



Chelmsford Public Schools Student – Family Handbook

2026 - 2027

Table of Contents

Communication.....	3
Calendar	3
Attendance.....	3
Registration Procedures.....	6
Health Services.....	7
Bus Transportation	12
Code of Conduct/Consequences.....	17
Due Process	22
PRIDE and Bullying Prevention and Intervention	39
Non-Discrimination.....	36
Transgender and Non-Conforming Students.....	49
STUDENT TRANSITIONS	50
PRIVACY	50
OFFICIAL RECORDS	50
NAMES AND PRONOUNS	50
FACILITIES.....	51
PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES AND INTRAMURAL AND INTERSCHOLASTIC ATHLETICS.....	51
OTHER GENDER-BASED ACTIVITIES, RULES, POLICIES AND PRACTICES	51
DRESS CODE.....	51
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.....	52
References.....	52
Student Study Team.....	52
Student Records	52
Parents' Right to Know - Teacher Qualifications.....	57
CPS Student Empowered Digital Use Guidelines.....	58
Search and Seizure.....	61
Academic Integrity.....	63
Incident Management.....	65
Delayed Openings and School Cancellations	66
Emergency Closings.....	66
Hazing	67
McKinney-Vento	68
Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements If Used	72
Child Abuse/51A Mandatory Reporting	76

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.

Parent Square 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 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 three (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 (with documentation), official appointments (such as a driver's test, etc. with documentation), 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.

Excessive Absenteeism/Truancy

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.

Other interventions may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Parent or guardian conference
- b. Restriction or prohibition on the participation of extracurricular or intramural activities, field trips, or other activities
- c. Filing of a "Failure to Send your Child to School" with the court
- d. Filing of a "Child Requiring Assistance (CRA)" with the court
- e. Filing of a "51A" with the Department of Children and Families (DCF)
- f. 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

The District's attendance policies apply to students with disabilities. Discussions about modifications to the District's attendance policies and procedures for students with disabilities are appropriately addressed through the IEP/504 Team process.

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. Developmental screening is required for all children who have not already been screened in a public preschool.

Appointments will be made at the time of registration. The purpose of this screening is to identify child who may need additional support in their developmental learning.

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

1. Completed Registration Packet
2. Proof of residence – to include:
 - a. A utility Bill
 - b. Mortgage Statement or a Signed Lease Agreement
3. Birth certificate
4. Completed immunization record
5. Proof of a current physical that was completed within one year prior to entrance to the Chelmsford Public Schools or within thirty (30) days after entering the Chelmsford Public Schools.

Proof of Parent Identity (examples may include a MA Driver's License, MA ID Card, Out-of-State License, etc.). Students transferring out of the Chelmsford Public Schools should notify the office and the classroom teacher as soon as possible so that forms can be promptly processed. Chelmsford Public Schools may forward student records to a school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll without the signed consent of a caregiver or eligible student, in accordance with 603 CMR 23.07(4)(g).

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 has various responsibilities, including attending to ill or injured students and notifying 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. Parents are encouraged to notify the school nurse at least 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., fractures, 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.

Medication

The Chelmsford Public Schools will comply with the requirements of Massachusetts regulations governing the administration of medication in school. 603 CMR 210. For more information, please see the District's Policies and Procedures regarding the Administration of Medication by visiting our [Health Services Page](#) on our school website.

Students with Life-Threatening Allergies, Asthma, and Seizures

The school district is responsible for the implementation of an allergen policy, and for ensuring that it remains consistent with M.G.L. c. 71 § 54B, 105 CMR 210.000, Section 504, the ADA, and USDA regulations. Use and storage of EpiPens will be consistent with 105 CMR 210. 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.

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

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, or written documentation that the student is immune as defined by the Department of Public Health.

State-mandated screenings are conducted in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, §57 and 105 CMR 200.00. Parents may request, in writing, that their child not participate in the screening program.

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. 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.

Upon entering kindergarten or within 30 days after school entry, the parent or guardian of each child shall submit certification that the student has passed a vision screening within the previous twelve (12) months. For students who fail the screening and for students diagnosed with neurodevelopmental delay, evidence of a comprehensive eye examination meeting the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 57 shall be provided to the school. Vision 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 hearing of each student will be screened in the year of school entry, annually through grade 3, once in grades 6 through 8, and once in grades 9 through 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 personnel approved by the Department of Public Health, on all students in 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 the student meets the standards for medical or religious exemption set forth in M.G.L. c. 76 §15. 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.

School Choice

The Chelmsford Public Schools participate in school choice. If space is available, students residing outside of the Town of Chelmsford may apply to attend the Chelmsford Public Schools. Please visit our [School Choice Page](#) on our website for enrollment information.

Physical Education

All students must participate in physical education classes in each year of school. In cases of illness for a day or two, a written note from parents will excuse participation. This note should be brought to the school nurse. A long-term request to excuse participation requires a written medical excuse from a physician and permission of the school administration.

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, unless part of a student's IEP.

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, and those receiving special education services with an IEP requiring special transportation, 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. All school rules are in effect while students are being transported to and from school-on-school buses, including at bus stops. 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.

- f. Students and parents may be 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 photos or videos 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 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.

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 cause any disruption or disorder. The District will not adopt or implement any policy that prohibits or impairs any hairstyle historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, protective hairstyles (braids, hair coverings, Bantu knots, locks, twists, and other formations), hair length, hair type, and hair textures. Any student wearing clothing deemed by an administrator to be a violation of the reasonable standards of health, safety, and cleanliness, or a disruption or disorder within the school environment, may be asked to change their clothing or be sent home.

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 shoe requirements may be enforced(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 require specific clothing for a field trip.

3. The following items are likely to cause disruption or disorder or violate reasonable standards of health, safety, and cleanliness. :

- 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 a 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.

Dress Code Enforcement

The list above is not meant to be all-inclusive. School administration and staff have discretion to determine what clothing may violate the reasonable standards of health or safety, and when clothing may cause any disruption or disorder within the school or to the educational process. As such, the administration reserves the right to determine what is and what is not appropriate in all cases and will determine consequences as described in the behavior section of this handbook. The administration may waive any restriction(s) in cases involving extenuating circumstances.

