/or falsehoods

SOME DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BULLYING AND OTHER FORMS OF ARGUING

Rough Play	Fighting	Bullying
Usually friends; often will do the same things again	Usually not friends; typically not repeated	Not friends but will be repeated
Power not an immediate issue	Power close to equal	Power is not equal
Not about hurting	Trying to hurt each other	Bully is trying to hurt, humiliate
Affect is friendly, mutual	Affect is negative, angry	Affect varies between the target and bully

Bullies pick on certain people they feel are different in some way. They may have friends who act as if they think bullying is funny, but it isn't funny. It's **WRONG!** Bullying also can happen on the Internet or by texting. Cyber-bullying is when children or teenagers bully each other using the Internet, cell phones or other cyber technology. This can include:

- Sending mean texts, emails or instant messages
- Posting nasty pictures or messages about others on websites
- Using someone else's user name to spread rumors or lies

Remember:

- If you are being bullied, it isn't your fault. The person being mean to you has the problem.
- You don't have to put up with it.
- It is hard to admit that it might be happening to you.
- There are people who can help you.

Schools are communities formed by the adults and children who attend. Establishing a positive climate helps everyone learn and feel safe. Sometimes students do things that can be considered bullying. Some of these include:

- You spread a nasty rumor about someone, in conversation, in a note, or through email or instant messaging.
- You and your friends have regularly kept one or more kids from hanging out or playing with you. Examples: at your lunch table at school, during sports or other activities, or activities that are a part of a club or other kind of group activity.
- You teased people in a mean way, calling them names, making fun of their appearance, or the way they talk or dress or act.
- You've been part of a group that did any of these things - even if you only wanted to be part of the crowd.
- There's a boy or a girl (or maybe more than one) whom you've repeatedly shoved, or punched or physically pushed around in a mean way just because you felt like it.
- You had someone else hurt someone you don't like.

If you checked any of these boxes, you're not alone. All over the country, in all types of neighborhoods and schools, there are all types of young people who bully others. Bullying is serious business. It causes young people a lot of pain, and it can affect their ability to do well in school and their general happiness.

But it doesn't have to be that way. By reviewing this information you can learn positive ways to treat your friends and acquaintances, as well as become part of the solution to this serious problem!

ARE YOU OR A FRIEND BEING BULLIED?

Ask yourself these questions:

- Did someone say or do something to you that made you feel unsafe or afraid?
- Has it happened more than once?
- Are they bigger, older, or in some way more powerful than you are?

Other things that may be happening to you could include:

- Am I feeling sick in the morning so I won't have to go to school and face a bully?
- Do I walk home another way or try to avoid the bus so no one will bother me?
- Does someone take things from me or force me to give up my things?
- Does someone say mean things about me, call me names, or tell other kids not to play or hang out with me?

If you answered **YES** to any of these questions, you may be a target of bullying. Now it's time for you to talk with a trusted adult, at home and/or at school, so you can get the help you need. You should not keep this to yourself.

I'M BEING BULLIED. WHAT DO I DO NOW?

If you are bullied, you may not know what to do because:

- You might think the bully can beat you up.
- The bully might have lots of friends.
- You don't think an adult can help.
- You are afraid to tell because you think no one will believe you or you think that the bullying will get worse.

WAYS TO DEAL WITH BULLIES

- Try acting like the bully does not bother you. Bullies like it when you get mad or upset. This is hard and may take some practice.
- Avoid being around the bully.
- Try ignoring; you can walk away, or not say anything.
- Stay close to people who are not bullies. Safety in numbers!
- Tell the bully to stop in a firm voice. Say things like, "I don't like being called names, I want you to stop now."

WHAT NOT TO DO IF YOU THINK YOU ARE BEING BULLIED

DON'T...

- Use violence to respond.
- Stay quiet – do tell a trusted adult about the problem.
- Avoid coming to school – there are adults in school who can help you.
- Hurt yourself. This is not your fault.

TELLING AN ADULT

Telling an adult that you or a friend is being bullied isn't tattling. **Tattling** is when you tell on another kid to get him/her into trouble. **Telling** is when you tell something that helps someone get out of trouble or keeps someone from getting hurt! So, if you or a friend is being bullied:

- Tell a trusted adult, he/she could be:
 - Your parents
 - A teacher
 - Guidance Counselor or School Psychologist
 - Principal or Assistant Principal
 - School Nurse
 - Other adults that you know care about you
- If the person you told does not help you, talk with someone else. Never keep being bullied to yourself.
- Your school has ways for you to report bullying. The first step is talking with a trusted adult.
- Your parents can report bullying for you. Ask them to talk to your school principal or your teacher.
- **When you report bullying make sure you tell who the bully is, how you are being bullied, when it happens, and where it happens.**

MY FRIEND IS BEING BULLIED. WHAT CAN I DO?

- It is good to try to help. Don't make the friend who is being bullied feel worse by laughing or doing nothing.
- Tell a trusted adult right away.
- If you can, tell the bully to stop. Explain that it is wrong to bully people. State what you don't like and how you want it fixed. For example, "I don't like it when you pick on Mike; it's not funny. I want you to stop right now."
- Walk away with the person who is being bullied.
- Talk to the person who is bullied; tell him/her that you will be his/her friend. You can never have too many friends.

HOW DO I FILE A REPORT ON BULLYING?

There are several ways to report suspected bullying incidents:

- You can make a report in person.
- You can complete the **Bullying/Harassment Form**
 - This form can be downloaded, printed and returned to the school.
 - The schools also have copies of this form available.
 - Reports can be made anonymously (you don't have to say your name).

Bullying reports may be made anonymously; however no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

It's important for kids to know that making up a story about a bully can also get you into trouble with your teacher or principal. Be sure you are always being honest.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

When the school receives a report of bullying, here are some things that might happen next:

- Your teacher and the principal might want to talk with you and ask you about the situation.

