



Chelmsford Public Schools Student – Family Handbook

2025 -2026

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This handbook has been translated into the major languages spoken by parents or guardians of District students. If a parent's or student's primary language is not English, and the District has not already translated a student handbook or student code of conduct into their primary language, the District will translate a handbook and/or code of conduct into that language or will make oral interpretation available for any parent or guardian with limited English skills, including parents or guardians who speak low-incidence languages.

Communication

If there is a situation at home that might affect your child, please let the teacher, school counselor or administrator know. Adjustments and extra consideration can be given to your child if we understand what he/she is experiencing. Some common situations are the death or serious illness of a family member, the death of a pet, parent business travel, etc. We want to support your child, so please keep us informed. If parents are concerned with any school-related issues, they should first discuss the matter with the teacher involved.

X2 Family Portal is the student information system used by the Chelmsford Public School System. Families will have a unique login to access their children's information (i.e. attendance, grades, schedule, contact information, etc.). It is the parent's responsibility to maintain accurate contact information at all times.

Blackboard ConnectEd is our Community Outreach and Emergency Communication system. It allows us to contact you immediately, effectively, and efficiently by phone or email should we have the need. It is critical that you provide the school office with current contact information in September and to update the information should there be any change during the course of the school year.

Calendar

[School Calendar](#)

The Chelmsford Public School calendar is set each year by the Chelmsford School Committee and is found on the district's website. We encourage you to go to the individual school calendars which can be found on the [district website](#). School events, early release days, field trips, and additional information will be posted on a regular basis.

Attendance

Massachusetts has a Compulsory Attendance Law. It is the responsibility of a parent or guardian to ensure their child attends school regularly to obtain the maximum benefits from the educational program. It is required that students attend school every day. A student must be at school or at a school-related activity for at least half the school day to be counted as present.

A parent or guardian (Pre-School through Grade 8) is to telephone the school office within 30 minutes from the start of school to report a student's absence and the reason for the absence. Parents/Guardians who do not telephone the school will be contacted regarding the child's whereabouts. See M. G. L. c. 76, § 1A. The school will notify a parent or guardian of the child's absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the parent or guardian within 3 days of the absence. When a student is absent, they will not be allowed to participate in any athletic or other extra-curricular activity on that day.

Every child between the ages of six (6) and sixteen (16) is required to attend a public school in the town where the student resides, or another day school approved by the school committee. See M. G. L. c. 76, § 1; 603 C.M.R. 8.02; and Chapter 741 of the Acts of 1965. The Superintendent, or designee, may excuse necessary absences totaling no more than seven (7) days or fourteen (14) half days in a six (6) month period. The school makes the final determination as to whether or not an absence is deemed excused.

Types of Absences:

1. Unexcused absences may include absences such as truancy, class cuts, and/or frivolous excuses for being out of school or class. Typically, unexcused absences might include family trips, trancies from school, class cuts, etc.
2. Excused absences may include absences such as illness or quarantine (documented by doctor's note), serious illness or death in the family, bereavement, religious observance, documented college visits, school-sponsored field trips, out-of-school suspension, court ordered appearances, weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the student, and other exceptional reasons approved by the Principal. The school office must be notified within 24 hours of the absence in order for it to be considered by the administration for an excused absence. When 24-hour notice is not possible given the nature of the illness, emergency, etc., notice must be provided as soon as possible in order for the absence to be considered excused.

Time out of school can be harmful to a child's progress, growth, and success in school. Parents are strongly discouraged from removing students from school while school is in session. If a student accompanies their parents/guardians on a business and/or personal trip (including vacations), the student, upon return, is responsible for contacting their teacher to discuss missed work and make-up procedures. The teacher is not obligated to provide assignments while the student is not in school. Families must adhere to the provisions of [School Committee Policy](#) and this handbook in regard to all absences.

When a student accumulates 5 school days of unexcused absences or has missed 2 or more classes over five school days due to tardiness, the parents will be contacted and invited to a

meeting to develop action steps to address the student's attendance. The action steps shall 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. M. G. L. c. 76, § 1B.

A student who willfully fails to attend school for more than eight (8) school days in a quarter, and is not excused from attendance, may be considered habitually truant.

Under M. G. L. c. 119, § 21, a child may be eligible for "Child Requiring Assistance" services through the juvenile court system if the child: repeatedly runs away from the home of a parent or legal guardian; repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of a parent or legal guardian, thereby interfering with the parent's/guardian's ability to adequately care for and protect the child; is sexually exploited; repeatedly fails to obey lawful and reasonable school regulations; or is "habitually truant." The school can assist parents with pursuing "CRA" services and supports.

A "51A" is a report of suspected child abuse or neglect that is filed with the Department of Children and Families ("DCF"). Under M. G. L. c. 119, § 51A, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis. This report of suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, commonly referred to as a 51A, is filed with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCF). By law, school personnel are mandated reporters.

Excessive Absenteeism/Truancy

Parents will be notified if their child has 5 or more unexcused absences in a year, or if the child has missed 2 or more classes due to tardiness for 5 days or more, and will be invited to a meeting to develop action steps to improve the student's attendance.

Excessive Absenteeism/Truancy

A student who willfully fails to attend school for more than eight (8) school days in a quarter, and is not excused from attendance, may be considered habitually truant and may be subject to the following non-exclusive list of interventions:

- a. Parent or guardian conference
- b. All future absences must be verified by a physician
- c. Restriction or prohibition on the participation of extracurricular or intramural activities, field trips, or other activities
- d. Filing of a "Failure to Send your Child to School" with the court
- e. Filing of a "Child Requiring Assistance (CRA)" with the court

- f. Filing of a “51A” with the Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- g. The student and parent may be reported to the Chelmsford Public Schools Truancy Officer who may file with Lowell District Court

Excessive Absenteeism/Truancy at the High School Level

For additional High School attendance procedures, please refer to the Chelmsford High School Addendum document.

Students with Disabilities

Discussions regarding how the District’s attendance policies and procedures apply to students with disabilities are the responsibility of the Student’s IEP/504 Team.

Disenrollment

In the event that a student is absent without valid excuse in excess of ten (10) consecutive school days, the student will be subject to disenrollment from the District. Prior to a student’s disenrollment under such circumstances, an Exit Interview Meeting will be conducted with the student and parents/guardians in accordance with the requirements of Massachusetts law. M. G. L. c. 76, §18.

College Visits

For High School procedures, please refer to the Chelmsford High School Addendum document.

Early Dismissal

Elementary and Middle Schools

Students should be dismissed before the end of the day only in cases of emergency. It is extremely important that students attend school for the entire school day. In cases of requests for early dismissal, it is essential that students present a written note to their elementary teacher and middle school office in the morning indicating the date and time for dismissal. Students will not be allowed to go to anyone’s home or with anyone else without a note from their parent or guardian. Parents/Guardians who need to have students dismissed early should come to the office. **All students will be dismissed directly from the office.** No student is allowed to leave the building without checking out from the office first.

Registration Procedures

All students new to Chelmsford Public Schools must register at the Central Administration Building located at 230 North Road, Chelmsford. Please refer to the website for more detailed information.

Children entering kindergarten must be five years of age on or before August 31st of the year in which he/she is to enter kindergarten. Children entering grade one must be six years of age on or before August 31st of the year in which he/she is to enter grade one.

To register a child, parents need to present the following before attending school:

1. Completed Registration Packet
2. Proof of residence – to include:
 - A utility Bill
 - Mortgage Statement or a Signed Lease Agreement
3. Birth certificate
4. Completed immunization record
5. Proof of a current physical

Proof of Parent Identity (examples may include: MA Driver's License, MA ID Card, Out-of-State License, etc.). Students transferring out of school should notify the office and the classroom teacher as soon as possible so that forms can be promptly processed. Once a withdrawal form has been signed, student records are forwarded by mail to the new school.

For more information regarding special circumstances, please see the following sections: McKinney-Vento, ESSA/Foster Care, Military Students

Health Services

CPS Health and Safety Protocols

A nurse is in attendance during academic school hours. The nurse attends to ill or injured students and notifies parents when necessary. It is the responsibility of the parent to inform the nurse of a child's illness/injuries and surgeries. Parents are also responsible for providing medications. It is also the responsibility of the parents to notify the school nurse annually of any condition that affects a child's well-being and safety (e.g., allergic reaction to insect bites, medications, or foods; asthma; diabetes; and/or seizures, etc.).

Illness

For public health and safety, we request you keep your child home if he/she has a severe cold, rash with other symptoms, and or if they have a steady cough, hacking cough or coughing fits with fever 100 or above. Your child needs to stay home with:

- **Strep Throat**- if you suspect he/she has strep throat. The child should remain home until the child either has had a negative throat culture or has been on antibiotics and fever free for a full 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
 - **A fever 100 or above**- may return to school when he/she is fever free for 24 hours without medication (e.g., Tylenol, Advil, Motrin Aleve Ibuprofen or acetaminophen).
 - **Vomiting and/or diarrhea**- may return to school 24 hours after his/her last vomiting and/or diarrhea episode.
 - **Red or pink itchy eyes with crusty and or green/yellow drainage**- may return to school the day after treated for 24 hours or has no further eye discharge.
 - **Head Lice or nits (eggs)**- the nurse will assess the student for the presence of head lice or nits. If head lice or nits are detected, the nurse will contact the parent/guardian and provide education on lice treatment. Based on the discretion of the school nurse, some situations may warrant a dismissal from school.
 - **A rash medically undiagnosed**- may require MD clearance at the discretion of the school nurse.
- **If a student is out for an illness or dismissed due to illness, they may not return for school sponsored activities/sports that day.**

If a child is too ill to remain in school, the nurse will call parent/guardian and or emergency contact numbers for dismissal. The student should not place the call from a school phone or cell phone.

Parents are required to notify the school if your child contracts any contagious diseases (e.g., Chicken Pox, Strep Throat, Whooping Cough, Fifth's Disease, Conjunctivitis, Scabies, Impetigo, Ringworm or Head Lice, etc.). If a child has been absent due to a communicable disease, a physician's release may be required before returning to school.