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 may result in suspension or expulsion in accordance with the discipline section outlined below, 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.*

Drugs and Alcohol

The use, possession or distribution of any alcohol, drugs (including marijuana, non-prescribed medication, and prescribed medication not in compliance with this handbook), 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 prohibited. 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. Violations may include but are not limited to discipline including possible long-term suspension or expulsion, as permitted under applicable state laws and regulations, and/or being barred from participating in a school-sponsored activity.

Where deemed appropriate by the school administration, a report may also be made to law enforcement authorities. Under the direction of a school administrator, an alcohol/drug screen may be performed by a school nurse.

Any individual (student, staff, or visitor) who smokes in a place where smoking is prohibited may be subject to a civil fine of \$100 for each violation.

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, may result in a discipline under MGL c. 71 § 37H ³/₄ and possible notification to the proper authorities.

Behaviors Not Allowed

Participation in any of the following may result in student discipline. This list is not exhaustive 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. 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 ¾).
6. 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)
7. 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.
8. 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
9. Harassment, hazing, or bullying.
10. Sexual harassment.
11. Possession or distribution of sexual paraphernalia.
12. Inappropriate use of technology and social media and other violations of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy (see Technology, Internet, and Email).
13. Insubordination

14. Disrupting the school environment

15. 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 is 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

Student Due Process Procedures

Our Code of Student Conduct provides guidelines for students to maintain a positive and supportive environment where students and staff are able to work collaboratively, but the Code of Student Conduct is not exhaustive. Rather, it establishes guidelines for addressing inappropriate conduct and imposing disciplinary consequences. It establishes every individual's responsibility to respect the rights of others. Finally, it identifies a range of possible consequences for misconduct, ensuring that students know in advance of their actions what obligations may be due. In some instances, consequences may carry over from one year to the next. Please be aware that some behavior warrants police investigation as the breach of conduct may also be a criminal offense.

Any failure to comply with the rules of the school, or state or federal law, may result in possible disciplinary consequences, which may include, but is not limited to, confiscation of prohibited items, counseling, loss of privileges, detentions, community service, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or, when appropriate and permitted, expulsion from school.

All school rules shall be in effect on school-provided transportation and for all extracurricular or co-curricular events and activities, home or away. The principal and vice-principal monitor, approve, and deliver all student disciplinary sanctions.

The Principal may, as a disciplinary measure, remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the disciplinary due process rights afforded students under Massachusetts law.

If you are excluded from school for disciplinary reasons, you may not be in school, on school grounds or attend any school-sponsored events during the duration of your suspension, which includes the day you are suspended. You may also be required to meet with the Assistant Principal and a parent/guardian either on the day you are suspended or when you return from suspension. Any student suspended during the year may be excluded from participating in any extracurricular activities (talent show, grade 8 dance, field trips, etc.)

In compliance with 603 CMR 53.14, the Chelmsford public Schools will collect and annually report data to DESE regarding suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals, access to education services, and other information deemed necessary by DESE in the form and manner determined by DESE. The Principal will periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, English language learner status, disability status, gender, and socioeconomic status, and assess the extent of removal, its impact on such selected student populations, and whether to modify disciplinary practices.

Student disciplinary offenses that may result in suspension or expulsion are subject to certain due process rights and procedures. The following sections provide you with information about these rights.

Suspensions and expulsions of students shall be imposed in compliance with constitutional, statutory, and regulatory requirements, including M. G. L. c. 76, §17; M. G. L. c. 76, §21; M. G. L. c. 71, §37H; M. G. L. c. 71, §37H 1/2; and M. G. L. c. 71, §37H 3/4. The Principal, and/or a designee, where permitted, may exercise their discretion to impose suspensions and expulsions for school rules violations within the limitations and the due process provisions set forth.

Definitions Related to Student Discipline - 603 CMR 53.00

- Superintendent: chief executive officer employed by the school committee to administer a school system, or his or her designee appointed for the purpose of conducting a student disciplinary hearing.
- Principal: the instructional administrative leader of the school or the Principal's 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) school days, indefinitely, or

permanently, as permitted under M. G. L. c. 71 § 37H or 37H½ for: (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, 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 M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½.

- **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. In-school suspension for ten days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.
- **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.
- **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.

Due Process Under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾

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.

The due process under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ applies to all offenses, except possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on staff, or felony offenses.

Emergency Removals - M. G. L. c. 71, §37H ¾ and 603 CMR 53.07 Only

The Principal or their designee 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 or their designee 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 or their designee 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. The Principal shall also provide written notice to the student and parent in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and include notice of the items numbered (3) – (8) in the previous sentence. 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 Only

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

Notice and Principal's Hearing - M.G.L. c 71, § 37H ¾ Only

Prior to the imposition of a short-term out-of-school suspension or a long-term suspension under this section, the Principal or their designee shall provide oral and written notice of the charges and potential disciplinary sanction and of the student's and parent's/guardian's right to participate in a hearing with the Principal or their designee to contest the charges against the student and to provide evidence, including mitigating facts, and witnesses in the student's defense, the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate, and the date, time and location of the hearing.

The hearing may take place without the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) if the Principal or their designee has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

The purpose of the principal's hearing is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, to provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, to determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

In accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4, as amended through Chapter 177 of the Acts of 2022, the Principal or their designee, when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing to consider a student's possible out-of-school suspension 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, first consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The Principal or their designee shall not suspend the student out-of-school on a short-term or long-term basis under such circumstances 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 (physical

and/or psychological) upon another person while in school. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4(b). Alternative remedies for purposes of these requirements may include but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving.

The Principal or their designee shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense and in accordance with the requirements of 603 CMR 53.00.

- Short-term Suspension (M.G.L. c 71, § 37H ¾ only)

The Principal or their designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student and the parents/guardians shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal or their designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The Principal or their designee shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal or their designee should consider in determining consequences for the student. Students and parents do not have the right under applicable policies and regulations to be represented by legal counsel at a short-term suspension hearing.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the Principal or their designee shall determine whether there is a preponderance of evidence to support a determination that the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, the remedy or consequence to be imposed.

The Principal or their designee shall provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian of the Principal or their designee's findings and 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. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice of hearing. The imposition of a short-term suspension is not subject to appeal.