- Your teacher and the principal might talk with other kids (bystanders) who might have seen the other student bully you.
- The teacher and the principal will want to talk with your parents about what you reported.
- An adult will complete the Northborough Public Schools Harassment/Bullying Form (*if not completed already*).
- The principal will want to talk with the student who you say is bullying you and the principal will call that student's parents.
- The principal will decide on consequences for unacceptable behavior (*if any*). *The principal will probably not tell you what the consequence for the other student is, but you should feel comfortable that the principal is working to help you feel more safe and comfortable in school.
- The principal will check in with all of the students later to see if the bad behavior has ended.

Things to know about bullying – visit the following websites to learn more about bullying:

Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center MARC: www.bridgew.edu/MARC/

Olweus Bullying Prevention Program: www.olweus.org

Stop Bullying Now: www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/kids

Ryan's Story: www.ryanpatrickhalligan.org/

Please see webpage for Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES REGARDING WEAPONS

The Principal has the authority to discipline, including a recommendation for expulsion, any student who is found on school premises or at a school sponsored event in possession of a dangerous weapon or controlled substance. Such action may result in:

- An immediate ten day out of school suspension
- A hearing to be held within ten school days of the offense
- Implementation of the recommendations of the hearing

Any student committing such a violation must receive:

- Notice in writing of an opportunity for a hearing before the Principal
- An opportunity to appeal to the Superintendent of Schools within ten days of suspension

The Principal may choose to suspend rather than recommend expulsion. Further sanctions may also apply if the student is involved in extracurricular activities at the school.

See Appendix: Massachusetts General Laws: Student Behavior and Discipline

DRESS CODE

Student dress is a matter of personal pride as well as an indication of respect for the learning environment. Students are encouraged to remember that learning is hard work and distractions that can be eliminated, such as defining the type of dress that is appropriate for the school environment, enable everyone to go about this important task more successfully. While clothing styles will change over time, and specific articles of dress or accessories may emerge and require further review, we provide the following general guidelines for dressing as a student in our elementary schools:

- Hats or head coverings of any type, except those worn for religious purposes, shall not be worn by either male or female students.
- Clothing shall not reveal any part of a student's underwear.
- Garments with messages or labeling that advocate or promote drugs, alcohol, violence, vulgarities, ethnic slurs, are of a questionable nature, or are generally considered to be in bad taste, shall not be worn.
- Garments that do not sufficiently cover the torso, chest, legs, back, or feet are not appropriate.

- Accessories that are deemed a safety hazard, or which could cause injury to the wearer or others, including wallet chains, and spiked jewelry are not appropriate.
- Students will be asked to change the article in question at the request of any staff member. This dress code is in effect for all school events.

TRANSPORTATION PROCEDURES



Students must ride their assigned bus. We cannot take a child's verbal statement that there is a change in his/her dismissal. The parent must contact the school either in writing or by telephone prior to 12:00 PM. Students are not allowed to ride on a bus that they are not assigned to. School bus students and their parents are reminded that the privilege of riding school buses to and from school, if abused, may be revoked.

SCHOOL BUS STOPS

The Director of Business, working with other appropriate administrators and contractors, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops and all other matters relative to the transportation program. Bus route information is available to parents in the newspaper and on the district website.

- School bus stops will be designated with concern for number of students, safety and bus route efficiency;
- Drivers will pick up students only at scheduled and designated stops. Only students assigned to the bus will be admitted;
- Kindergarten students must be accompanied by an adult at all bus stops



LOADING AND UNLOADING

For the safety and welfare of our students, we would remind you that Massachusetts law prohibits the idling of motor vehicles on school grounds in excess of five (5) minutes. M.G.L. c.90, §16A. Violators will be subject to a fine.

STUDENTS AT BUS STOPS

- For everyone's benefit, safety and the efficiency of the entire transportation system, students and parents are asked to be considerate of others by being prompt at each stop and during loading and unloading of the bus.
- Students must be on time—waiting at their bus stops when the bus arrives. Buses cannot wait.
- Students must enter and leave the bus at designated stops only.
- Every effort will be made to have the kindergarten and first grade students seated at the front of the bus.
- Instructions and directions of the bus driver must be followed at all times.
- Parents and other caregivers are not allowed on the bus.

BEHAVIOR ON THE SCHOOL BUS

- Riders must be on time—the bus will not wait;
- Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only;
- Riders will use quiet voices;
- Orderly behavior is expected at the bus stop and on the bus;
- Instruction and direction of the driver must be followed;
- Riders are encouraged to wear seatbelts;
- Riders must remain in seats while bus is in motion;
- Riders will not have balls outside of backpacks as they are a safety hazard; and
- Riders will not bring skateboards on the bus.

Misbehavior on the bus is very serious because of its ability to distract the driver. Because of this, misbehaviors are considered more seriously here than they might be in a school situation. For further explanation of misbehaviors and disciplinary actions, see "School Behavior" section of this book. Students who ride a school bus are assigned to a specific one and are not allowed to change buses.

BUS PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

Misbehavior on a bus is very serious because of its ability to distract the driver from concentrating on driving. Because of this, misbehaviors are considered more seriously here than they might be in a school situation. As in the previous discussion of Levels, examples below are not considered exhaustive. Also as listed above, all disciplinary actions are dependent upon the severity and frequency of the misbehavior.

Students will be expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior during daily transportation as well as field trip transportation. Bus drivers are informed annually of behavior expectations. Difficulties will be recorded by the drivers and given to each Principal, who will address the concern with the student and, when necessary, his/her parents.

LEVEL 1 – BEHAVIORS ~ There are no behaviors, which are classified Level 1.