Injuries

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school nurse of all injuries (i.e., fracture sprains, stitches, etc.) Guidelines regarding injuries and non-participation in physical education (P.E.) classes and recess as follows:

1. Students with casts, stitches, or splints may not participate in P.E. class, sports or outdoor recess without written consent from the attending physician. All injury notes from the doctor should include the type of injury, any activity limitations or allowance to participate in such activities and the date the child may return to full participation in PE, sports, and recess. Parents' wishes may not supersede this medical prescription. At the school nurses' discretion some P.E. activities may require non-participation for the safety of the student or others.

2. Students need a subsequent doctor's note when it is safe to resume normal activity in P.E. and/or recess.
3. Students using non prescribed/ over the counter support items and ACE wraps may be restricted from certain activities at the school nurse's discretion.
4. If a student is to come to school with a cane, crutches, wheelchair or an assistive device, a doctor's note is required before returning to school. If applicable, such doctor's notes need to indicate if the student can or cannot use stairs. An example of this would be a student with the need to wear a brace that would immobilize a knee.

Medications

It is the policy of Chelmsford Public Schools to administer medications during the school day only when necessary.

Medications in School

Before the school nurse can administer any medication (prescription or non-prescription) complete signed doctor's orders and parental consent must be received by the health office. Medication orders must be submitted every new school year or at the start or restart of any medication treatment. Medication consent forms are located on the school website under the Health Services tab.

The school nurse supervises the administration of medication at all Chelmsford Public Schools. If medication needs to be administered during school hours, whether it is a prescription or over-the-counter medicine, such administration of medication must be done by the school nurse or with the authorization of the school nurse in accordance with 105 CMR 210.000. Unless the conditions for self-administration outlined in 105 CMR 210 have been met, no student is permitted to carry and/or self-administer medication.

Whenever possible, medication administration should be scheduled at times other than during the school day. If it is necessary that your child receive medicine during the school day, the school nurse is responsible for the administration of all medications. All medications must be delivered to the nurse by a parent, guardian, or another designated adult. Medication must be in its original pharmacy-labeled container and be accompanied by a doctor's order and written parental approval prior to administration. No more than a thirty (30) school day supply shall be stored at the school. Parents/guardians may retrieve the medication from the school at any time. All unused, discontinued, or outdated medications will be returned to the parent/guardian. In extenuating circumstances, with parental consent, when possible, medications may be destroyed by the school nurse in accordance with the policies of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Division of Food and Drugs. For short-term prescription medications, i.e., those requiring administration for ten school days or fewer, the pharmacy-labeled container may be used in lieu of a licensed prescriber's order. The written request of a parent/guardian is required.

The school nurse will ensure that there is a proper medication order renewed as necessary including at the beginning of each academic year. Before the student enters school, the medication order shall be obtained by the school nurse, along with any other additional information from the doctor, and the medication administration plan shall be developed in accordance with 105 CMR 210.005.

A medication administration record for each student will be maintained, including a daily log, the medication administration plan, the medication order, and parent/guardian authorization. Prescription medications to be administered “as needed” may be administered by the school nurse or authorized school personnel after the school nurse assesses or consults with the student after each dose.

In the case of field trips and other short-term special school events, every effort will be made to have a nurse or other school staff member trained in prescription medication administration accompany the student. When this is not possible, the school nurse may delegate prescription medication administration to another responsible adult, subject to written consent from the parent/guardian for the named responsible adult, and subject to the requirements of 105 CMR 210. The administration of parenteral medications may not be delegated, with the exception of epinephrine administered in accordance with 105 CMR 210.100. Epinephrine must be administered solely in accordance with 105 CMR 210.100, even if on a field trip. The school nurse cannot delegate the administration of epinephrine to another “responsible adult.” Only those allowed under 105 CMR 210.100 can administer epinephrine.

The school nurse may, in accordance with standard nursing practice, refuse to administer or allow to be administered any prescription medication which, based on their individual assessment and professional judgment, has the potential to be harmful, dangerous or inappropriate. Parents/guardians and the doctor will be notified immediately by the school nurse in this scenario.

Students found in possession of unauthorized medications on school grounds or at school-sponsored events may be subject to discipline.

Health Services. Short-term antibiotics are the only prescription medications that do not require a separate signed physician medication order. The instructions on the bottle will be sufficient if the current label is intact, and a parent or guardian signed consent is provided for the short-term antibiotics.

Please Note:

- *Students who have had surgery, dental procedures, or injuries and are taking any type of narcotic pain reliever (i.e., Percocet, Vicodin, Tylenol#3,) are not allowed to return to school until their pain can be managed with a non-narcotic analgesic such as Ibuprofen or Tylenol. Narcotic pain relievers will not be administered in school.*

- *Over the counter medications such as Tylenol and Ibuprofen will not be administered within 30 minutes of the end of the school day as the effects of the medication cannot be evaluated.*

Medication Delivery/Pick-up Requirements

All medications must be delivered to the school and picked up from the school by a responsible adult. All medications can be picked up from the nurse's office anytime during the school day. All medications will be disposed of if they are not picked up within one week following termination of the order or if they are not picked up by the last day of school.

All prescription medications must be in a pharmacy labeled container that includes the child's name, name and correct dose of the medication, physician's name, and current date. Please ask your pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. Not more than a thirty-day supply of medicine should be delivered to the school. **All nonprescription medications must be in the original manufacturer's container.**

Additional Medication Information

- **Students are not permitted to have medicine in the classroom or on their person** without authorization from the parent and school nurse.
- **No medications that are scheduled to be given after the early release dismissal time will be given on school half-days** unless specifically requested in writing by a parent and or guardian.
- **In order for your child to receive any medications on a field trip or for any medications to be sent on a field trip, the medication field trip consent must be completed before your child goes on a field trip.**
- **It is important for the school nurse to be informed of any medication that your child might be taking even if your child does not need to receive these medications during the school day.** It is also important for the school nurse to be informed of any medication changes in a timely manner.

As noted on the emergency form, the school physician has approved, after a nurse's assessment and if deemed appropriate for the safety and welfare of a student, the use of Acetaminophen/Tylenol, Caladryl, Benadryl, Oragel, Vaseline, Sting Relief Wipes, saline eye solutions, Bacitracin, Silvadene cream, Hydrocortisone cream, Ibuprofen/Motrin, Tums and First Aid cream. Students showing signs of a life-threatening allergic reaction or anaphylaxis may be given EpiPen or Narcan and Emergency Medical Services will be summoned.

Guardians must note on their child's annual medical information form if they do not want any of the listed medications or ointments used.

Students with Life Threatening Allergies, Asthma, and Seizures

For the well-being and safety of students with asthma, seizures and allergies, guardians should submit a medical plan of care for that student even if you as guardian do not send in a related medication to the school. Plans of care forms are available on the school's website.

The Chelmsford Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life-threatening allergies or prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, educate the community, and to maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs. A system-wide effort requires the cooperation of all groups of people within the system. For more information on protocols for students with life threatening allergies, please go to our [Health Services page on the website](#).

Health Examinations, Immunizations, and Exclusions of Students

Physical Exams and Health Screenings

Students are required to submit a copy of a physical examination that was completed within one year prior to entrance to Chelmsford Public Schools or within thirty (30) days after entering Chelmsford Public Schools, and at intervals of three years thereafter. In compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health state laws, our district requires physicals for students in kindergarten, third grade, sixth grade, and ninth grade. Students entering Chelmsford Public Schools are required at the time of student registration to provide a copy of a physical examination dated within one year of entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry and at intervals of either three or four years thereafter. A student transferring from another school district shall be examined as an entering Chelmsford Public Schools student.

All students participating in competitive athletics will need to submit a copy of a physical examination every year in which they intend to participate. See 105 CMR 200. Students are also required to submit a copy of a physical examination if they are over the age of fourteen (14) but under the age of sixteen (16) and are requesting employment certificates.

Within thirty (30) days of a student's first day at Chelmsford Public Schools, all students must submit certification that the student has passed a vision screening within the previous twelve (12) months. Vision and hearing screenings will be conducted in the year of school entry and annually through grade five (5), once in grades six (6) through (8), and once in grades nine (9) through twelve (12).

The weight and height of each student will be measured in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. Every effort will be made to protect the privacy of each student during the screening. School personnel

will not disclose the height, weight or BMI calculations of an individual student to anyone other than the parent/guardian, unless written consent is provided by the parent/guardian. Parents/guardians can request in writing that their child's measurements not be taken.

Postural screening will be conducted annually by the nurse, or other approved personnel approved by the Department of Public Health, on all students grades five (5) through nine (9).

SBIRT: Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment

Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) will be completed annually in grades [7 and 9]. SBIRT is a verbal screen of students for substance use disorders. Parents and guardian will be notified ahead of time, and either the parent/guardian or the student may opt out of the screening at any time before or during the screening through written notification. Information provided by a student during a screening is confidential, except in instances of an immediate medical emergency or disclosure of the information provided is required by state law. The screening will be implemented in accordance with state and federal laws regarding student confidentiality, including applicable student record laws and regulations.

Definition: SBIRT stands for Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment. An evidence-based screening tool is utilized for the Screening; the Brief Intervention is provided through motivational interviewing and the Referral to Treatment is dependent on resources available in the school and community.

Background: Substance use during adolescence is associated with various negative outcomes including problems in school, injuries, emergency room visits, arrests, violence, and other risky behaviors, such as unprotected sex. The younger a person is when he/she first uses alcohol or drugs, the greater the likelihood that he/she will become dependent and/or addicted as an adult. Additionally, heavy alcohol and marijuana use in adolescence may result in long-lasting functional and structural changes in the brain affecting memory and learning functions, decreasing motivation, and increasing the risk of serious mental illness. In response to the Opioid Crisis, an Opioid Bill was signed by Governor Baker on March 14, 2016, mandating a verbal screening for substance use (also known as Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment – SBIRT).