- Long-term Suspension (M.G.L. c 71, § 37H ¾ only)

In addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student and parent/guardian shall also have the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the school may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice (at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense); the right to produce witnesses on the student's behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled

to do so; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; the right to request that the hearing be recorded 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.

If present, the parent/guardian shall, in addition to the student, have an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal or their designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

Based on the preponderance of evidence presented at the hearing, the Principal or their designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances, the remedy or consequence to be imposed. The Principal or their designee shall send the written determination in English and the primary language spoken in the student's home to the student and parent/guardian by certified first-class mail and by email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the Principal/designee and the parent/guardian.

If the student is suspended for more than ten (10) school days for a single infraction or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple school rules violations in any school year, the notice will include written notification of the right to appeal to the Superintendent or his/her designee and the process for appealing. Except as provided for under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and/or 37H1/2, no student will be suspended in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4 for greater than ninety (90) school days for one or more violations of school rules within a school year.

School Rules Violations Superintendent's Appeal Hearing - M.G.L. c 71, § 37H ¾ Only

Students do not have the right to appeal an in-school or short-term out-of-school suspension imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H3/4. Students and parents/guardians do, however, have the right to appeal a long-term suspension imposed by the Principal, to the Superintendent or the Superintendent's designee. The student and/or the parent(s)/guardian(s) shall have five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension to submit a written request for an appeal to the Superintendent but may be granted an extension of time of up to seven (7) calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal.

The Superintendent or their designee will hold a hearing with the student and the parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) school days or the student's request for an appeal. The time may be extended up to seven (7) calendar days if requested by the parent(s)/guardian(s). The appeal hearing may proceed without the

parent(s)/guardian(s) only if a good faith effort was made to include parent(s)/guardian(s). The Superintendent or designee shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if the Superintendent or designee has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent or designee shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing in both English and in the primary language of the student's home.

At the appeal hearing, the Superintendent or designee shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, the appropriate consequence therefor. Students shall have all of the rights afforded to students at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension. The Superintendent will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the Principal (or the Principal's designee) but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal's decision. The Superintendent's appeal decision is the final decision of the school.

During the course of any suspension, a student may be ineligible to participate in any school-related activities, including athletic activities and other extracurricular activities and school-sponsored events. Removal from such activities and events is not subject to the procedures of M. G. L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ or 603 CMR 53.00. The student and his/her parents are expected to meet with a school administrator prior to the student's return to class. During the course of an out-of-school suspension, a student may not be on school premises.

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 Under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½

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 or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, 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 Under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½

Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½, the 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 the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. 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 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 Under 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 Related to Long-Term Exclusion Under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H: Any student who has been expelled from the school 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.

Suspensions or expulsions are decisions that must consider a student's due process rights. The Principal or their designees are required to report to the police department

the presence of any weapon on school premises.

Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 1/2

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 may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said Principal if said Principal 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 Related to Long-Term Exclusion Under 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 Related to Long-Term Exclusion Under M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2: The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent. The student must notify the Superintendent in writing 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 District 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 may expel said student if such Principal 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 Related to Long-Term Exclusion Under 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 Related to Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion Under 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, 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 District with regard to the long-term suspension/expulsion.

Opportunity To Make Academic Progress

The District 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 withdraws from the District and/or 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. This information serves as notice that the District may share copies of the student record, including discipline records, with any school in which the student may seek or intend to enroll. 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 school work 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's Education Service Plan is subject to change, and may include, but is not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, and online or distance learning.

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.

Removal from Privileges and Extracurricular Activities

Students who are suspended or expelled from school are not allowed on school grounds and may not participate in any school-sponsored events, including extracurricular activities or other school-sponsored events. A removal from privileges and/or extracurricular activities is not subject to the procedures set forth herein.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. In addition to those due process protections afforded to all students, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and related regulations, require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education services or who the school district knows or has reason to know might be eligible for such services. Students who have been found to have a disability that impacts upon a major life activity, as defined under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, are, generally, also entitled to increased procedural protections upon the imposition of a discipline sanction that will result in the student's removal for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or which will result in a pattern of short term removals exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students with disabilities:

- i. Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for ten (10) school days or less to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive school days in a given school year or subjected to a pattern of removal constituting a "change of placement," building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team will meet to review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, any teacher visits, and any relevant information from the parents, to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP—"a manifestation determination."
- ii. No later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district will notify the parent(s) of that decision and provide them with the written notice of procedural safeguards.

Team Determination that the Conduct was Not a Manifestation of the Student's Disability

1. If building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the student's conduct was NOT a manifestation of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student in accordance with the procedures and penalties applicable to all students, except that students eligible for special education are entitled to services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year. Such services are not available to students under Section 504. The student's IEP Team will identify the services necessary to allow the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals during the period of exclusion, review any existing behavior intervention plan or, may, as appropriate, conduct a functional behavioral assessment, to address the behavior so that it does not recur.

Team Determination that the Conduct Was a Manifestation of the Student's Disability

1. If building administrators, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), and relevant members of the student's IEP or 504 Team determine that the misconduct giving rise to disciplinary action was a manifestation of the student's disability, the student will not be subjected to further disciplinary removal or exclusion from the student's current educational program based on that incident of misconduct (except for conduct involving weapons, drugs, or resulting in serious bodily injury to others). The student's IEP Team shall either: if a behavior intervention plan has already been developed, review and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; or arrange for a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan for the child.

Special Circumstances

1. If a student with a disability possesses or uses illegal drugs, sells or solicits a controlled substance, possesses a dangerous weapon, or causes serious bodily injury to another on school grounds or at a school function, the District may, with or without parent/guardian consent, and regardless of the manifestation determination, place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. A court or BSEA Hearing Officer may also order the placement of a student who presents a substantial likelihood of injury to self or others in an appropriate interim setting for up to forty-five (45) school days. A parent can also consent to a forty-five (45) school day interim setting. If the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

2. The interim alternative setting must enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and progress toward the goals in the IEP. The interim alternative setting must also provide services and modifications designed to address the behavior giving rise to the removal and to prevent the behavior from reoccurring.
 - a. At the conclusion of the forty-five (45) school day period, *the student shall be returned to his/her previous placement* unless the parent (or student if 18+) consents to an extension of the interim alternative setting or an Order is obtained from the Bureau of Special Education Appeal authorizing the student's continued removal.
 - b. The parent shall have the right to appeal the Team's manifestation determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first.