LEVEL 2 - MISBEHAVIORS

Misbehaviors, which interfere with the orderly transportation of students. Some examples are:

- Annoying other passengers;
- Littering the bus;
- Spitting;
- Tampering with the possessions of other passengers;
- Use of profanity; and
- Damage to the bus.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The bus driver reports misbehaviors on the bus. The Principal administers disciplinary action. This action may include the following:

- Conference with principal;
- Contact with parents;
- Preferential or assigned seating;
- Loss of bus privileges for up to five school days.

LEVEL 3 - MISBEHAVIORS

Behavior which can endanger the safety of the driver or students, and which impairs the driver's ability to drive safely. Some examples include:

- Repeated occurrences of Level 2 behaviors;
- Bullying;
- Distracting the driver;
- Refusal to obey driver;
- Fighting, including pushing and/or wrestling;
- Possession of dangerous objects;
- Refusal to remain in seats; and
- Throwing objects.

DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

The bus driver reports level 3 misbehavior. Disciplinary actions involve the Principal. Parents will be contacted.

- Loss of bus privileges for a period of time to be determined by the Principal: Exclusion from classroom activities
- Repeated incidents of Level 3 behavior may result in a child being expelled from bus privileges.

PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING PASSENGER MISCONDUCT

- The bus driver shall report any misconduct occurring on the school bus. A School Bus Conduct Report shall be

completed and submitted directly to the Principal or his/her designee who shall then send it home for signature. The Principal or his/her designee, the driver and the bus company will retain copies of the signed report.

The Principal or his/her designee shall adhere to the guidelines of the Student Behavior Code and to the due process procedures.

• Discipline Guidelines

All disciplinary procedures are subject to, and students must comply with, all policies adopted by the Northborough School Committee from time to time. No student shall be disciplined without being afforded appropriate due process. M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4; M.G.L. c.71, 37H; M.G.L. c.71, .§37H1/2.

Student Discipline

Definitions

Expulsion: the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

In-School Suspension: the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. * *Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.*

Long-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

Principal: The primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

Due Process In-School Suspension:

Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent. On or before the day of the In-School Suspension, the principal will deliver written notice to the parent of the basis for and length of the in-school suspension and inviting the parent to meet to discuss the student's behavior if such a meeting has not already occurred. Students have the right to appeal an in-school suspension that will result in their in-school suspension for more than ten (10) school days in a school year.

Out-of School Suspension:

In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension. Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and in the primary language of the Student's home

and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing. Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's right to legal representation (at private expense), the right to present and examine witnesses, the right to review the student record and documents that may be relied upon by the Principal, and the right to request that the hearing be audiotaped.

For disciplinary offenses involving a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term suspension or an interim suspension of less than ten (10) consecutive days pending formal proceedings. Upon imposition of a short term or interim suspension or an interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of any formal disciplinary proceedings.

Principal's Hearing:

Short-Term Suspension:

At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

Long-Term Suspension:

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student will have the following rights:

- the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
- the right to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not
- the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident;
- the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request.

Principal's Decision:

Based on the evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and the remedy or consequences to be imposed. The Principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense and, in cases not involving possession of a controlled substance, a weapon, an assault on staff or felony charges, shall avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. If the Principal decides to suspend or expel the student, written notice of the Principal's decision will be sent to the student and parents in English and the primary language of the home identifying the disciplinary offense, the factual basis for the Principal's decision, the beginning and end dates of the suspension or expulsion, and the process for appeal. The Principal will also notify the student and parent of the student's opportunity to make academic progress during the period of removal from school in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

Appeals:

Where the student is excluded in accordance with M.G.L. c.71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) calendar days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) school days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. And for exclusions imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4, the Student shall

have five (5) calendar days from the effective date of the suspension imposed by the Principal but shall be granted an extension of seven (7) calendar days upon request.

Academic Progress:

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan.

BASIS FOR EXPULSION

The following infractions may result in a student's permanent expulsion:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon
- Possession of a controlled substance
- Assault of any member of the educational staff
- Admission or finding of guilt to a felony or felony delinquency charge

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The following procedures apply to suspension of students with disabilities when suspensions exceed 10 consecutive school days or when a pattern has developed for suspensions exceeding 10 cumulative days. These procedures include the responsibilities of the team and the responsibilities of the district.

- a. A suspension of longer than 10 consecutive school days or a series of short term suspensions that exceed 10 school days and constitute a pattern of removal and are considered to constitute a disciplinary change in placement.
- b. Prior to a suspension that would result in a disciplinary change in placement of a student with a disability, the building administrators, the parents and relevant members of the student's IEP/504 Team will convene to determine whether the violation for which the student is subject to a disciplinary change in placement was caused by or directly and substantially related to the student's disability or was the direct result of a failure to implement the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.
- c. If the Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the policies and procedures applicable to all students except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year.
- d. If the team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the district will conduct a functional behavior assessment or review any existing behavior intervention plan and takes steps (with the consent of the parent) to correct the IEP, the placement, or the behavior intervention plan and the student will not be suspended for the violation found to be a manifestation of his/her disability.
- e. . Regardless of the manifestation determination, the district may place the student in an interim alternative setting (as determined by the Team) up to 45 school days:
 1. If the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance while at school or at a school function; or
 2. If the student causes substantial bodily injury to another at school or a school sponsored event; or
 3. If the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to

injure him/herself or others and a hearing officer/court orders the alternative placement.

- f. The parent shall have the right to appeal the manifestation Team's determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

LOST AND FOUND



The schools maintain a clothing lost and found box in a specified location in each school. Articles such as jewelry, eyeglasses, and money are placed in the office. On the last Friday of each month unclaimed items from the Lost and Found may be donated to a charitable organization. Parents are welcome to examine the contents of the lost and found box for lost items anytime.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

There are four days scheduled for staff professional development. Professional development opportunities are mandated by the Department of Education and provide opportunities for staff to participate in district wide learning with their colleagues. Please take note of these days on the school calendar, as there is no school for children on these days.