Purpose: The purpose of SBIRT is to promote prevention and identify early risk for substance use in our adolescents and to take appropriate actions as soon as possible if a problem is identified. Neuroscience tells us that the developing adolescent brain is at particular risk for addiction, so intervening early, before a substance use disorder develops, is key to the life-long health of our students. The SBIRT screening process reinforces healthy choices being made by students, identifies those who need intervention and education, ideally before substance use begins, and provides a referral for those who need additional support or treatment. SBIRT screenings are performed like other health screenings in school settings

(i.e., vision, hearing, BMI) with respect to identifying a health condition as soon as possible so as to enable all children to obtain the fullest benefit of their educational opportunities.

Universal Screening: The SBIRT protocol developed by the MA Department of Public Health (DPH) for use by school health personnel is a structured, evidence-based conversation that promotes prevention and identifies early risk for substance use among adolescents. It is a UNIVERSAL screening of ALL students in a selected grade level. It is not a targeted screen for selected students, nor is it intended to get anyone “in trouble”. It is neither “drug testing” nor is it a treatment program for students who may be addicted to substances.

SBIRT Team: An SBIRT team will be composed of school health personnel, such as school counselors, adjustment counselors, social workers, psychological staff, and health educators. Members of the SBIRT team will implement the screening, provide education to the students and/or provide follow-up as necessary.

Vaccination and Immunization

All students attending, enrolled, or registered to attend Chelmsford Public Schools must present, in accordance with 105 C.M.R. 220, a copy of their certificate of immunization documenting their immunization records before they can attend school unless a waiver of this requirement has been granted based upon documented medical need or sincere religious belief. Students with exemptions may be subject to exclusion during disease outbreaks.

Emergency Medical Information Forms

Emergency Medical Information forms must be completely filled out and returned to the Nurses’ Office each year. Forms provide important phone numbers and contact persons for dismissals, emergencies, and signed permission for some over the counter medications including Tylenol. Forms will be sent home at the beginning of each school year and are available online or at your school nurse’s office.

Bus Transportation

An essential component of a quality education is safe transportation for all students to and from school each day. Each year we experience a variety of parent questions concerning our transportation program. The purpose of this section is to present responses to the most commonly asked questions. This is a resource for parents. Please read the document carefully and reread the document with your child. If questions remain, please feel free to communicate directly with the principal of your child’s school or our transportation supervisor in the superintendent’s office. Your willingness to adhere to these guidelines will be greatly appreciated.

BUS QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q: Does the Chelmsford Public Schools provide transportation for all students?

A: It is the policy of the Chelmsford School Committee to provide bus transportation for all students living beyond a minimum walking distance to school.

Q: Will my child be assigned to a particular bus?

A: Yes. Bus assignments are published on the school website. Individual student bus assignments are available in the X2 Family Portal.

Q: Will my child be assigned to a particular seat?

A: No, however, the bus driver or school administrator has the authority to direct students to sit in specific seats, particularly when there is a disciplinary concern.

Q: Will my child be permitted to ride other buses throughout the school year?

A: Students must ride only on their assigned bus. Bus swapping or riding to a friend's house is not permitted. Students are only permitted to change from their assigned bus when the student is employed in a particular location or to visit the Town Library. In both instances, a written request must be given to the building principal three days before the need for such transportation. A response to the request can be expected one day before the request. Requests will be granted only in those instances where there is space available on the desired bus.

Q: Can I expect transportation to my child's day care facility?

A: Students may only change from their assigned bus to attend a day care facility within the school's attendance area five days a week.

Q: Can I expect the bus to stop directly in front of my house?

A: No. We try to minimize bus stops in order to promote efficient bus routing. Door to door service should not be expected.

Q: What responsibilities do parents or guardians have in providing safe transportation for students?

A: Parents or guardians have a number of important responsibilities. They include:

- Parents or guardians of elementary and middle school students should read or review this document with their children.

- Parents or guardians should support the bus regulations and inform their children that they too have the same expectations for behavior and procedures. Parents need to work with the school in setting appropriate expectations.
- Parents or guardians should supervise children waiting for the bus at the bus stop.
- Parents or guardians should instruct their child to be at the bus stop three to five minutes before the expected arrival time of the bus.

Q: What should a student do if the bus does not arrive at the stop on time?

A: If the bus does not arrive at the stop in a timely manner, e.g., 10-15 minutes past the expected arrival time, the student should return home directly. The parent should call the school to inform the school office of the non-arrival of the bus and make other arrangements for transportation to school. If a parent or guardian is not present upon the child's return to home, it is recommended that the child go to the home of a predetermined family member. It is recommended that each family speak with their children in the event of this rare occurrence.

Q: Are parents of kindergarten students expected to meet their child at the bus stop upon returning home from school?

A: Yes. No kindergarten student will be permitted to exit the bus unless there is a responsible adult at the bus stop charged with the responsibility of escorting the child safely home. If no responsible adult is present at the bus stop, the kindergarten child will be returned to the school. The parent will be contacted, and the parent will be responsible for transporting the child home.

Q: What will happen if the bus is unable to reach a bus stop because of inclement weather or some other unusual circumstance?

A: Bus drivers have been instructed to never let a child out at a stop other than his/her designated stop. All children will return to the school building and parents will be contacted to arrange safe transportation home.

Q: Will my child receive special training on bus safety?

A: Yes. The school system is required to have training sessions at each school location. There will be a training session at the beginning of the year to review the expectations detailed in this document; introduce all students to bus drivers, thereby reinforcing the importance of

following their directions at all times always following his/her directions; and answer any student's questions or respond to student concerns. Training sessions will focus on procedures for exiting a bus during an emergency situation. Training sessions will reinforce the importance of rules and procedures.

Q: As a parent, what should I do if I have a question or concern about the transportation of my child?

A: Simple problems or student conflicts on the bus can be resolved by contacting the building principal. For other transportation issues, you may want to file a "Bus Issue Identification Form" online. Problems that may require the use of the Bus Issue Identification Form include: a request to change a bus route, a request to change the location of a bus stop, or a concern with a bus driver's adherence to bus regulations. The Bus Issue Identification Form can be found on the school website under Transportation.

Q: Is it ever appropriate for parents to communicate directly with the management of the transportation company regarding a bus problem?

A: No. The Chelmsford Public Schools transports in excess of 5000 students each day. We have a commitment to safe and efficient transportation. School officials, the Transportation Company and parents need to work together to provide a quality transportation program. Parent support of all messages embedded in this document will be appreciated.

Bus Fees

Chelmsford Public Schools assess a fee for student bus transportation. Transportation fees are assessed as follows:

Kindergarten through grade 6 students will ride free if the distance from the end of their driveway to their school's driveway is beyond 2 miles. All other students in grades K-6 and all students in grades 7-12 will pay the fee to ride the bus. Students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, receive free transportation.

Bus Rules

Parents should be aware that students' opportunity to ride the school bus is conditioned on their behavior and observance of school rules pertaining to proper conduct. Drivers have the daily responsibility of enforcing student rules and regulations for all students and ensuring their safety. Buses are equipped with video monitoring devices. In the event of a problem impacting the safety of students or the failure of students to comply with rules and regulations, the driver will contact the principal for further administrative action.

Please review the following non-exhaustive list of rules so that you can help your child have a positive bus riding experience:

- a. Students are to observe all rules and regulations established by the bus driver.
- b. Each student is to take a seat and remain in that seat until his or her bus stops. It is expected that students will share seats with their peers. Kindergarten students may have assigned seats in the front of the bus. Students in grades 1 through 12 may be assigned seats at the discretion of the bus driver or school administrator.
- c. Students are not permitted to throw anything on the bus or out of the window.
- d. All talking and noise must be kept at a minimum.
- e. No smoking (i.e., including e-cigarettes) is permitted on the bus; this is in accordance with State law.
- f. Students and parents are responsible for any physical damage to the bus.
- g. Inappropriate behavior, including physical contact, is not allowed on or around any bus, or while waiting for the bus.
- h. Riders must keep hands and head inside the bus at all times.
- i. No pets or animals are allowed on the bus, except service animals when required by law.
- j. Students must ride only their assigned bus. At the middle and high school levels, bus swapping for employment purposes, or to go to the library is allowed, provided there is space on the bus. The school bus will not change its routing to accommodate students swapping buses.
- k. Only small musical instruments are permitted on the buses; instruments that can be kept in a child's lap or within the area of a child's seat. Large musical instruments will not be permitted on the bus due to safety concerns. Specific information relative to approved instruments allowed on buses will be given to students and parents when they enroll in the instrumental program.
- l. Students are not allowed to take any photo or video on buses.
- m. All the rules that apply at school apply on the bus.

Students who fail to follow bus rules face the possibility of losing the opportunity of riding any bus to and from school. If a student is referred to the office by a bus driver for breaking a bus rule, this is what may happen depending on the severity of the offense.

School Bus Offenses

FIRST OFFENSE – At a minimum, a parent or guardian will be contacted.

SECOND OFFENSE AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES – A student may be suspended from riding the bus.

- **Please note a serious infraction of the rules may result in an immediate bus suspension at the discretion of the building administrator.**

Additional infractions of the rules may result in permanent suspension from riding the bus. Restitution will not be made for bus fees due to student suspension and/or expulsion.

Other Transportation Requirements Drivers shall not pass school buses when passengers are being picked up or discharged. Drivers must come to a full stop when approaching a vehicle that is displaying a “School Bus” sign and flashing front and rear red lights, and has stopped to let passengers off. See M. G. L. c. 90, § 14 (punishable by fines and loss of license for repeat violations). With limited exceptions, Massachusetts law prohibits the unnecessary idling of motor vehicles on school grounds. M. G. L. c. 90, § 16B. While on school property, drivers, as well as passengers, must properly fasten safety belts.