Note: If, prior to the disciplinary action, the school district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district will make all protections available to the student (e.g., manifestation determination) until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if: (a) the parent had expressed concern in writing; (b) the parent had requested an evaluation; or (c) District staff had expressed directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. The district may not be considered to have had prior knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student has resulted in a determination of ineligibility. If a request is made for an evaluation of a student's eligibility for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) during the time period in which the student is subjected to disciplinary measures, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student will remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion from school. If the suspension imposed terminates prior to the completion of said expedited evaluation, the student shall be allowed to return to school immediately upon the conclusion of the disciplinary exclusion. If the student is found eligible, then he/she receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

Non-Discrimination

Right to Equal Education

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where she/he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, disability or sexual orientation. M.G.L. c. 76, § 5.

Notice of Non-Discrimination

The Chelmsford Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of race¹, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age or immigration or citizenship status. The Chelmsford Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, immigration or citizenship status, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law. In addition, the District provides equal access to all designated youth groups. Consistent with the requirements of the McKinney-Vento Act, the District also does not discriminate against students on the basis of homelessness.

The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The Chelmsford Public Schools' policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Chelmsford or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of

¹ Under Massachusetts law, "'Race', as applied to a prohibition on discrimination based on race, shall include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles." M. G. L. c. 4, § 7. Protective hairstyles, "shall include, but not be limited to, braids, locks, twists, Bantu knots, hair coverings and other formations." *Id.*

race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law.

In addition to designating at least one administrator to respond to inquiries regarding the District's non-discrimination policies, the District has adopted grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy. If an individual is interested in filing a complaint that they have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, disability including meal modifications, homelessness, religion, age or immigration status, their complaint should be filed in accordance with the District's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

A complete copy of the District's Civil Rights Grievance Procedures are available [here](#).

A complete copy of the District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures are available [here](#).

Chelmsford Public Schools Civil Rights and Title IX Coordinator:

Diane Carey, Director of Human Resources

careyd@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

978-251-5100 X6904

TITLE IX

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The District does not tolerate discrimination against students, parents, employees, or the general public on the basis of sex. The District is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on sex, including harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or parenting status. The District'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, admission to the District or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex.

How to Report Sexual Harassment: Individuals are encouraged to report allegations of sexual harassment to the District Title IX Coordinator or the Principal. Any report of sexual harassment, as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be responded to promptly in accordance with the District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure.

Reports of discriminatory harassment not constituting sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be initially addressed through the [District's Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedure](#) and may, if dismissed under that procedure, be investigated in accordance with the [District's Civil Rights Grievance Procedure](#).

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will: (1) promptly and confidentially contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures; (2) inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint; (3) consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures; (4) if the school district does not provide the complainant with supportive measures, document the reasons why such response was reasonable; and (5) explain to the complainant the process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

Any employee or student found to have engaged in sexual harassment may 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 may be subject to professional discipline including but not limited to possible termination of employment.

Civil Rights Policy for the School Food Service Program

The Chelmsford Public Schools ("Chelmsford" or "District") is committed to complying with state and federal Civil Rights Requirements in all of its programs, including the USDA Food and Nutrition Services and DESE School Food and Nutrition Programs.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, because of prior civil rights activity, or, as applicable, political beliefs

In addition to USDA policy and federal law, Chelmsford provides benefits to all eligible individuals without discrimination in accordance with state civil rights laws. To this end, Chelmsford is committed to maintaining school environments free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, homelessness, or disability. Harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in any form or for any reason is prohibited. This includes harassment or discrimination by administrators, personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals in school or at school-related events.

Any person alleging harassment or discrimination in the District's School Food and Nutrition Program has the right to file a complaint. Please see the [District's Complaint Procedures](#).

Chelmsford will make meal modifications and/or substitutions, at no cost to the student or parent/guardian, for students who are unable to eat meals served in any Child Nutrition Programs because of their disability(ies). To request a meal modification and/or substitution based on your child's disability, please contact Chelmsford's 504 Coordinator and submit supporting documentation, including a medical statement signed by a state-licensed healthcare professional or registered dietitian. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact Chelmsford's

504 Coordinator and submit supporting documentation. The medical statement must include the following information: information about the child's disability that is sufficient to allow Chelmsford to understand how it restricts the child's diet; an explanation of what accommodations are necessary; and the food or foods to be omitted and recommended alternatives. A request for meal modification may be declined if such a modification would fundamentally alter the nature of the of Child Nutrition Program.

Chelmsford's 504 Coordinator can be reached at:

Amy Reese, Director of Student Services

reesea@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

978-251-5111 X6919

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 paraeducator to engage in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage

to the victim's property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to himself or of damage to his property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the act 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.

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

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, nothing in this Plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school-related activities, functions, or programs.

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.

Policies and Procedures for Reporting and Responding to Bullying and Retaliation

1. Reporting bullying or retaliation. Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, to the principal or designee, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing by the principal or designee. Chelmsford Public Schools' staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of suspected bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members may be made anonymously.

- a. The district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community, including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form, a dedicated mailing address, a list of telephone numbers, and an email address (Appendix B). Anyone may make a report of a behavior or activity that is

believed to be bullying, including cyberbullying or retaliation, to the principal or designee.

- b. Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report (See Appendix A). The school or district will
 - i. Include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form at the beginning of the packets for students and parents or guardians;
 - ii. Make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and
 - iii. Post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

Nothing in this Plan shall be construed to limit an individual's ability to call 911 where a threat to the safety of a student and/or other individuals is present. If there is concern about anyone's immediate safety, please call 911 first, then notify an administrator. Nothing in this Plan prevents an individual from reporting to the police a crime. Nothing in this Plan prohibits an individual from exercising their responsibilities as a mandated reporter under M. G. L. c. 119, sec. 51A and nothing in this Plan shall be used to deter an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The District encourages students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee by either submitting the Incident Report Form, orally reporting the instance, or otherwise make the principal or designee aware of the instance. Any report made anonymously will be investigated, however, no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous complaint. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor.

2. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

After making a preliminary determination that the facts as alleged, if true, would meet the statutory definition of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will promptly commence an investigation.

a. Safety

Upon commencing a bullying investigation, the principal or designee will make a preliminary determination as to the need for immediate interventions to protect the safety of the alleged target, complainant, witnesses or interviewees regarding the bullying allegations. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to: (i) creating a personal safety plan; (ii) predetermining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; (iii) identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target; and (iv) altering the aggressor’s schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary. The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. Student safety planning procedures will be implemented as per the school protocols. Other steps to promote safety may be taken, as appropriate, if the alleged aggressor is a staff member.

b. Obligations to Notify Others

- i. Notice to parents or guardians. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. The notification to the parents and guardians of the target will include the actions the school is taking to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state and federal confidentiality and student records laws and regulations, including 603 CMR 49.00.
- ii. Notice to Another School or District. If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, including 603 CMR 49.00 and 603 CMR 23.00.
- iii. Notice to Law Enforcement. At any point after receiving a report of bullying or

retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

A principal may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 CMR 49.06 without the consent of a student or his or her parent/guardian. The principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the Plan, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Chelmsford Police Department and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the Chelmsford School District's "Law Enforcement Unit", if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

- iv. Notice to Other Parties. A principal may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent/guardian unless the information is about the parent's/guardian's own child.

A principal may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(e) and 34 CFR 99.31(a)(10) and 99.36. 603 CMR 49.07(3) is limited to instances in which the principal has determined there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals. It is limited to the period of emergency and does not allow for blanket disclosure of student record information. The principal must document the disclosures and the reasons that the principal determined that a health or safety emergency exists.

- 3. **Investigation.** The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports, whether oral or written, 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, alleged 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.

When a report of bullying involves the principal or the assistant principal, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target.

4. **Determinations.** The principal or designee will make a determination as to whether the preponderance of the evidence supports a finding that bullying occurred. 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 feels safe and 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.

If bullying is substantiated, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and 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 target about the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's ("DESE") Problem Resolution System and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim through the Problem Resolution System. The parents or guardians of the victim must be provided with the following contact information: Program Resolution System Office, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906, Telephone: 781-338-3700; TTY: N.E.T. Relay: 1-800-439-2370.

The principal will collaborate with special educators, guidance counselors, counselors and/or school adjustment counselors to provide counseling or appropriate referrals for services for targets, aggressors and families.

If, at any time during the bullying investigation and determination process, the Principal determines that potential discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected class may have occurred, the Principal shall follow the district or school's policies and procedures for applicable discrimination or harassment investigations.

5. Responses to Bullying.

- **Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building**

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 370(d)(2)(v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

- offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- meeting with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home; or
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills.

6. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior. Discipline will be consistent with the Plan and with the rubrics developed for each level. The rubrics are developed as a guide for principals or designees and do not prohibit them from using their discretion 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.

7. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

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

Training and Professional Development

Assessing needs and resources. At least once every four years beginning with 2015-16 school year, the district will administer a Department of Elementary and Secondary-developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools. Additionally, the school or district will annually report bullying incident data to the Department. Annual staff training on the Plan. At the building level, annual training for all school staff on the Plan will include staff duties under the Plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired, unless they can demonstrate participation in an acceptable and comparable program within the last two years. Ongoing professional development. The goal of professional development is to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build

the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by law, the content of school-wide and district-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally/age-appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally/age-appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
- information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
- research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment.
- information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

The District will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it, including relevant sections for staff, in the District employee handbook. The Plan will also be available on the District's website.

Curriculum

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. For more information, please see the section in the Student-Family Handbook section titled "Transgender and Non-Conforming Students."

Human Sexuality and Curriculum

Parents and guardians have the option to exempt their student from any portion of the curriculum dealing primarily with human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The District will not penalize a student for such an exemption. Parents or guardians opting to exempt their student must provide written notification to the Principal. To the extent

practicable, instructional materials for such curriculum will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardian, educators, school administrators, and others for review and inspection. M. G. L. c. 71, § 32A.

Curriculum Opt-Out

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.

SERVICES AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Some students with disabilities require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to help them make effective progress in school.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) provides: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Pursuant to Section 504, any qualified student with a disability is entitled to a free appropriate public education (FAPE). Section 504 FAPE is the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet a student’s individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met.

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) and M.G.L. c. 71B, some students with disabilities may be eligible for services if they require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to help them make effective progress in school. These services can include, but are not limited to: speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Students may be referred to the Special Education Department for an evaluation of eligibility for special education services. Within five (5) school days of such a referral, a consent form authorizing an evaluation of the student will be forwarded to the parent(s). Within forty-five (45) school days of receipt of the parent(s)’ consent, an evaluation will be conducted, and a Team meeting will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If the student is found eligible for special education services, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

In some cases, the evaluation Team determines that a student with a disability may require only individual accommodations as opposed to specially designed instruction and /or related services. Such students may then be referred for an evaluation of their eligibility for an individual accommodation plan in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

For more information regarding the services available to students with disabilities please contact the Section 504 Compliance Officer:

Amy Reese, Director of Student Services

reesea@chelmsford.k12.ma.us

200 Richardson Road

North Chelmsford, MA 01863

978-251-5100 X6919

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, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, disability, homelessness, religion, age, immigration or citizenship status. The Chelmsford Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status, age, genetic information, ethnic background, ancestry, disability, or any category protected by state or federal law.

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

If 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.

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

Under state law, information about a student's assigned birth sex, name change for gender identity purposes, gender transition, medical or mental health treatment related to gender identity, or any other information of a similar nature, regardless of its form, is part of the individual's student record, is confidential, and must be kept private and secure, except in limited circumstances. See 603 CMR § 23.04. The federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act also protects the privacy of education records. Authorized school personnel, however, may require the information to provide administrative, teaching, counseling, or other services to the student in the performance of their official duties. When a student new to a school is using a chosen name, the birth name is considered private information and may be disclosed only with authorization as provided under the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations. If the student has previously been known at school or in school records by his or her birth name, the Principal should direct school personnel to use the student's chosen name.