PARENTS ON THE PLAYGROUND

Parents visiting the school are requested to conduct visits inside the school. Parents are not permitted to observe recess unless granted permission by the building principal. Parents are discouraged from observing recess because it is impossible for staff to know all parents, thus making it impossible for them to differentiate between a parent or stranger. When an unknown adult is observing young children at recess, it is a perceived threat to the safety of all children on the playground.

PARKING AT SCHOOL

Parents visiting the school are requested to park in the designated parking areas only. Due to fire safety regulations, you will be asked to move your vehicle if you leave it unattended in front of the main entrance at any time. For the safety and welfare of our students, we would remind you that Massachusetts law prohibits the unnecessary idling of motor vehicles on school grounds. M.G.L. c.90, §16B. Violators will be subject to a fine.

INVITATIONS/CELEBRATIONS

If invitations are to be distributed for birthday parties or other celebrations, they should be done so outside of school, unless the child's entire class is invited to attend the event.

WALKING/RIDING BICYCLES AND SCOOTERS TO AND FROM SCHOOL

Bicycling is generally a safe activity for children. Before the age of 10, however, few children understand how traffic works. Children have trouble judging speed and distance. They can't locate sounds (i.e. car engine, siren) very well. They think that if they can see a car, the driver can see them. Children can be taught skills and rules, but may have trouble with confusing traffic situations.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to use discretion when permitting children to ride their bicycles to school. Children in grades **4 and 5** may independently ride bicycles to school **ONLY** with **written parental permission**. Bikes are to be parked in the bicycle area and locked securely. A lock should be provided and children must use the crosswalks. Children must walk their bicycles on school property. **Helmets are required by state law**. Children will not be permitted to leave school property without wearing a helmet. Each child is responsible for their own bicycle security. **Parents/guardians of children younger than fourth grade may ride to and from school with their children to assure their safety**. Walking is excellent exercise for children and adults. Children designated as bus students may walk to and from school **ONLY** with **parental permission**.

Skateboards are not allowed to be used on school property.

Some schools do not have crossing guards so it is best practice if an adult (parent or guardian) accompanies any child that will be walking or riding a bike to and from school.

FIELD TRIPS



Field trips are designed to augment the curriculum and enhance student-learning experiences. Teachers will supply details for each trip. Parents receive a permission slip for each trip, which must be signed and promptly returned. Some field trips are within walking distance from the school. If the trip requires transportation, a school bus is hired. If the cost of a field trip represents a financial hardship, parents are asked to contact the principal directly.

The transportation for all field trips will be provided by bus, unless the administration determines that bus travel would have an adverse effect upon the trip or the resulting learning experience. Students will be asked to make a donation for participating in curriculum-related field trips not to exceed a figure which represents distributing the expense of the trip proportionately among students who participate in the trip. Such donation shall be considered voluntary and not a requirement for participation on such trips. Donation amounts related to grade level field trips would be calculated proportionately with the end result of having each child at that grade level contribute an equal amount. Chaperones will not be assessed a transportation fee for their participation in field trips but they may be asked to pay their own entrance fee if a fee is charged by the field trip provider. Chaperones will be expected to accompany students on the bus as part of their assisted supervision role. Chaperones may not drive their own vehicles to a field trip destination or transport students to and/or from a field trip destination, unless otherwise approved by the principal. The principal may approve this in the event of a health-related concern and/or injury.

- APPENDIX -

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

POLICY STATEMENTS

Non-Discrimination/
Equal Opportunity / Affirmative Action / Title IX/
ADA/Title 1/Section 504 / Chapter 622 Grievance Procedure

The Northborough, Southborough and Northborough-Southborough Regional School Districts, in accordance with federal and state laws, prohibit discrimination in its operations. This policy, providing equal employment and educational opportunities to all persons regardless of their race, color, gender, gender identity, religion, marital status, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or homelessness, will apply to all persons affiliated with the Northborough, Southborough and Northborough-Southborough Regional School Districts including students, parents, employees and prospective employees. The Director of Student Support Services, Barbara Goodman, 53 Parkerville Road, Southborough, MA 01772, telephone number (508) 486-5115, is responsible for the coordination of Title IX, Section 504, ADA, Title I, the Age Act and Chapter 622 in the Northborough, Southborough and Northborough-Southborough Regional School Districts and will be responsible for coordinating the following grievance procedures:

A grievance shall be a complaint by a student, parent, prospective employee or staff member, alleging discrimination on account of race, color, gender, gender identity, religion, marital status, age, sexual orientation, national origin or disability, which is filed no more than 30 business days after the alleged act and/or statement.

An aggrieved party must institute proceedings hereunder within **30 business days** of the event or events giving rise to the grievance or with **30 business days** from the date the aggrieved party had knowledge or reasonably should have had knowledge of the event or events giving rise to the grievance. Exceptions to this timeliness requirement will be made for good cause in the discretion of the Director of Student Support Services. The four levels of the grievance process for complaints include:

LEVEL 1

Any person who believes they have been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly to any teacher, guidance counselor, or building Principal/Supervisor. The school staff member should then promptly report the concern to the school principal or Director of Student Support Services. In the event that the complaint is made against the Principal or the grievant's Supervisor, the complaint will be investigated by the Director of Student Services. District staff is expected to report possible incidents of discrimination or harassment of students and fellow employees to the building Principal/Supervisor. The discussion shall be documented in written form.

The Principal/Supervisor will promptly investigate every complaint of discrimination and consult with the Director of Student Support Services as necessary to complete the investigation of the complaint. If the Principal/Supervisor determines that discrimination or harassment has occurred, he/she shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory or harassing environment, which may include but is not limited to determining what disciplinary action should be taken against the person(s) who engaged in discrimination or harassment, if any; and determining what corrective and/or remedial steps are necessary to prevent recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate. This investigation and determination by the Principal/Supervisor shall be within fifteen (15) business days after the receipt of the complaint by the Principal/Supervisor. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond fifteen (15) school days because of extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to availability and cooperation of witnesses, complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If the investigator extends the investigation, he or she will notify the Complainant of the extension.