Code of Conduct/Consequences

Student Expectations

The Chelmsford Public Schools is committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment which embraces a respect for self and others. Students are responsible to school administrators and teachers for their behavior to and from school, on school grounds, on buses, and during any school-sponsored activity or field trip.

1. Students are expected to report to each class with all their necessary materials, books, writing implements, the day’s assignment, and the Reminder Binder (if applicable).
2. Each student should treat the teacher and all members of the class with respect and allow others to participate equally in the lesson.
3. Students will use moderate voices at all times.
4. Students are expected to keep to the right and to avoid blocking other students’ movement in the hallways.
5. Running, wrestling, and roughhousing are not allowed at any time.
6. During an emergency drill, students must follow directions, stay with their class, use the proper exits, exit quickly, and refrain from talking.

7. Objects must never be thrown in school.
8. Gum chewing is not allowed in school (elementary & middle school).

Teachers and all school personnel are expected to enforce these behavior expectations at all times. Infractions will be handled using the individual school's discipline procedures.

Dress Code

The Chelmsford Public Schools' dress code supports equitable educational access and will be enforced in a non-discriminatory manner. consistent with the laws that protect students on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, household income, gender identity, or cultural observance.

The Chelmsford Public Schools supports students' freedom of expression (including through attire) and does not seek to abridge that expression, provided that such expression does not cause any disruption or disorder within the school. The school district and individual schools are responsible for seeing that student attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any student, and that student attire does not contribute to a hostile or intimidating atmosphere for any student.

1. Basic Principle: Certain body parts must be covered for all students

Clothes must be worn in a way such that genitals, buttocks, nipples, and chest are fully covered with opaque material. All items listed in the "must wear" and "may wear" categories below must meet this basic principle.

2. Students Must Wear:*

- Shirt.
- Bottom: pants/sweatpants/shorts/skirt/dress/leggings
- Shoes; activity-specific shoes requirements are permitted (for example for sports)
- Shirts, pants, and dresses must have fabric in the front, back and on the sides.
- Clothing must cover all undergarments.

* Courses that include attire as part of the curriculum (for example, professionalism, public speaking, and job readiness) may include assignment-specific dress.

*Nothing in this policy should be read to restrict assignment of class-specific dress (e.g., physical education) or requiring specific clothing for a field trip.

3. Students May Wear: (provided they do not violate Section 4 below)

- Protective Hair Styles historically associated with race, including but not limited to, braids, locks, twists, Bantu knots, hair coverings and other formations.

4. Students Cannot Wear Clothing that Causes Disruption or Disorder or Violates Reasonable Standards of Health, Safety and Cleanliness. Examples may include, but are not limited to:

- Violent language or images.
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol (or any illegal item or activity) or the use of the same.
- Hate speech, profanity, pornography.
- Anything that obscures the face or prevents identification of students in person or on security cameras (except as a religious observance or if the headwear constitutes protective hairstyle as described above)
- Images or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class.
- Visible underwear. Visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation.
- Bathing suits.
- Shoes with wheels in the heel.

Students who violate these dress standards must:

1. Find alternate clothing in their locker or from a friend;
2. Receive alternate clothing from the nurse/office;
3. Ask a parent to bring in alternate clothing or go home to change clothes.

Items Not Allowed During School

The following items are not allowed during school hours at school without permission:

1. Electronic games or devices, laser pens or pointers, personal music systems, cameras, video cameras. (**Taking pictures or videos of students and staff is not permitted in school or on buses.**)
2. Squirt guns, water guns, etc.
3. Skateboards/sneakers with built-in wheels. (You may only use the skateboard park after you have gone home or been picked up by your parent/guardian).
4. Lighters, matches or other lighting devices, alcohol, drugs, counterfeit drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco (chewing or smoking, such as cigarettes), vapes, e-cigarettes, tobacco and vape paraphernalia, any weapons including but not limited to firearms,
5. knives (including pocket or utility knives), fireworks, or stink bombs. Bringing any of these items to school will result in suspension or expulsion, and in some cases reported to the police and/or fire department.

6. Other devices that may create a disruption or potentially be a safety risk (i.e. shock delivering devices).

** Lockers are school property. There is no expectation of privacy for items contained in school lockers. Items located in your locker are considered to be in your possession and may be confiscated by school administrators.*

Phone Usage

If students need to contact home, they should see their teacher/administrator to receive permission to use the phone in the classroom or office. Conversely, if a parent needs to speak with a student, the parent should call the school office. All cell phones/communication devices should be off while in school, unless in use for instructional purposes. Any student using a cell phone/communication device for non-instructional purposes while school is in session will have that cell phone confiscated by administration. A first offense will lead to a warning and the administrator will return the phone/communication devices to the student at the end of the day. Second and subsequent offenses may result in the phone being returned only to the parent and/or further disciplinary actions.

Unauthorized Recordings, Photos and Video

The unauthorized taking or distribution of voice recordings, photographs, or videos of staff or students, at school, on buses, or at a school function, will result in a discipline under MGL c. 71 § 37H ¾ and possible notification to the proper authorities.

Behaviors Not Allowed

Participation in any of the following result in student discipline. This list is not an exhaustive list but is meant to be illustrative.

1. Throwing objects.
2. Stealing.
3. Threats, acts of intimidation, aggressive behavior (including pushing and shoving), fighting.
4. Borrowing or exchanging money (Items for sale will be confiscated and parents will be notified. Students should not bring large sums of money to school.)
5. Lighters, matches or other lighting devices, alcohol, drugs, counterfeit drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco (chewing or smoking, such as cigarettes), vapes, e-cigarettes, tobacco and vape paraphernalia, any weapons including but not limited to firearms,

6. Damage to, defacing, or tampering with school property or the property of others. (Students may be expected to pay for all damages. Additional consequences may also be enforced, including the option of discipline under MGL c. 71 § 37H ³/₄).
7. Cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of AI, or any other violation of the Academic Honor Code in any form. Cheating is a serious breach of trust and is never acceptable. (See Academic Honor Code)
8. Unauthorized leaving of school grounds. In the event a student leaves the school grounds during the school day, the parent will be notified and will be expected to return the student to school immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, the School Attendance Officer and Police Department will be notified in an effort to locate and return the student to school.
9. Possession, use, or distribution of alcohol, drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco/nicotine, or tobacco products or paraphernalia, including e-cigarettes and vaporizers (vaping devices and/or vape pens) on school grounds, within school buildings or facilities, at school-sponsored events, or on a school bus is strictly prohibited and may result in suspension or, where permitted under applicable laws, expulsion from school. Intentionally smelling or inhaling the fumes of any substance having the property of releasing toxic vapors in order to cause intoxication, euphoria, excitement, exhilaration, stupefaction, or dulled senses or nervous system is prohibited. It is also illegal to possess, buy or sell any such substance in order to violate, or aid another to violate, this section. Violations may result in discipline. District and MIAA standards will be applied to athletics and other extracurricular activities. M. G. L. c. 71, § 2A; M. G. L. c. 270, § 18; M. G. L. c. 71, § 37H
10. Harassment, hazing, or bullying.
11. Sexual harassment.
12. Possession or distribution of sexual paraphernalia.
13. Inappropriate use of technology and social media and other violations of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy (see Technology, Internet, and Email).
14. Insubordination
15. Disrupting the school environment
16. Vandalism

Forms of Consequences May Include But Are Not Limited To:

1. Withholding privileges - A student may not be allowed to attend a special program within the school, or school-sponsored events. For example, if a student acted poorly in the cafeteria, the privilege of eating in that setting might be withheld. A student may be required to eat lunch in the school office or in a supervised alternative location. Exclusion from extracurricular activities are not subject to the due process procedures set forth below or Massachusetts regulations. See 603 CMR 53.11. The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the remainder of this policy, law, or regulation.
2. Detention - A student may be required to serve detention after school. The parent will be notified in advance if a detention is to take place after school hours so that parents can provide transportation from school.
3. Expulsion or Suspension – A student may be disciplined according to M.G.L. c. 71 § 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾ depending on the particular circumstances of the infraction.

Due Process

Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, § 37H ¾

(For ALL offenses except for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on staff and felony offenses)

Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ ONLY. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 please see the appropriate sections below.

Definitions Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4

- Superintendent – the Superintendent or designee for disciplinary purposes.
- 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 ten (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.

- Short-Term Suspension: the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. 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. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H(a) or (b), or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½ no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.
- Principal: the primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.
- Written Notice: Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or 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

Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ ONLY. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 please see the appropriate sections below.

All school principals and principal's designees and the Superintendent and Superintendent's designees when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing or appeal to consider student discipline for violations of school rules other than offenses involving drugs, weapons, assaults on school staff and felony offenses, shall, when deciding the consequences for the student, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal or designee shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies would be unsuitable or counter-productive, or unless the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4(b).

Emergency Removals; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ - A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of: (1) the emergency removal; (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate. Before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent, the Principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing. Additionally, the Principal is required to render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension as set forth below, whichever is applicable. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

In-School Suspension, M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ - 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. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 C.M.R. 53.00.

- Due Process for In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: 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.

- Principal's Decision – In-School Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: – On or before the day of suspension, the principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the In-School Suspension, including the reason and the length of the In-School Suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 C.M.R. 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. 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.

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

- Due Process for Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: 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.
- Notice – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the
- proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the

- hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.
- The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
- Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: 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.
- Principal's Decision – Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. The Principal's decision shall be final with no opportunity for appeal. 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, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: means 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. A principal may, in their discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or in §37H ½ of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

- Due Process for Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: 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.
- Notice - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: 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 following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; and (5) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The student will have the rights identified in the written notice and the principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- Principal's Decision – Long-Term Suspension: M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾: Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a Long-Term Suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or 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. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at

the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; (3) identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language: (a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

- Superintendent Appeals – Long-Term Suspension; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: A student who is placed on Long-Term Suspension under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H ¾ following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.
- Superintendent Appeal Hearing; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension. The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that

an audio record will be made of the hearing, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension as identified above.