A student who is 14 years of age or older, or who has entered the ninth grade, may consent to disclosure of information from his or her student record.

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.

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. 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 (10) 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 fee at the district rate 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. Parents and eligible students should submit their request to access/inspection to the Principal.
- 2.
3. Confidentiality of Records: With a few exceptions, no individual or organization other than the parent, student, and authorized school personnel are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student.

4. 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. The parent and eligible student have a right to request a conference with the Principal or her/his designee to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the Principal or their designee must render a decision on such a request in writing. If the parent and/or eligible student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school.
5. Directory Information: Federal law requires that the District release the names, addresses, and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. In addition, the school may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a student's name, address, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, honors and awards, and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances, parents may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying the Principal in writing by the end of September of each school year.
6. Destruction of Records: The regulations require that certain parts of the student record, such as the temporary record, 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.
7. 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.
8. 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.

9. 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.
10. 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.

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the state and federal laws pertaining to student records that relate to student and parent/guardian rights. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be reviewed at your school office.

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment Act

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents certain rights regarding the school's conducting of surveys, the collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

• *Consent* before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”) if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (DOE)–

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student’s parent; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

A. *Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of –*

1. Any other protected information survey, regardless of funding;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and
3. Activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others. (This does not apply to the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the exclusive purpose of developing, evaluating, or providing educational products or services for, or to, students or educational institutions.)

B. *Inspect*, upon request and before administration or use

1. Protected information surveys of students and surveys created by a third party;
2. Instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and
3. Instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents to a student who is 18 years old.

Chelmsford Public Schools will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents/guardians, regarding these rights, as well as methods to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. The school will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The school will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his or her child out of participation in the specific activity or survey. The school will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the school has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys.

Specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement include: the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; the administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by DOE, and any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

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

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5901

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. Misuse of district devices or network may result in 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.

Any use of the District's devices and/or network must abide by the policies of the Chelmsford Public Schools, including the CPS Student Empowered Digital Use Guideline, and applicable state and federal law. Any violation may result in loss of privilege to use the District's devices and/or network, and/or disciplinary sanctions. A user also violates school rules by failing to report any violations by other users that come to the attention of the user. Further, a user violates school rules if he or she permits another to use his or her account or password to access the District's devices and/or network.

Any devices and/or network issued or owned by the District, including email, are the property of the Chelmsford Public Schools, and students do not have an expectation of privacy as to their use of such devices and/or network, including, but not limited to, any information accessed, stored, or transmitted on, with, or during use of the information technology. The Chelmsford Public Schools reserves the right to monitor, inspect, copy, review, and store at any time, and without prior notice, any and all usage of its devices and network, and any and all information accessed, stored, transmitted, or received in connection with such usage. All information files on District devices and networks shall be and remain the property of the Chelmsford Public Schools.

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](#)

CIPA (Children's Internet Protection Act)

Both on premises and at home when using school-issued devices/accounts, content is filtered and monitored as required by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Chelmsford Public Schools is required by CIPA to block access to inappropriate content and monitor internet use by minors. The Chelmsford Public Schools Technology Department is responsible for managing the school's internet filter and will work with Chelmsford Public Schools' staff to ensure the filter meets the academic and operational needs of the school, while protecting minors from exposure to inappropriate content. There should be no expectation of privacy related to information stored or transmitted using Chelmsford Public Schools devices, systems, or networks.

Users will inform teachers or administrators of any inadvertent access to inappropriate material, in order that there is appropriate modification of the filtering profile. Chelmsford Public Schools educates Students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites as well as cyberbullying awareness and response.

COPPA – Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act

The Chelmsford Public Schools works diligently to comply with COPPA requirements. Chelmsford Public Schools does not collect student personal information in order to transmit such information directly to online entities for the purpose of creating a web-based account.

Search and Seizure

Students have no expectation of privacy in a student’s locker or desk, a school-issued laptop, school-issued email, and/or the student’s use of the school’s network. The Chelmsford Public Schools have 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.

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.

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.

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 may be delayed up to 2 hours. All activities in the schools will continue as usual including the same dismissal time. Morning 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 buses will 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.

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines "homeless children and youths" as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The definition includes children and youths who are:

- sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason;
- living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- abandoned in hospitals;
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in the circumstances described above.

The term "unaccompanied youth" includes a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian. If a student is homeless, or becomes homeless during the school year, he/she is encouraged to inform school administration. The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act requires that schools 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, or have missed any enrollment deadlines.

Homeless students have the right to immediately enroll in the school district where they are temporarily residing or remain in their school of origin and receive transportation. Homeless students are entitled to transportation to and from their school of origin. If the school of origin is in a different district, the districts will coordinate the transportation services and costs.

According to the student's best interest, if a student becomes homeless or permanently housed during the school year, they have the right to remain in their school of origin with transportation, if needed, for the duration of homelessness or attend the public school in the area where they are actually living. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra- and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families residing in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, with transportation, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the school's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The school's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by the process set forth by state and federal law and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Once the enrollment decision is made, the school shall immediately enroll the student, pursuant to school policies. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be admitted under an exception. Students and families are encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the school liaison is directed to assist. Records from the student's previous school shall be requested from the previous school pursuant to school policies. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with school policies, including compliance with the state's address confidentiality program when necessary. Information about a homeless student's living situation will be treated as a student education record and is not considered directory information.

The school's liaison for homeless students and their families will coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in schools and the school's Homeless Education Policy, in such places where children receive services such as: schools, family shelters, and health clinics. The liaison will also help homeless families and youth access educational services and related opportunities for which they are eligible, including but not limited to Head Start, Even Start, and school nutrition programs.

For additional information regarding homeless students' rights and services, please contact the Principal or the School Homeless Liaison.

For further information, please contact [enter name], Homeless Education State Coordinator, Joanna Johnson-Collins at johnsoncollinsj@chelmsford.k12.ma.us.