The investigator will inform the alleged target of the discrimination and/or harassment and the person(s) who was the subject of the complaint of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws) in writing within fifteen (15) school days of receipt of the complaint, unless the investigation is extended in the discretion of the investigator. This notice of the outcome of the investigation will inform the complainant as to whether or not the investigation determined that the conduct occurred, any individual remedies offered or provided to the complainant or any sanctions imposed on the perpetrator that directly relate to the complainant (e.g., stay away order or no contact order), and other steps the school has taken to eliminate the discrimination or hostile environment, if one has been found to exist, and prevent recurrence. The perpetrator should not be notified of the individual remedies offered or provided to the complainant (e.g., counseling; alternative classes, etc.). This determination shall be final unless the aggrieved party elects to appeal to the next Level II.

LEVEL II

If the complainant or the student's parents/legal guardians are dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the Director of Student Services within ten (10) school days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation. In the appeal, the appellant should identify any specific alleged factual or legal errors and explain why the errors should result in a different conclusion. The Director of Student Services shall review the investigation and may conduct further investigation if deemed appropriate. Within five (5) school days of receipt of any such appeal, the Director of Student Services shall decide whether or not to reopen the investigation, uphold the principal or designee's determination, or reverse the principal or designees determination. The Director of Student Services shall provide written notification of that determination to both the Complainant and the accused.

The Director of Student Services' decision shall be final, subject to further written appeal to the Superintendent within five (5) days of receipt of the decision of the Director of Student Services.

LEVEL III

The Superintendent of Schools or his /her designee shall issue a written response to the complainant within ten (10) business days after the receipt of the written appeal.

Confidentiality will be maintained during all grievance and investigation procedures to the extent consistent with the District's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements. See the Algonquin Conduct and Discipline Guidelines to address disciplinary procedures related to issues violating this policy. NOTE: The Northborough, Southborough, Northborough-Southborough Regional School Districts urge all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of discrimination to the attention of school personnel so that they can resolve the issue; however, individuals are hereby notified that they also have the right to report complaints to:

The United States Department of Education
Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02110-1491

Telephone: (617) 289-0111

Fax: 617-289-0150

TDD: 877-521-2172

or

Program Quality Assurance Services

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906

Telephone: 781-338-3700

TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370

FAX: 781-338-3710

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (E.E.O.C.)

One Congress Street, 10th floor

Boston, MA 02114

1-800-669-4000

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.)

One Ashburton Place

Boston, MA 02108

617-727-3990

PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

Overview

This policy describes the rights of parents and guardians relative to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. This is in accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A.

Process

At the beginning of each school year, parents/guardians of students in our schools are notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Building Principal is responsible for sending the notice. Parents/guardians of students enrolling in school after the start of the school year are given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, parents/guardians are notified, as practicable, of this fact in a timely manner before implementation of the change.

Description of Choices

Each notice to parents/guardians includes a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy and informs parents/guardians of the following choices:

- They may exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student exempted may be given an alternative assignment that will be clearly stated on the permission slip.
- They may inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula. These materials will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians to the extent practicable at the time of notification. Parents/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school, or may review them at other locations determined by the Superintendent.

Procedure, if Dissatisfied

Parents/guardians who are dissatisfied with a decision of the principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy, may follow the steps listed here.

Step	Action
1	Parents write a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue.
2	Superintendent or designee reviews the issue and gives the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks.
3	If still dissatisfied, parents send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue.
4	School Committee reviews the issue and gives the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks.
5	If still dissatisfied after this process, parents send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in dispute.

Additional Guidelines

- Prior to any discussion in the schools of a topic of a sexual nature, a permission slip is sent out for parental approval.
- A copy of this policy is distributed to each principal by September 1 of each year.

Adopted:	June 18, 1997
Revised:	June 6, 2001

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR TECHNOLOGY

Overview

The Northborough Public School District provides students and staff access to a robust technology infrastructure that includes Internet access. The district’s goal in providing this technology is to support and promote educational excellence and a sense of community in our schools by facilitating resource sharing, innovation, and communication.

All those who use district information technology resources must comply with the written policies covering their use as well as the spirit and intent of those policies. Use of school technology resources must be in support of education and research consistent with educational objectives.

The district is required to comply with the Child Internet Protection Act (CIPA) (<http://www.fcc.gov/cgv/consumerfacts/cipa.html>) which obligates the schools to block or filter Internet access to content that is: (a) obscene, (b) child pornography, or (c) harmful to minors. No filter is one-hundred percent effective and use of such filtering does not guarantee that network users will not come in contact with inappropriate sites. All users accessing the Internet do so at their own risk.

Users are expected to abide by the guidelines listed below for acceptable use of technology. The user is personally responsible for his or her actions in accessing and using district technology resources. Users should be careful not to have their own statements mistakenly attributed to the district. Network storage areas may be reviewed by an administrator to maintain system integrity and to ensure that the system is being used responsibly. Computer storage space is not private and contents may be viewed at any time.

Guidelines

Students are expected to abide by the guidelines listed below for acceptable use of technology resources. The school district has instituted these guidelines to protect students and foster the use of technology in a safe environment. Students are personally responsible for their actions in accessing and using the school's technological resources. Inappropriate use may result in network use and/or account being denied, revoked or suspended, and/or other disciplinary action.

General information

- Illegal activities, including violation of copyright or other contracts, and unauthorized access, including "hacking," are strictly forbidden.
- Network storage areas may be reviewed by school personnel to maintain system integrity and to ensure that the students are using the system responsibly. Network storage should be used only for educational purposes.
- Computer storage space is not private and contents may be viewed at any time.