- Superintendent's Decision; M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4: The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which: (1) identifies the disciplinary offense and the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) sets out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Superintendent; (3) identifies the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) includes notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; and (5) notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of the Chelmsford Public Schools with regard to the long-term suspension.

Due Process Under M.G.L. 71, §§ 37H and 37H1/2 Offenses

(For offenses involving: dangerous weapons, drugs, assaults on staff and felony offenses)

Short-Term Suspension; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - 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 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 the formal disciplinary hearing.

Long-Term Suspension/Expulsion; M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student. Long-term suspension/expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for (1) possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission

of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½. The Principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below apply to suspensions under M.G.L. c. 71 §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

Dangerous Weapons, Drugs and Assaults on Staff - M.G.L. c, 71, §37H

1. 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
2. in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school and school district by the Principal.
2. Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school and school district by the Principal.

Principal's Hearing, Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraphs 1 or 2 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at their own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the Principal may, in their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the Principal to have violated either paragraphs 1 or 2 above.

Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H - Any student who has been expelled from the Chelmsford Public Schools pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of their appeal. The student has the right to counsel (at his or her own expense) at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½

Issuance of a Felony Criminal Complaint

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 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.

- Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion – M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at his or her own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After the hearing, the Principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.
- Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent in writing and must notify the Superintendent of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the student's own expense. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Chelmsford Public Schools with regard to the suspension.

Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or felony delinquency charge or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

- Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation (at his/her own expense), along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After the hearing, the Principal shall issue a written decision, which will include reasons for an expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification

of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

- Superintendent's Appeal/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H 1/2 - The student shall have the right to appeal the long-term suspension/expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, of their request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on their behalf and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at student's own expense. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Chelmsford Public Schools with regard to the long-term suspension/expulsion.

A. OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ACADEMIC PROGRESS

The Chelmsford Public Schools shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school district shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

For all suspensions, students will be entitled to the following in terms of the opportunity to make academic progress:

Less Than 10 Consecutive Days - 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 schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

More than 10 Consecutive Days - 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, earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan.

The school-wide education service plan will be provided to the parent and student at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension.

DISCIPLINING A STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY - 34 CFR 300.530

Any student may be suspended or removed from school for disciplinary reasons for a short time, which is no more than 10 days. Once a special education student has been removed from the school placement for more than 10 cumulative days during the school year the student must receive a free and appropriate public education. For students on 504 Plans or on an IEP, the Team must meet within 10 days of the school's decision to impose the discipline. At this meeting, called a "manifestation determination," the IEP Team will determine if the misbehavior was caused by or had a direct relationship to the student's disability, or was the direct result of the school's failure to provide the services required by the student's IEP or 504 Plan.

If the Team determines that the student's behavior was caused by or substantially related to the student's disability or the failure to properly implement the IEP or 504 Plan, then the student must be returned to the last approved placement unless the Team decides on a different placement. It must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop a behavior plan (or review and modify an existing plan, if necessary).

If the team determines that the student's behavior was not caused by or substantially related to the student's disability or the failure to properly implement the IEP or 504 Plan, then a student with a disability can be disciplined in the same manner and for the same length of time as other students are disciplined for the same offense.

Note that if your student possessed or used a weapon or drugs or caused serious bodily injury to another person on school property or at a school event your student may be placed by the principal in an interim alternative education setting ("IAES") for up to 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. The IEP Team will determine the IAES and the appropriate educational services that will be provided to the student while he or she is in the IAES.

If a parent disagrees with any decision regarding placement of his or her student under the disciplinary provisions or disagrees with the manifestation determination, or if the school district believes that maintaining the current placement of the student is substantially likely to result in an injury to the student or to others, either the parent or the school district may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing with the BSEA.

A. Sexual Harassment / Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The Chelmsford Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex and strictly prohibits sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, in any education program or activity that it operates, including in admission and employment. SVTHS does not

discriminate on the basis of pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions in its educational programs and employment activities. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; M.G.L. c. 151B; M.G.L. c. 151C; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5. Chelmsford's policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admissions, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex.

Chelmsford Public Schools has adopted and implements a Title IX Grievance Procedure to ensure the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment. A copy of the Chelmsford Public Schools' Title IX Grievance Procedure may be accessed on the Chelmsford Public Schools' website at the [following link](#) or through the office of the Title IX Coordinator.

For questions related to Chelmsford Public Schools' Non-Discrimination policy or grievance procedures, to make a report or complaint of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, or for information relative to accommodations and services for individuals based on pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, please contact Chelmsford's Title IX Coordinator: Diane Carey – Director of Human Resources

Inquires or complaints relative to sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, may also be directed to the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights:

U.S. Department of Education
8th Floor
5 Post Office Square
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Telephone: (617) 289-0111
Facsimile: (617) 289-0150

[Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Boston@ed.gov)

Chelmsford has also designated certain Chelmsford staff members to serve as Confidential Employees with whom a student or employee may discuss a report of sex discrimination, including sex-based harassment, informally and without concern for further disclosure, unless such further disclosure is requested. Contact information for those Confidential Employees is available at the [following link](#).

Sex-based harassment is a form of sex discrimination.

Any employee or student found to have engaged in sexual harassment will be subject to disciplinary action. Students found to have engaged in sexual harassment may be subject to disciplinary proceedings in accordance with procedures set forth in the disciplinary due process section of this handbook and applicable state and federal laws and

regulations. Staff members determined to have engaged in sexual harassment shall be subject to professional discipline including but not limited to possible termination of employment.

PRIDE and Bullying Prevention and Intervention

We believe that there are certain personal characteristics that need to be cultivated within children in order for them to reach their potential throughout their formal education and position themselves for a lifetime of success. Chelmsford Public Schools will provide support for students to grow in these areas as they move through our system Pre-K through Grade 12 in a consistent and purposeful manner by unifying our successful academic and nonacademic programming that identifies and promotes prosocial and healthy behaviors. Therefore, we have developed our district-wide program, PRIDE.

This program is modeled after the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Model Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan and includes the years of professional development and bullying rubrics and procedures created by the staff of the Chelmsford Public Schools. It is designed to satisfy the requirements of by M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 . It has been revised and submitted to the state as the amendments to the law have required. To review the bullying prevention and intervention plan, please use the following link : [CPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan](#).

The Chelmsford Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive, and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyberbullying as articulated in the Bullying Intervention Plan. It is a violation of this policy for any student or 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 to engage in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation or for any employee of the Chelmsford Public Schools to condone or fail to report acts of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation that they witness or become aware of (i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; (ii) at school sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs whether on or off school grounds; (iii) at school bus stops; (iv) on school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; (v) through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or (vi) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

It is a violation of the Plan for any employee of the Chelmsford Public Schools to condone or fail to report acts of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation that they witness or become aware rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent/guardian to recognize acts of bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation against students and take every action necessary to ensure that the applicable policies and procedures of the Chelmsford Public Schools are implemented. Any student who believes that he or she has been subjected to bullying and/or cyberbullying has the right to: (i) file a complaint to his/her teacher or principal and to (ii) receive prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. Further, all reasonable efforts shall be made to maintain the confidentiality and protect the privacy of all parties, but proper enforcement of this policy may require disclosure of any and all information received. A report of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously, provided that no disciplinary action shall be taken against the student solely on the basis of such report.

Students, parents, and Chelmsford Public Schools' employees (including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurses, paraprofessionals, cafeteria workers, custodians, van drivers, van monitors), who witness or become aware of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation should immediately report it to the principal. The Chelmsford Public Schools will not tolerate retaliation against a person who reports bullying or cyberbullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or cyberbullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying or cyberbullying.

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

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whomever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged aggressor, target, and witnesses that retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

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

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

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

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

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

If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee shall inform the parents or guardians of the victim about the department's problem resolution system and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the problem resolution system.

The Chelmsford Public Schools will provide students with age-appropriate instruction on bullying/cyberbullying prevention. Each principal shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the Plan at his/her program.

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the rubrics developed for each level. The rubrics are developed as a guide for principals or designees and do not prohibit them from using their judgment when assigning consequences. Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding student discipline. If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of the Chelmsford Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or parenting status, race, religion, color, disability, immigration status, age or national origin in its educational programs, activities or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Educational Amendments and Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971. The District also does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of homelessness in a manner consistent with the McKinney-Vento Act. The District shall evaluate, on an annual basis, all aspects of the K through 12 school programs to ensure that all students regardless of sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or parenting status, race, religion, color, disability, immigration status, age, homelessness or national origin are given an opportunity to participate in all programs offered by the school including athletics and other extra-curricular activities.

Complaints which allege misconduct meeting the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, will be addressed pursuant to the District's Title IX policy. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title IX may be directed to the Coordinator of Title IX and Chapter 622, 230 North Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824. Telephone (978) 251-5100, extension 6904.

Any student or school employee who feels that he/she has been discriminated against for any of the reasons cited above should refer to the District's grievance procedures found on the [District's website](#).

Students found to have engaged in discrimination, harassment, or retaliation may be subject to discipline, up to and including removal from the educational setting.

Students, parents, or employees who choose not to use the District's internal non-discrimination procedures or who are not satisfied with the result of the District's internal procedures may file a complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation with an appropriate state or federal agency, including the following listed agencies.

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD),
One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108
Telephone: (617) 994-6000
mcad@mass.gov

And/or

Office for Civil Rights
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109
Telephone: (617) 289-0150

OCR.Boston@ed.gov

CURRICULUM INCLUSIVITY

Consistent with Massachusetts regulations, 603 CMR 26.05(1), the Chelmsford Public Schools, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Section 504 is an Act which prohibits discrimination against a person with a handicap in any program receiving federal financial assistance. The act defines a person with a handicap as anyone who:

1. has a mental or physical impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities (major life activities include activities such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working)
2. has a record of such an impairment; or
3. is regarded as having such an impairment.