42 U.S.C. 11301; DESE McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance – Advisories

Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires that foster care students continue to attend their school of origin, unless after a collaborative decision-making process it is determined to be in the student's best interest to enroll in and attend school in the district in which a foster care provider or facility is located (if different than their prior school district). The law also requires that when it is not in the student's best interest to remain in the school of origin, the student is immediately enrolled and attending in a new school district, even if records normally required for enrollment cannot be quickly produced. Additionally, the law requires the Department of Children and Families (DCF) the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the school district to designate points of contact; and also, that the district collaborate with DCF and the other school district to ensure that students will receive transportation to the school of origin if needed. For more information, please access the DESE website at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/foster/>.

- Best Interest Determination: Decisions about whether a student in foster care should continue to attend their school of origin should be made collaboratively by DCF, the student (as appropriate), the student's family and/or foster family (and if different, the person authorized to make educational decisions on behalf of the student), the school and district of origin, and (when different) the local district where the student is placed. Best interest determinations should focus on the needs of each individual student and take into account a variety of factors. Every effort should be made to reach agreement regarding the appropriate school placement of a student in foster care. However, if there is disagreement regarding school placement for a student in foster care, DCF will finalize the best interest determination.

The district can seek review of DCF's decision by utilizing a Foster Care School Selection Dispute Resolution Process established by DESE and DCF. Decisions made through this process are not subject to review. Under the law, to promote educational stability, students should continue to attend their schools of origin while best interest determinations are being made.

- Transportation: The district of origin must collaborate with DCF on how transportation will be provided and arranged to ensure that students in foster care who need transportation to remain in their school of origin will receive such transportation while they are in foster care. Transportation options may include using Title I funds, establishing regional collaborations among districts, coordinating with existing routes for transportation, seeking help from foster parent(s), etc. If there are additional costs associated with transportation to maintain the student in in their school or origin, the district will provide the transportation if DCF agrees to reimburse the district, the district agrees to pay for the cost of such transportation, or DCF and the district share the cost. Absent other agreements between the district and DCF, the district of origin is responsible for providing transportation to and from the school of origin.
- Immediate Enrollment: If it is in the best interest of a student in foster care to leave the school of origin, the student must be enrolled in school in his/her local school district immediately. To minimize disruption of the student's education, the law requires the district to enroll the student in a new school right away, without waiting to receive the typical student enrollment documentation (other than emergency contact information). The enrolling school must immediately contact the child's school and district of origin to obtain the relevant records and documentation, and the school and district of origin should immediately transfer those records. To facilitate enrollment, DCF representatives will present a Notice to Local Educational Agency form that indicates that the student is in foster care, along with their state-agency identification badge, to the local school district when enrolling students.

Every Student Succeeds Act; DESE “Ensuring Educational Stability for Students in Foster Care – Guidance,” Dated January 18, 2018.

Prevention of Physical Restraint and Requirements If Used

Physical Restraint and Seclusion of Students

Medical Restraint and Mechanical Restraint are prohibited. Physical restraint shall be considered an emergency procedures of last resort and shall be prohibited in public education programs except when a student’ behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent serious, physical harm to self or other and the student is not responsive to directive or other lawful and less instructive behaviors interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstance. 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. For more information, please see the District Policies and Procedures regarding Physical Restraint and Seclusion.

[Physical Restraint of Students Policy/Procedure](#)

Educational Opportunities for Military Children

The Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children applies to children of military families who are school-aged children enrolled in kindergarten through 12th grade, and their parent is an active duty member of the in the household of an active duty member of the uniformed service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserve serving on active duty. a member or veteran of the uniformed services who was severely injured and medically discharged or retired for a period of one (1) year after medical discharge or retirement, or a member of the uniformed services who died on active duty or a result of injuries sustained on active duty for a period of one (1) year after death.

The following applies under the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunities for Military Children:

- Sending schools must send either official or unofficial records with the moving students, and District receiving District schools must use those records for immediate enrollment and educational placement.
- Simultaneously, the receiving school must request official records, and the sending schools shall respond within 10 days with the records.
- Immunization requirements of the District may be met within 30 days from the date of enrollment (or be in progress).
- At enrollment, the receiving school shall allow the student to continue at the grade level that is equal to the grade level in the sending state, regardless of age. If a student has completed the prerequisite grade level in the sending state, the student shall be allowed to enroll in the next highest grade level in the receiving state, regardless of age. If the student

is transferring after school has started in the receiving state, the student shall enter the receiving school at the level validated by the sending state.

- Receiving schools must initially honor placement of students in all courses from the sending school, if the courses are offered and space is available. Courses include but are not limited to vocational, career pathways, advanced placement, etc. Receiving school shall initially honor placement based on assessments and placements at sending school. Receiving schools are not precluded from performing subsequent evaluations to ensure the appropriate placement and continued enrollment of the student in courses and programs.
- In compliance with federal law, special education students must be placed by the existing IEP, requirements of Section 504, and requirements of ADA, with reasonable accommodations in the receiving school. The receiving school is not precluded from performing a subsequent evaluation to make sure the student is placed appropriately.
- The District may, as deemed appropriate, waive prerequisites or other preconditions for all courses and programs, while also maintaining its right to re-evaluate the student to ensure continued enrollment, as deemed appropriate.
- Students shall have additional excused absences at the discretion of the District for visits with parents or legal guardians relative to leave or deployment.
- An eligible student living with a noncustodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis shall be permitted to attend the school in which he or she was enrolled while living without the custodial parent/guardian without any tuition fee imposed, or the school in which the non-custodial parent or other person standing in loco parentis lives without any tuition fee imposed.
- The student will be provided with the opportunity for inclusion in extra-curricular activities regardless of deadlines as long as the child is otherwise qualified.
- To facilitate on-time graduation, receiving school shall waive specific courses required for graduation if similar course work completed satisfactorily in sending district, or provide reasonable justification for any denial. If waiver not granted, and student would otherwise qualify to graduate from sending school, receiving school shall provide alternative means of completing required coursework so that graduation may occur on time. If a high school student enrolls in grade 11 or later, the school may, in lieu of the MCAS, submit alternative evidence or information to DESE that the student has met the Massachusetts competency determination graduation standard in each required content area (ELA, math, science, technology/engineering). Students in grade 11 are still eligible to participate in the spring MCAS if they wish to qualify for the Adams Scholarship or Koplik Certification. If a student transfers at the beginning or during grade 12 and is ineligible to graduate from the receiving school after all of the alternatives in the Compact have been considered, the sending and receiving school shall ensure receipt of a sending school diploma if the student meets the graduation requirements of the sending school.

Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children; DESE Guidance on the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3), September 16, 2016.

English Language Learners

Upon a student's enrollment, the Chelmsford Public Schools will identify (1) students who may be English learners (ELs) and will assess their level of English proficiency, or (2) students who may be Former English learners (FELs). Specifically, the Chelmsford Public Schools will administer a home language survey to all newly enrolling students, and if a language other than English is identified, the Chelmsford Public Schools will screen the English proficiency of the student using the WIDA screening assessment within thirty (30) days of the student's enrollment. At any time, a parent/guardian of a student enrolled at the Chelmsford Public Schools may request that the school assess the student's level of English proficiency. The Chelmsford Public Schools will notify the parent/guardian of the school's determination and the student's placement, and such information will be placed in the student's school record.

Students identified as English Learners (ELs) will be enrolled in an English Language Education (ELE) program, such as a sheltered English immersion program or an alternative that meets the requirements of federal and state law. The Chelmsford Public Schools will verify at the beginning of each school year that the teachers in the English learner program are properly endorsed. Students with a disability are eligible for ELE programming, and EL students are eligible for special education if they meet the criteria.

Students have the right to enter into an ELE at any time. A parent/guardian may request to enroll or transfer their student into a specific EL education program offered by the Chelmsford Public Schools, and such requests will be reviewed by the superintendent or his/her designee and responded to within twenty (20) school days. Parents/guardians may also request that a specific ELE program be implemented. If at least twenty (20) parents of EL students submit a request, the school will respond within ninety (90) days with either an offer to implement the requested program or an explanation denying the request. Parents/guardians have the right to visit an ELE program. If advised to by the student's teacher or guidance counselor, the school may request, in writing, a program transfer of the student, with notice to the parents/guardians.

The Chelmsford Public Schools will not separate ELs from their English-speaking peers, except when programmatically necessary to implement an ELE program. ELs in any program will be taught to the same academic standards and curriculum frameworks as non-EL students and will be provided the same opportunities to master such standards and frameworks. ELs will have equal access to all educational programming and extracurricular activities offered by the school, for which they qualify, including non-core academic courses. English proficiency will not determine student participation in academic programs and services such as career education programs, counseling, special education, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, Title I services, athletics, electives, or performing arts, unless a particular program or advanced course requires English proficiency for meaningful participation. ELs will be awarded credit toward graduation. ELs will participate in the statewide assessment system, and an English proficiency test will be administered each year. Only ELs identified as severely learning disabled will be exempt. ELs have the right to receive counseling and guidance offered by the school in a language they can understand.

The Chelmsford Public Schools will assess ELs annually to gauge proficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking English, and progress in learning English.

Once an EL attains English proficiency and is able to do regular schoolwork in English, he/she will no longer be classified as an EL and will be transferred to mainstream, English language classrooms. The Chelmsford Public Schools will still monitor the FEL's progress for four years and provide any needed support, if applicable. A FEL will be reclassified back to an EL if they fail to make academic progress due to a lack of English proficiency. Parents/guardians will be notified of all re-classifications.

A parent/guardian may withdraw their student from an EL education program in accordance with state and federal law. If a parent opts their student out of a language program, the school will provide instructional support to ensure the student has access to the curriculum and the same opportunities to master academic standards and curriculum frameworks as his/her native English-speaking peers. An opted-out student will still be assessed with the state-mandated English language proficiency test.

M. G. L. c. 71A; 603 C.M.R. 14.00

Visitor/Observations

Visitors: All persons entering the school must enter at the front of your child(ren)'s school and sign in at the Main Office; you are not to go directly to a classroom. Visitors must present identification upon arrival. Visitor badges will be issued to individual visitors and volunteers while they are in school. For security reasons, all visitors and volunteers are asked to visibly wear their stickers/badges.

Volunteers: All employees, interns, volunteers, chaperones, transportation personnel, and contractors working on school property may be subject to CORI and fingerprint background checks pursuant to M. G. L. c. 71, § 38R. If you are selected to volunteer, you must follow appropriate visitor procedures. Please remember that volunteers may not take pictures or videos of students.

Observations of Student's Programs: Observations of a student's current and/or proposed special education program may be conducted by a parent/guardian or their designee in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71B § 3. Parents/guardians must request an observation in advance and can submit the request to the Special Education Director or designee and/or the Principal. Observers may be required to sign a non-disclosure form to protect student information. Observers shall be accompanied at all times by a school staff member.

Wellness

At the center of a thriving school is a healthy, resilient, and successful learner. A comprehensive school wellness program will improve the safety and health of all school community members and support the academic achievement of students. The Chelmsford Public Schools will strive to make a significant contribution to the general well-being, nutritional status, social-emotional development, physical capacity, and learning ability of each student. The Superintendent or

designees shall ensure compliance with the established district-wide general wellness policy. In each school, the building administrator or designees shall ensure compliance.

Please refer to the district's [Wellness Website Page](#) and the [Wellness Policy](#) for additional information.

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.

Fire Safety

The principal is responsible for immediately reporting any incident involving the unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building or on school grounds to the fire department. The principal shall submit a written report to the head of the fire department. The report shall be filed without regard to the extent of the fire or whether there was a response by the fire department.

False alarms of fire, as well as tampering or meddling with the school's fire signal system, are crimes and violations of the school's code of conduct. In addition, tampering with any of the school's fire emergency alarms, extinguishers or any other related apparatus or emergency reporting devices may result in discipline. Failure to comply with the law or school policy may result in disciplinary action, including but not limited to long-term suspension from school. Students who discharge a fire extinguisher, except for emergency use, may be subject to a minimum of a two-day suspension and responsible for the cost of recharging the extinguisher.

Reports of Dangerous Weapons

All staff shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time. Supervisors in turn shall file such weapon report with the Superintendent, who in turn shall file such report with the chief of police, DCF, the District's Office of Student Services, and the School Committee. The Superintendent, chief of police, DCF, and Office of Student Services shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. The student shall be referred to a counseling program in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of the program, a follow-up assessment shall be completed of the student by the Superintendent, Chief of Police, DCF, and Office of Student Services.