Acceptable Uses

Access the school computers, network, Internet and email only for educationally relevant purposes.

Use personal electronic devices such as cell phones, handhelds, MP3 players, or laptops only for educational purposes, directly related to the curriculum, and at the discretion of the teacher. School rules must be adhered to; see student handbook.

Connect or install any computer hardware, software, or other electronic devices only with prior approval of the teacher.

Respect the rights of copyright owners by citing your sources and do not plagiarize work that you find on the Internet. Use web based blogging or social networking sites only when directly related to the curriculum and with *direct adult supervision* and permission.

Promptly disclose to a teacher or administrator any misuse of or damage to equipment.

Safety Issues

- Do not share your personal account or password with anyone, leave the account open and unattended, or use an account assigned to another user.
- Never provide last name, address, telephone number, or school name online.
- Never respond to and always report to a teacher or parent, any messages that make you feel uncomfortable or that are from an unknown origin.
- Promptly disclose to a teacher, if by accident, you encounter materials that violate the rules of appropriate use or if you observe another user accessing inappropriate sites.
- Never arrange a meeting in person with someone you met on-line.
- Do not publicly post private information about another person or publicly post confidential communications without the author's consent.
- Do not download any files or execute any attachments which are not from a trusted source.

Examples of Prohibited Uses

- Causing any damage to any computer, software, or service on the school network or sending a file or command that may damage another computer.
- Interfering with the operation of the network in any way. This includes installing shareware, freeware, illegal software or software that you own personally.
- Sending any material that is likely to be offensive, objectionable or could be deemed as harassment or threatening to recipients. This includes cyber bullying. Please see the definition of cyber bullying on the following page under "**Code of Conduct.**"
- Knowingly posting or forwarding any information that is not true.
- Using the school computers or networks for personal or financial gain, advertising, or for political activity.
- Using any social networking sites (examples: chat rooms, instant messaging, Facebook, Myspace) unless directly related to the educational curriculum and with teacher or administrator supervision.
- Accessing or attempting to access unauthorized or restricted network resources or the folders, data or documents of another person.
- Transmitting any obscene or pornographic material. This may also be a violation of local, state or federal law as well.

Code of Conduct

- Cyber bullying is prohibited. Cyber bullying, which is the repeated use by one or more students of an electronic expression alone or in combination with any written or verbal expressions or physical acts or gestures, directed at a victim that:
 1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property;
 2. Places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property;
 3. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim;
 4. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school;
 5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process of the orderly operation of the School. See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71. Section 370.
- Use appropriate language and do not swear, use vulgarities, or any other inappropriate language.
- Carefully choose wording because in the absence of face-to-face communication, messages may be misinterpreted.
- Never change the content of photos, videos, or media for personal use or to misrepresent the owner.
- Avoid stereotyping by race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity, geography, sexual orientation and disabilities.
- Be responsible and use citations for any information you gather electronically.

Agreement

I/We have read the Internet Acceptable Use Policy, understand it, and agree to adhere to the principles and procedures detailed within. I/We understand and accept the conditions stated above. I/We understand that my/our student is expected to use good judgment and follow the Policy in making electronic contact with others. Parent permission will be obtained prior to a student’s work with their name being put on a school’s home page on the Internet.

Should my student breach this policy, I understand that the consequences of this violation could result in but are not limited to:

- revocation of all network access on the School Districts’ network
- suspension of computer access
- revocation of computer access
- school suspension
- school expulsion
- legal action and prosecution by the authorities.

If you choose to deny direct Internet access to your student at this time, you are refusing permission for individual exploration only. Students may still be exposed to information from the Internet in guided curricular activities at the discretion of their teachers. A student will not have individual Internet access without a signed Acceptable Use Policy.

Student’s name: _____
(Please Print)

Parent signature

Student signature

Parent signature **Date** *Resources: Acceptable Use Policies from the Hampton-Dumont Community Schools, Florida Institute of Technology, University Liggett School, Shrewsbury Public Schools, Classroom Connect Internet site, Lightspan.com, Chicago Public Schools Policy Manual, section 604.1, and Acceptable Use Policy of Forsyth County Schools, Georgia.*

Adopted:	March 15, 1997
Revised:	June 6, 2000

Revised:	January 2, 2002
Revised:	February 8, 2011

HOMEWORK

Overview

Homework is a necessary part of our educational program which fulfills both academic and non-academic purposes. It refers to work assigned by a teacher to be completed by the student outside of class time and is not limited to that which can be written. Homework is intended to provide an opportunity for integrating home and school experiences. It should help foster the concept of learning as a life long process.

Consistent with the Massachusetts Common Core of Learning, we believe homework should serve many purposes:

- Improve academic performance
- Help students organize and budget their time
- Extend learning and critical thinking beyond the school day
- Develop individual responsibility, decision making skills and independent study skills
- Provide additional time for the application and reinforcement of new skills and concepts
- Encourage innovation and creativity
- Develop diverse interests that might enhance later experiences in life
- Keep parents involved in and informed about curriculum, skills and strategies being developed

Guidelines

Suggested time guidelines are as follows:

- K an average of 10 minutes per day
- 1-3 an average of 10-20 minutes per day
- 3-5 an average of 30-40 minutes per day
- 5 an average of 45-60 minutes per day
- 6 an average of 60-90 minutes per day
- 7-8 an average of 60-120 minutes per day

Naturally, some students may require more or less time to complete assignments. In general, students will receive homework on a daily basis Monday through Thursday. At times, homework assignments may involve weekend and holiday work as well. Teachers should take into account student commitments when assigning long term projects that encompass a holiday or vacation.

A successful homework program depends on a successful partnership of student, teacher, and parent.