The Chelmsford Public Schools recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted in any of the programs and practices of the school system.

The school district has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and if the child is determined to be eligible under Section 504, to afford access to appropriate educational services.

If the parents or guardian disagrees with the determination of the professional staff of the school district, he/she has the right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer.

Parents and/or guardians of a student should contact the Coordinator of Section 504: Director of Student Services at 230 North Road, Chelmsford, MA 01824.

Transgender and Non-Conforming Students

The Chelmsford Public Schools strives to provide a safe, respectful, and supportive learning environment in which all students can thrive and succeed in its schools. The Chelmsford Public Schools prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, disability, national origin, age, or sexual orientation and ensures that all students have equal rights of access and equal enjoyment of the opportunities, advantages, privileges, and courses of study.

Understanding the terminology associated with gender identity is important to providing a safe and supportive school environment for students whose rights are protected under the law. The following terms are defined to assist in understanding the guidance presented.

Although these are the most commonly used terms, students may prefer other terms to describe their gender identity, appearance, or behavior.

Gender expression: the manner in which a person represents or expresses gender to others, often through behavior, clothing, hairstyles, activities, voice, or mannerisms.

Gender identity: a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth.

Gender nonconforming: a term used to describe people whose gender expression differs from stereotypic expectations. The terms "gender variant" or "gender atypical" are also used.

Transgender: an umbrella term used to describe a person whose gender identity or gender expression is different from that traditionally associated with the assigned sex at birth.

Transition: the process in which a person goes from living and identifying as one gender to living and identifying as another. Transition is a process that is different for everyone, and it may or may not involve social, legal, or physical changes.

STUDENT TRANSITIONS

A student chooses when to transition. Regardless of the timing of a student's transition, the school shall act in accordance with the following age-appropriate guidelines.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: Generally, it will be the parent or guardian that informs the school of the impending transition or if the student has already transitioned. However, it is not unusual for a student's desire to transition to first surface at school. If school staff believe that a gender identity or expression issue is presenting itself and creating difficulty for the child at school, approaching parents about the issue is appropriate at the elementary level, after discussion with the student to ensure the prospect of such a conversation with the parent does not provoke fear in the child. Together, the family and school can then identify appropriate steps to support the student.

SECONDARY SCHOOL: Generally, notification of a student's parent about his or her gender identity, expression or transition is unnecessary, as they are already aware and may be supportive. In some cases, however, notifying parents carries risks for the student. Prior to notification of any parent or guardian regarding the transition process, school staff should work closely with the student to assess the degree to which, if any, the guardian will be involved in the process and must consider the physical and mental health, well-being, and safety of the transitioning student.

When a student is transitioning, notifies the school of a plan to transition, or has already transitioned, the school shall offer to meet with the student (and parents if they are involved in the process) to ascertain desires and concerns, and to discuss a plan that will create the conditions supporting a safe and accepting environment at the school for the student. This plan may include items such as: the student's chosen name and pronoun; a plan to initiate the use of the student's chosen name and pronoun within school; communication between the school and the parent/guardian; name and gender markers in the student record; and the student's right to use restrooms, locker rooms or changing facilities, in accordance with the policy outlined below.

PRIVACY

All persons, including students, have a right to privacy, and this includes the right to keep one's transgender status private at school. Protecting the privacy of transgender and gender nonconforming students must be a top priority for staff. Information about a student's transgender status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth may constitute confidential medical information. Disclosing this information to other students, the student's parents, or other third parties may violate privacy laws, such as the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Transgender and gender nonconforming students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information. The fact that a student chooses to disclose his or her transgender status to staff or other students does not authorize school staff to disclose other medical information about the student. Also, to prevent a breach of confidentiality, *unless the student,*

parent, or guardian has specified otherwise, school staff should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth when communicating with the parent or guardian of a transgender student.

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Changes of a student's name and/or gender marker within the student records should be made upon request of the student and/or parent/guardian, depending on the student's age/grade, as set out in the student records regulations. 603 CMR 23.01; 603 CMR 23.08. For students under 14 years old and who have not entered ninth grade, only the parent/guardian may request the change. For students who are 14-17 years old, or who have entered ninth grade, the parent and the student may either alone or together make decisions about the student record. Any student 18 years or older who is not under guardianship may make the request. Massachusetts recognizes common law name changes, which means that anyone can use their chosen name for an honest purpose. Therefore, when requested to do so, the school will record the student's chosen name and gender marker on all records, whether or not the student, parent or guardian provides the school with a court order formalizing a name change. If a change is made to the student's name and/or gender marker in the student record, the school should keep the records that contain the student's birth name and/or gender in a separate, confidential file.

NAMES AND PRONOUNS

Every student has the right to be addressed by a name and pronoun that corresponds to the student's gender identity. A court-ordered name or gender change is not required, and the student need not change his or her official records to be afforded the respect of having school staff use the pronoun requested. It is strongly recommended that a trained staff member privately ask transgender or gender nonconforming students at the beginning of the school year how they want to be addressed in class, in the school's correspondence to the home, and at conferences with the student's parent/guardian. In accordance with the student's desires, the staff member should disseminate the student's chosen name and pronoun to other staff who may be in regular contact with the student and/or the student's home, to ensure the student is appropriately addressed and referred to. As noted above, this conversation about the student's chosen name and pronoun should be part of the initial planning meeting with the student.

FACILITIES

With respect to all restrooms, locker rooms or changing facilities, students shall have access to facilities that correspond to their gender identity. Schools shall allow students to access the restroom, locker room or changing facilities consistent with their gender identity.

In any gender segregated facility, any student who is uncomfortable using a shared facility, regardless of the reason, shall, upon the student's request, be provided with a safe and non-stigmatizing alternative. This may include, for example, addition of a privacy partition or curtain, provision to use a nearby private restroom or office, or a separate changing schedule.

Under no circumstances may students be required to use sex segregated facilities that are inconsistent with their gender identity.

Where available, schools are encouraged to designate facilities designed for use by one person at a time as accessible to all students regardless of gender, and to incorporate such single user facilities into new construction or renovation. However, under no circumstances may a student be required to use such facilities because they are transgender or gender nonconforming.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES AND INTRAMURAL AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS

All students shall be permitted to participate in physical education classes and intramural sports in a manner consistent with their gender identity. Furthermore, unless precluded by state interscholastic association policies, all students shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic athletics in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

OTHER GENDER-BASED ACTIVITIES, RULES, POLICIES AND PRACTICES

As a general matter, schools should evaluate all gender-based activities, rules, policies, and practices — including but not limited to classroom activities, extra-curricular activities, school ceremonies, school photos, and documentation requests, such as field trip permission forms - and maintain only those that have a clear and sound pedagogical purpose and do not violate anti-discrimination law. Students shall be permitted to participate in any such activities or conform to any such rule, policy, or practice consistent with their gender identity.

DRESS CODE

Schools may enforce dress codes pursuant to district policy. Students shall have the right to dress in accordance with their gender identity, within the constraints of the dress codes adopted by the school. School staff shall not enforce a school's dress code more strictly against transgender and gender nonconforming students than other students.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The administration shall conduct training for all staff members on their responsibilities under applicable laws and this policy, including teachers, administrators, counselors, social workers, and health staff. Information regarding this policy shall be incorporated into training for new school employees. The administration shall implement ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify and respond to bullying, harassment and discrimination that may result from gender identity matters.

The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to:

- (i) terms, concepts, and current developmental understandings of gender identity, gender expression, and gender diversity in children and adolescents.

(ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for communication with students and parents about issues related to gender identity and gender expression that protect student privacy and safety.

References

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 4 Section 7 – Definitions of Statutory Terms
Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, § 5 – School Attendance: Discrimination
603 CMR 26.00 – Access to Equal Education Regulations
603 CMR 23.00 – Massachusetts Student Records Regulations
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *Guidance for Massachusetts Public Schools: Creating a Safe and Supporting School Environment – Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity*
P5303 – [Anti-discrimination policy]

Student Study Team

Student Study Team

A Student Study Team is available to assist students with regular education interventions.

Parents, Guardians, and/or staff may initiate a referral of any student to the Student Study Team at any time. The Student Study Team is comprised of both regular education and special education staff. Once a referral has been made to the Student Study Team, staff will collaborate to ensure that any student experiencing difficulty in school will receive any needed regular education services or classroom accommodations that the Student Study Team deems necessary to address the student's needs.

Referrals to the Student Study Team are considered as a regular education initiative. Such referrals do not preclude any parent, guardian, or other person in a care-giving or professional position concerned with the student's development, from initiating a referral for special education evaluation and services. Further information regarding the special education referral and evaluation process may be obtained from the Office of the Director of Student Services.

Student Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Massachusetts Student Records regulations (603 CMR 23.00) provide parents and eligible students certain rights with respect to a student's education records. A general overview of those rights is provided below. Parents and eligible students may obtain a complete copy of their rights by contacting the Principal.

Massachusetts regulations related to student records (603 CMR 23.00) ensure a student's (and their parents') rights of inspection, amendment, destruction, and confidentiality related to their records.

Under 603 CMR 23.01, the rights related to student records belong to the student's parent if the student is under the age of fourteen (14) and has not started the ninth grade. Upon reaching the age of fourteen (14) or upon starting the ninth grade (whichever occurs first), both the student and their parent retain the rights related to student records. Either the student or the parent can exercise these rights independently. Once the student reaches the age of eighteen (18), the student exclusively retains the rights related to student records and only they can exercise such rights if they expressly limit the rights of their parent, exclusive of the right to inspect. If a student wishes to limit the rights which are held by their parent, they must make the request to the Principal or Superintendent in writing. A parent always maintains the right to inspect the student record.

The student record consists of the transcript and the temporary record, including all information on recording and computer tapes, microfilm, microfiche, or any other materials regardless of physical form or characteristics concerning a student that is organized on the basis of the student's name or in a way that such student may be individually identified, and that is kept by the public schools of the Commonwealth as defined under state law. The regulations divide the record into two sections, the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes the name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade levels completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

1. Inspection of Records

A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen years old (eligible student), has the right to inspect the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or eligible student no later than ten days after the request unless the parent or eligible student consents to a further delay. The parents or eligible student has the right to receive copies of any part of the student record. The district may charge a reasonable fee for such copying, not to exceed the costs of reproduction, unless the charging of such fee would effectively prevent the parents or eligible student from exercising their federal rights to inspect and review the records. Finally, the parents or eligible student may request to have the record interpreted by a professionally qualified school employee or a 3rd party of their choosing, who may thereafter inspect and interpret the records following their production of specific written consent from the parent or eligible student.

2. Confidentiality of Records

Subject to specific exceptions enumerated in the regulations, no individual or organization are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, written consent of the parent or eligible student. In addition, subject to specific exemptions enumerated in the regulations, any person inspecting or releasing information contained in the student record must note in a log kept as part of the temporary record, which portion of the record was inspected or released, and for what purpose. Authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to the information without consent. Authorized school personnel include school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity. It includes contractors, electronic/online vendors, consultants, volunteers, or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions.

Administrative office staff and clerical personnel who are either employed by the school committee or are employed under a school committee service contract, may access student record information when their duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record.

3. Amendment of Records

The parent and the eligible student have the right to add relevant comments, data, information, or other relevant written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent and eligible student have the right to request that certain information in the record be amended or deleted. Parents or eligible students should refer to the specific requirements contained within the Student Record Regulations with regard to the appropriate procedure to follow with regard to any such requested amendment or deletion of a student record.

4. Destruction of Records

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

5. Transfer of Records

In accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g), it is the practice of the Chelmsford Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to enroll, or already has enrolled in another public school district, if the disclosure

is for the purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer. The parent or eligible student has the right to receive a copy of the school record that is forwarded to the new school.

6. Non-Custodial Parents - Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the student) of any public-school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first-class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent. M.G.L. c. 71, §34H; 603 CMR 23.07.
7. Third Party Access - Authorized school personnel, to include: (a) school administrators, teachers, counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the evaluation team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary
8. Complaints - A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Student Privacy Policy Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-8520, 1-855-249-3072 or with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 135 Santilli Highway, Everett, MA 02149; 781-338-3000. If you have any questions regarding this notice

or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment Act

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) requires that the school notifies you to obtain consent or allow you to opt out of the following school activities: a student survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of the following seven areas (“protected information surveys”):

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 other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

This requirement also applies to the collection, disclosure, or use of student information for marketing purpose (“marketing surveys”), and certain physical exams and screenings.

The Chelmsford Public Schools will provide parents, within a reasonable period of time prior to the administration of the surveys and activities, a notification of the surveys and activities and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out, as well as an opportunity to review the surveys. (Please note that this notice and consent/opt-out transfers from parents to any student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law).

Parents Right to Know - Teacher Qualifications

Several schools in Chelmsford receive Title I funds from the federal government. These funds support funding for the early intervention reading program providing supportive reading services to grade 1 students. Federal law has established the right of parents at schools served by Title I funding to know the professional qualifications of the classroom teachers who instruct your child. Please be assured however, that the Chelmsford Public Schools have been very successful in obtaining highly qualified certified teachers for teaching positions.

In compliance with federal regulations, we would like you to be aware that federal law allows you to ask for certain information about your child’s classroom teachers and requires us to give

you this information in a timely manner if you ask for it. Specifically, you have the right to ask for the following information about each of your child's classroom teachers:

1. whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction;
2. whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived;
3. whether the teacher is teaching in the field of discipline of the certification of the teacher; and
4. whether the student is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.
5. If you would like to receive any of this information, please call the Director of Human Resources at 978-251-5100, ext. 6904.

CPS Student Empowered Digital Use Guidelines

Technology/Internet Acceptable Use

As technology becomes increasingly integral to instruction and educational services at Chelmsford Public Schools, we recognize that students will be accessing technology in various ways during their learning experiences. To ensure that technology is used in ways that enhance the learning process, the Chelmsford Public Schools has developed and continuously updates policies and protocols to guide its use. All School Committee policies can be found [HERE](#).

Technology specific guidelines are contained both on the School Committee policy website, and within this document. The CPS Student Empowered Digital Use Guideline is the overarching technology acceptable use policy for students. If at any time any user is unclear about technology use guidelines, please call or email the Director of Information Communication and Technology Services with your question.

Chelmsford Public Schools recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction intended to develop digital citizenship skills and emphasize the appropriate and ethical use of technology. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways, aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge

and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

All users shall acknowledge they understand that using digital devices on the school district network is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines, they will retain that privilege. Misuse of district devices or network can and will end with disciplinary measures, including but not limited to prohibition from using the school district network. Please see a [list of possible disciplinary measures](#) that may be taken for violations of this or any classroom technology policy.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities;
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private;
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media;
- Users shall give acknowledgment to others (people, sources, tools including AI (Artificial Intelligence), for their ideas and work;
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

These procedures shall be frequently reviewed by the district and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, appropriate communication strategies, and ethical use of technology.

Please reference the [CPS Student Empowered Digital Use Guidelines](#) document for further information regarding each topic:

- Safe and Responsible Use
- Access to Digital Resources
- Removal of BYOD
- Academic Integrity
- Video Surveillance
- Social Media & Communication

- Chromebook/Device Distribution
- Chromebook/Device Care and Maintenance
- Chromebook/Device Usage Expectations at School
- Chromebook/Device Usage Expectations Outside of School
- Audio/Video Recording and Photos
- Saving to the Chromebook/Device
- Network Connectivity
- Student Expectations
- Parent/Guardian Responsibilities
- Loss, Theft, or Damage

Empowered Digital Use & Chromebook/Device Agreement Form

Search and Seizure

The Chelmsford Public Schools has the right to inspect school property at its discretion, including a student's locker or desk, a school-issued laptop, school-issued email, and/or the student's use of the school's network.

Lockers/Desks

If a locker or desk is issued to students by the Chelmsford Public Schools, such lockers and desks are school property, and the school reserves the right to search them at any time. Students have no expectation of privacy in the contents of their lockers or desks.

1. Lockers and desks are the property of Chelmsford Public Schools. The Chelmsford Public Schools maintains control of all locks affixed to lockers. No other locks are permitted, and such locks will be removed by school officials.
2. Students shall not have any expectation of privacy in school lockers and desks and should be aware that school lockers and desks may be searched at any time by school officials.
3. It is prohibited to store any items/substances in violation of any school rule or Federal, State, or Local law in a locker or desk.

4. Items/substances prohibited from being in school, including in lockers and desks, include but are not limited to: guns/knives/weapons (real or fake), drugs and/or alcohol, fireworks/explosives, fire/smoke/odor producing products, and any other item or material which may disrupt the educational environment or present threat of harm to students and/or school staff.

Electronic Devices

School issued laptops, as well as any other device issued by the Chelmsford Public Schools, and the Chelmsford Public Schools' network (including email), are the property of Chelmsford Public Schools, and students do not have an expectation of privacy as to their use of the school-issued devices laptop and/or network, including but not limited to, any information accessed, stored, or transmitted on, with, or during use of the school issued device or network.

Search of Students and Their Belongings

1. A Search of a student's person, personal possessions (including personal electronic devices), automobile on school property, will only be performed by school administrators, where there exists reasonable suspicion that the search will produce evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or the rules of the school. The search will be conducted in a manner reasonably related to its objectives and will not be excessively intrusive in light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. Whenever a personal search is deemed necessary, the student shall be advised of the reason for the search prior to its implementation. A search of a student may extend to but is not limited to: articles of clothing such as pockets; removal and search of outer garments such as hats/caps/head-gear, jackets, coats, sweaters, sweatshirts, or shoes; and to items such as pocketbooks, lunch bags, book bags, athletic bags, backpacks, and personal electronic devices. The consent of the student or a parent/guardian shall not be required prior to conducting a search of a student or the student's belongings. Students found in possession of prohibited items or materials may be subject to disciplinary action and/or criminal prosecution.
2. If the student fails to comply with a search, the student may be detained until the student's parents, and, if necessary, the police, can arrive at the school. Students who impede or refuse to comply with a search may be subject to disciplinary consequences, including a short or long-term suspension from school.
3. In the event of a search of a student or their belongings, parents will be notified of the search and the results thereof as soon as practicable. Except under exigent circumstances, the school administrator will conduct searches in the presence of another adult. Any object or substance found which may be evidence of a crime will be given to the police. Objects or substances which may be evidence of a school rule violation, but not a crime, will be held by Chelmsford Public Schools administrators, and, if appropriate, may be returned to the student's parents.

Because the Chelmsford Public Schools has the right to inspect school property at its discretion, the Principal may permit law enforcement to search school property, including with the use of drug detection dogs. Individuals shall not be subjected to a search by a drug detection dog.

Locker Rooms

Students are not to enter a locker room that is not supervised by an adult, unless they have permission from a coach or staff member. While in the locker rooms, students are expected to follow all of the school rules and expectations, including the prohibitions against bullying and hazing.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is Chelmsford Public Schools' commitment to responsibility, honesty, trust, and respect. Academic Integrity essentially means being responsible for one's own work, and it is held in high regard in our schools. Students can take pride in work they have produced from their own efforts; they have worked honestly and fairly.

Academic Integrity also means upholding values and beliefs that are considered important, not just by our schools, but also by society, including sports teams, employers, friends and family. Violating our policy on Academic Integrity is cheating and a violation of school rules. For more specific Middle School Information on the Academic Honor Code, please visit the McCarthy or Parker School Website. For more specific High School Information on the Academic Honor Code, please see the High School Handbook Addendum.

What are some examples of cheating?