Bibliography:

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 Radencich, Marguerite C. and Schuman, Jeanne Shay. How to Help Your Child with Homework. Free Spirit Publishing, 1988.
 Rosemond, John. Ending the Homework Hassle. Andrews and McMeal, 1990.
 Zifferblatt, Steven Michael. Improving Study and Homework Behaviors. Research Press, 1978.

Adopted:	• June 3, 1987
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Revised:	September 6, 1995
Revised:	January 5, 2000
Reviewed:	November 6, 2002

DISPENSING OF MEDICATIONS

Overview

This policy outlines the process for proper dispensing of medications.

Restrictions and Guidelines

According to 105 CMR 210.000, a licensed nurse must have a medication order from a licensed prescriber in order to administer prescription medications. A licensed nurse will follow the Board of Registration in Nursing's protocols regarding the administration of over-the-counter medications.

These guidelines apply:

- Students are prohibited from carrying medicines of any kind on their person or having them in their possession without prior approval of the school nurse. Students who fall into the following exceptions may self administer prescription medication, provided the student, school nurse and parent/guardian, where appropriate, enter into an agreement which specifies the conditions under which prescription medication may be self administered:
 1. Students with asthma or other respiratory diseases may possess and administer prescription inhalers.
 2. Students with cystic fibrosis may possess and administer prescription enzyme supplements.
 3. Students with diabetes may possess and administer glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems.
- No medication is administered or terminated in school without a written order from a licensed prescriber. The order must be signed, dated, for a closed period of time and include instructions for dispensing.
- A written and dated request concerning dispensing of medication must be submitted to the nurse. This request must be signed by a parent/guardian or by an emancipated eighteen-year-old.
- Prescribed medications, over-the-counter medications, and inhalers administered under these conditions are brought to the nurse or designee by a parent/guardian in the original properly labeled container.
- For short-term medication, requiring administration for ten or less school days, the pharmacy-labeled container may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order. If the nurse has a question, he/she may request a licensed prescriber's order.
- New written orders from the licensed prescriber as well as written requests from the parent/guardian are needed each new school calendar year. Written parent/guardian consent forms and licensed prescriber order forms may be obtained from the school nurse.
- All medication will be picked up by the parent/guardian on or before the last day of the school year. No medications will be stored over the summer. Medications left at school will be disposed of appropriately.
- The school nurse will be authorized to train designated unlicensed personnel in the emergency administration of Epinephrine (by auto injector/Epipen) to students with a known diagnosis of life-threatening allergic reaction in the event that a school nurse (RN) is not readily available.

This delegation shall be performed in accordance with the standards established by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Adopted:	October 17, 1984
Revised:	August 26, 1992
Revised:	March 5, 1997
Revised:	June 6, 2001
Revised:	May 5, 2010

Revised:	December 1, 2010
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MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL LAW: CHAPTER 71: SECTION 3: PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Section 3. Physical education shall be taught as a required subject in all grades for all students in the public schools for the purpose of promoting the physical well being of such students. Instruction in physical education may include calisthenics, gymnastics and military drill; but no pupil shall be required to take part in any military exercise if his parent or guardian is of any religious denomination conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, or is himself so opposed, and the school committee is so notified in writing; and no pupil shall be required to take part in physical education exercises if a licensed physician certifies in writing that in his opinion such physical education exercises would be injurious to the pupil.

Head Injury and Concussion Policy – J-340

Overview

The Northborough Public Schools has established this policy to be in compliance with 105 CMR 201.000 and has the protocol titled Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities to protect the safety and wellness of young athletes. The requirements of 105 CMR 201.000 shall apply to students who participate in any extracurricular athletic activity, including membership in a marching band.

Purpose

The Northborough Public Schools will provide protocols to standardize procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training, management and return-to-activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities and during the school day in order to protect their health and safety. The protocol has been adopted to be in compliance with the law and will be reviewed and/or revised as needed, but at least every two years.

The Head Injury and Concussions Protocol For Extracurricular Athletic Activities is located in the health office at each school and in the student handbooks.

Additional information regarding policy J-340 can be viewed at: <http://melican.nsboro.k12.ma.us/pages/Melican/>;
<http://web.nsboro.k12.ma.us/lincoln/>;
<http://web.nsboro.k12.ma.us/peaslee/>;
<http://web.nsboro.k12.ma.us/proctor/>;
<http://web.nsboro.k12.ma.us/zeh/>

Adopted:	April 4, 2012
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Massachusetts Statutes: Student Behavior and Discipline

M.G.L. c.71, §37H

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H:

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

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

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

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

(E) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

M.G.L. c.71, §37H1/2

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

M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4.

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

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

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

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

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

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

M.G.L. c.76, §21

Principals and headmasters shall ensure that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Principals shall develop a school-wide education service plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. In developing the education service plan, principals may seek the cooperation or input of relevant health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies education collaboratives, and other service providers. Any school or school district that expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days shall provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student’s parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. Students exempt from attending school under section 1 of chapter 76 shall not be subject to this section.

M.G.L. c.71, §37L

Section 37L. The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under section 51A of chapter 119 and the reporting requirements for fires under section 2A of chapter 148.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student’s possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of children and families, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of children and families, together with a representative from the office of student services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

STUDENT RECORDS :

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

(1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the School receives a request for access.

(2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

(3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

(4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

SUMMARY OF MASSACHUSETTS LAWS AND REGULATIONS PERTAINING TO STUDENT RECORDS

I. Inspection of the Student Record

A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least 14 years old (eligible student), has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The parent and/or eligible student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee may be charged for the cost of duplicating materials. The record must be made available to the parent or eligible student no later than ten (10) calendar days after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. The parent and/or eligible student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

II. Rights of Non-Custodial Parents

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 34H and 603 CMR 23.07 specify detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please see 'ACCESS FOR NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS' below.