- Copying another student's answers on a test or quiz, with or without their permission
- Sharing questions from an exam with another student who has not yet taken the exam
- Copying another student's answers on a homework assignment
- Copying some other student's work and claiming it as your own
- Allowing another student to copy your work or giving your work to them to turn in as their own
- Forging (signing) your parent's/guardian's name on a note or permission slip
- Plagiarism (copying another's words/work without giving credit), including copying material or ideas from books, internet sources, AI, etc.
- Changing grades on midterm or report card
- Use of electronic devices for unauthorized sharing of information.

- The unauthorized use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which may include but not be limited to using AI to gain an unfair advantage, such as using AI-enabled math-solving websites to solve math problems or employing generative AI to create art or graphics for assignments as well as writing essays or papers.

Why is cheating wrong?

- It breaks a bond of trust — we become suspicious of others.
- It is against the rules and there are serious penalties. People have been thrown out of college, lost jobs, and ruined their careers over cheating.

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Alexander Lindey has defined plagiarism as: “...the wrongful act of taking the product of another person’s mind and presenting it as one’s own...To use another person’s ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source is to plagiarize. Plagiarism, then, constitutes intellectual theft.” (Lindey, Alexander. Plagiarism and Originality)

The following are examples of plagiarism:

1. Buying or downloading a paper from a research service or a term-paper mill and offering it as your own.
2. Turning in another student’s work, with or without that student’s knowledge, as your own.
3. Copying any portion of another’s work without proper acknowledgement.
4. Paraphrasing ideas and language from a source without proper documentation.
5. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate essays or papers and turning them in as one's own work without proper attribution is considered plagiarism.

Consequences for Cheating or Plagiarism

1. The student will receive a zero for the entire assignment/assessment. A student will not be allowed the opportunity for make-up of any kind.
2. A conference may be held with the student, teacher, and the student’s Dean.
3. Parents/guardians will be notified of the offense.
4. Students will be required to attend an after-school session on cheating and plagiarism.

Exception: The definition of plagiarism given above includes “Paraphrasing ideas and language from a source without proper documentation” (definition number 4). In violations

that pertain to this type of plagiarism, the teacher, in consultation with the student's administrator, will determine the consequences. The purpose of the consequence in this case will be to teach the proper way to attribute sources in academic work. The teacher will use his or her professional expertise to determine whether or not the offense relates to definition number 4.

Directory Information

(603 CMR 23.07 (4) (a))

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

Incident Management

The Chelmsford Public School District has a comprehensive Incident Management Plan. It is expected that all students participate in the prescribed emergency drills in their schools as instructed by the school administration and staff. It is imperative that students understand the importance of engaging in these procedures in a serious manner so as to be fully prepared should an emergency arise during the school day.

There are four types of drills that are required for all staff and students in all school buildings during the school year:

Evacuation Drill – is used when it is important to move away from the building to a secure location away from the building. This drill will take place at least four (4) times per year under the direction of the Chelmsford Fire Department.

Safety Drill – is used when a bomb-type threat is made to the safety of a building. These drills will take place at least two times per year.

Hold in Place – is used to protect staff and students from incidents and/or distractions that are taking place in the hallway. A hold in place implies that instruction should continue within the classroom, and that students should remain in the classroom until further notice. These drills will take place at least two times per year.

ALICE/Option-Based Response – ALICE/Options Based Response

The ALICE/Options Based Emergency Response(s) require staff and students to make survival decisions based on real-time information. Each one of these emergency situations is unique and likely requires a different response. ALICE is an acronym for the 5 steps you can utilize in order to increase your chances of surviving a surprise attack by an Active Shooter. It is important to remember that the ALICE response does not follow a set of sequential actions you must follow when confronted with an Active Shooter. Decisions are made using the information available at any given time. Your survival is paramount, and it is critical that staff and students are prepared to react if they are ever faced with one of these situations.

1) ALERT – Use any available means of communication to tell others what is happening.

2) LOCKDOWN/ENHANCED LOCKDOWN– This is a semi-secure starting point from which to make survival decisions. If you decide to not evacuate, secure the room.

3) INFORM – Using any means necessary to pass on real time information.

4) COUNTER – This is the use of simple, proactive techniques should you be confronted by the Active Shooter.

5) EVACUATE – Remove yourself from the danger zone as quickly as possible.

The District has a crisis response team to oversee the safety and security of students and staff and the implementation of the District's emergency policies during crisis incidents. The District's crisis response team is led by the building principal.

Delayed Openings and School Cancellations

In cases of inclement weather or other emergency necessitating the closing or delaying of school, the Superintendent will make the decision. Central administration personnel will then notify the radio and television stations between 5:00 AM and 5:45 AM. A Blackboard Connect-Ed message will be sent to all families and staff. Delayed Openings will be posted on the district and school websites.

School openings will be delayed by 2 hours. All activities in the schools will continue as usual including the same dismissal time. Morning Kindergarten and CHIPS Preschool classes will be cancelled when the start of school is delayed. Please see the school website for a complete listing of school start and dismissal times.

Emergency Closings

On a rare occasion school may be closed due to a weather-related event. In this case, all children must be sent home, with the exception of those children scheduled to attend the Community Education Extended Day Child Care program. Elementary children enrolled in the Extended Day Child Care program will remain at their school and parents will pick them up as soon as possible, but no later than 6 p.m. McCarthy Childcare students will be bussed as usual to Parker, and parents should pick up Parker and McCarthy students at Parker as soon as possible, but no later than 6 p.m.

1. The Superintendent will notify the school that busses would be arriving to take children home at a specified time.
2. A Connect-Ed call would be used to notify parents of dismissal procedures.

It is important that parents keep their home, business, and emergency numbers current with the school as these are the numbers which will be called through Connect-Ed.

Parents who plan to come to the school to pick up their child are strongly encouraged NOT to call the school and tie up the phone lines. Just come to the office and your child will be dismissed. It is imperative that each child knows where to go in the event that a parent cannot be notified. For parent peace of mind, this would also help in those rare cases when an emergency arises, and a parent cannot get home to meet their child.

Hazing

Hazing is prohibited and is a crime. Any student who violates the anti-hazing laws (M. G. L. c. 269, §§ 17-19) may be subject to discipline, including possible suspension. The following is a copy of M. G. L. c. 269, §§ 17-19.

Section 17. Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

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

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand (\$1,000) dollars.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or

similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

McKinney-Vento

According to the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, schools are required to immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records, or proof of residency. There are similar protections under Title I of Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) for foster care students. For additional information regarding the education of homeless students, please contact the homeless liaison coordinator. For information regarding foster care students, please contact the DCF liaison of the Chelmsford Public Schools.

The Chelmsford Public Schools prohibits discrimination or harassment based on homelessness. Any complaints of discrimination or harassment based on homelessness may be reported to the homeless liaison coordinator and will be investigated using the same process and steps as the Chelmsford Public Schools' non-discrimination procedures.

Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements If Used

The Chelmsford Public Schools recognizes that on occasion physical restraint is required to protect the safety of school community members from assault, or serious, imminent physical harm. Physical restraint may be used only as an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to self or others and the student is not responsive to directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances. Physical restraint shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include: brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

Physical restraint shall not be used: (a) as a means of discipline or punishment; (b) when the student cannot be safely restrained because it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting; (c) as a response to property destruction, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a public education program rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm; or (d) as a standard response for any individual student. No written individual behavior plan or individualized education program

(IEP) may include use of physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior. Physical restraint is an emergency procedure of last resort. Physical restraint in a public education program shall be limited to the use of force necessary to protect a student or another from physical injury or harm.

Nothing in Chelmsford Public Schools policy, or the applicable regulations, prohibits: (a) the right of any individual to report to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (b) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or other person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (c) the exercise of an individual's responsibilities as a mandated reporter pursuant to MGL c. 119, § 51A.

The Chelmsford Public Schools complies with the requirements of Massachusetts regulations governing the use and reporting of physical restraint in school, 603 CMR 46.00.

Child Abuse/51A Mandatory Reporting

All school staff are mandated reporters. By law, information about child abuse and neglect must be communicated by school employees to the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families (DCF) according to DCF protocol, and/or to the Principal (or their designee), who in turn are responsible for notifying DCF according to DCF protocol. The duty to report is triggered when a mandated reporter, in their professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child is: (i) suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon them which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare including, but not limited to, sexual abuse; (ii) suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from neglect including, but not limited to, malnutrition; (iii) a sexually exploited child; or (iv) a human trafficking victim, as defined by section 20M of chapter 233; provided, however, that an indication of prenatal substance exposure shall not solely meet the requirements of this section.

In schools, mandated reporters must fulfill their mandatory reporting duty by:

1. immediately making an oral report directly to DCF and then following up with a written report (which can be filed online, by fax, or mail) to the DCF local area office within 48 hours; **or**
2. immediately notifying the Principal (or their designee), in which case that individual becomes responsible for immediately making the oral report to DCF and submitting the written report (which can be filed online, by fax, or mail) to the DCF local area office within 48 hours.

A mandated reporter who works for a school *may* also choose to immediately notify both DCF and the person in charge of the school. In addition, mandated reporters may contact the police or the Office of the Child Advocate.

If a mandated reporter believes a child is in imminent danger, they should call 911 immediately. If school officials believe that criminal laws may have been violated, whether or not the violation is included under § 51A, they should report such matter to the police.

Any person, even if not a mandated reporter, may file a report with DCF if that person has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from, or has died as a result of, abuse or neglect.

Any suspected abuse or neglect of a person with a disability aged 18 and over must be reported to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), 300 Granite Street, Braintree, MA, 02184. Tel: (617) 727-6455.

The School Committee is responsible for informing teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of the reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under M. G. L. c. 119, § 51A. See M. G. L. c. 71, § 37L. The District is knowledgeable about this protocol and will ensure that staff are informed of their reporting obligations under M. G. L. c. 119, § 51A. All staff are made aware of the signs of child abuse and neglect, and the Principal, on a yearly basis, informs all professional staff of their obligations to report cases of child abuse and neglect.