III. Confidentiality of Student Records

With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent(s), student, and authorized school personnel are eligible to access information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the parent or the student. One such exception is the authority of the school district to forward, without consent, the complete student record to schools or school districts to which a student transfer or enrolls..

IV. Amendment of the Student Record

Eligible students and/or parents have the right to add additional information, comments, data, and/or other relevant material to the student record. Eligible students and/or parents also have the right to request in writing that the student record be amended. Any such request should be directed to the principal. The building principal will render a written decision on such a request within one week. A denial of a request to amend a student record may be appealed to the Superintendent.

V. Destruction of Student Records

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, be destroyed within seven (7) years of a student's transfer or graduation. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and eligible student must be notified, and provided with the opportunity to obtain a copy of any records to be destroyed.

VI. Directory Information

Federal and state regulations authorize school districts to 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 directory information is to allow the Northborough-Southborough Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include but are not limited to:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets, such as for wrestling, showing weight and height of team members

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 written consent.

If you do not want directory information from your child's education records disclosed without your prior written consent, please notify the Principal in writing. The Northborough Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Email address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance

- Grade level
- The most recent educational agency or institution attended

The above is only a summary of some of the more significant provisions of the laws and regulations pertaining to student records. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be obtained from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These state regulations are designed to insure parent and student rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records. The regulations apply to all information kept by a school committee on a student in a manner such that the student may be individually identified. The applicable regulations may be found at 603 CMR 23.00.

Student Records Access for Non-Custodial Parents

M.G.L.c.71,§34H Noncustodial parents; receipt of information for child enrolled in public elementary or secondary schools; notice to custodial parent.

- A. Each public elementary and secondary school shall provide student records, including, but not limited to, the following information, in a timely and appropriate manner to the parents of a child enrolled in the school if the parents are eligible for information under this section and request the information in the manner set forth in this section: report cards and progress reports; the results of intelligence and achievement tests; notification of a referral for a special needs assessment; notification of enrollment in an English language learners program established under chapter 71A; notification of absences; notification of illnesses; notification of any detentions, suspensions or expulsion; and notification of permanent withdrawal from school. Each school shall also make reasonable efforts to ensure that other written information that is provided to the custodial parent but not specified in the preceding sentence be provided to the requesting parent if that parent is eligible for information under this section. All electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either the work or home locations of the custodial parent shall be removed from information provided under this section. Receipt of this information shall not mandate participation in any proceeding to which notification pertains, nor shall it authorize participation in proceedings and decisions regarding the child's welfare which are not granted through the award of custody. For purposes of this section, any parent who does not have physical custody of a child shall be eligible for the receipt of information unless: (1) the parent's access to the child is currently prohibited by a temporary or permanent protective order, except where the protective order, or any subsequent order which modifies the protective order, specifically allows access to the information described in this section; or (2) the parent is denied visitation or, based on a threat to the safety of the child, is currently denied legal custody of the child or is currently ordered to supervised visitation, and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation. All such documents limiting or restricting parental access to a student's records or information which have been provided to the school or school district shall be placed in the student's record.
- B. A parent requesting information under this section shall submit a written request to the school principal.
- C. Upon receipt of a request for information under this section, the school shall review the student record for any documents limiting or restricting parental access to a student's records or information which have been provided to the school or school district and shall immediately notify the custodial parent of the receipt of the request. Notification must be made by certified mail and by first class mail in both the primary language of the custodial parent and in English. The notification shall also inform the custodial parent that information requested under this section shall be provided to the requesting parent after 21 days unless the custodial parent provides to the principal of the school documentation of any court order which prohibits contact with the child, or prohibits the distribution of the information referred to in this

section or which is a temporary or permanent order issued to provide protection to the child in the custodial parent's custody from abuse by the requesting parent unless the protective order or any subsequent order which modifies the protective order, specifically allows access to the information described in this section.

- D. At any time the principal of a school is presented with an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to this section the school shall immediately cease to provide said information and shall notify the requesting parent that the distribution of information shall cease.
- E. The principal of each public elementary and secondary school shall designate a staff member whose duties shall include the proper implementation of this section.
- F. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education shall promulgate regulations to implement the provisions of this section. Said regulations shall include provisions which assure that the information referred to in this section is properly marked to indicate that said information may not be used to support admission of the child to another school.

Notification of Rights under the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)

PPRA affords parents certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED)-
 1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
 2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
 3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
 4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
 5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
 6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
 7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student parents; or
 8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –
 1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
 2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law;
 3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use –
 1. Protected information surveys of students;
 2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes;
 3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

The Northborough – Southborough Public Schools has developed and adopted policies in consultation with parents regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The Northborough – Southborough Public Schools will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The Northborough – Southborough Public Schools will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution.
- Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED.
- Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-5920

Visitation and Observation Policy - K-250

Parents/Guardians are always welcome to visit schools. There are many parent programs throughout the year for this purpose. The Superintendent of the Public Schools of Northborough-Southborough shall develop uniform procedures for the scheduling and handling of visitations and observations throughout the District.

“Visitation” is defined as a general visit to an identified area of a school for purposes such as completing school-related business, attending a scheduled meeting with the child’s teacher(s), attending a school event, and dropping off a student lunch or other belongings.

“Observation” is defined as a parent/guardian or designee being present during the delivery of educational services to the child for the specific purpose of observing or assessing those services or instruction.

To ensure the safety of all students, all visitors and observers shall abide by the established [Visitation and Observation Procedures](#).

The Visitation and Observation Policy and the Visitation and Observation Procedures shall be implemented in a manner consistent with the [District’s Non-Discrimination Notice](#).

Legal References: M.G.L. c. 71B, §3; M.G.L. c. 71, 34H; 603.CMR.23.00 and 603 C.M.R. 28.07 (Parental Involvement)

Adopted	September 18, 2019
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