

Stoughton Elementary Schools Student and Parent Handbook

2017 – 2018



The Future Starts Here!

Stoughton Public Schools
232 Pearl Street
Stoughton, MA
781-344-4000

Marguerite Rizzi, Ed.D.; Superintendent of Schools

The administration reserves the right to revise the Elementary Student and Parent Handbook at any time for any reason during the school year. The current version of the Elementary Student and Parent Handbook can be found at each of the Stoughton elementary school web sites.

TRANSLATION NOTIFICATION

The Stoughton Public Schools will ensure that, when requested, specific components of the school handbooks and district codes of conduct will be made available in the primary language of a parent or student whose primary language is not English. Parents may also request that, to the extent possible, school notices and reports be provided in a language that they understand.

[Arabic]

تكفل مدارس ستاوتون الحكومية بأنها، عند الطلب، ستوفر مكونات معينة من كتيبات المدارس وقواعد السلوك في مدارس المنطقة باللغة الأساسية للتلميذ أو لأهله والذين لغتهم الرئيسية غير اللغة الإنجليزية. ويستطيع الأهل أيضاً، وفي حدود الإمكان، أن يطلبوا بأن تكون إشعارات وتقارير المدرسة بلغة يفهمونها.

[Chinese] 如果主要語言不是英語的家長或學生提出請求，Stoughton公立學校保證將以家長或學生的主要語言提供學校手冊和學區行為守則的具體章節部份。家長還可以請求在可能的情況下以他們能夠理解的語言提供學校通知和報告。

[French] Le système scolaire de Stoughton (Stoughton Public Schools) assurera à ce qui en feront la demande que des passages des manuels scolaires et des codes de conduite du système scolaire seront fournis dans la langue maternelle d'un parent ou d'un élève dont la langue maternelle n'est pas l'anglais. Les parents pourront aussi demander que, dans la mesure du possible, les annonces, avis, et rapports scolaires soient fournis dans une langue qu'ils comprennent.

[Gujarati] Jo CataR Aqavaa vaDIlaao naI paaqa-maIk BaaYaa AMgaroP naqaI, Aomanaa AnauraoQa]par, sTaoTna paiblak skUlsa; skUla hOMDbauk Anao Plaa kaoD AacarLa naI ivaiSaYT GaTkao paaqa-maIk BaaYaa maa]palabQa kravaSaoo. jyaa sauQaI samBava haoya, skUla naaoiTsa Anao irpaaOT-, vaDIlaao samaxaI Sako Ao BaaYaa maa]palabQa kravaa maaTo; vaDIlaao AnauraoQa krI Sako Co.

[Portuguese] As Escolas Públicas de Stoughton asseguram que, quando requeridos pelos pais, certos requerimentos específicos dos livros de regulamentos escolares sejam disponíveis na primeira língua dos encarregados de educação ou de qualquer aluno(a) cuja língua primária não é o Inglês. Os encarregados de educação também poderão requerer que, enquanto possível, as informações e relatórios escolares sejam fornecidos numa língua que os mesmos entendem.

[Russian] По просьбе родителей или учеников, родной язык которых – не английский, школьный округ Stoughton Public Schools готов предоставлять определенные разделы школьных руководств и сводов правил школьного округа на их родном языке. Родители могут также попросить, чтобы школьные уведомления и отчеты об успеваемости предоставлялись - по мере возможности - на понятном для них языке.

[Spanish] Las Escuelas Públicas de Stoughton asegurarán que, cuando pedido, componentes específicas de las guías escolares y códigos de conducta del distrito estarán disponibles en el idioma principal de un padre o estudiante de quienes idioma principal no es inglés. También los padres pueden pedir – a la medida posible – que las noticias y reportes escolares estarán proveído en una lengua que ellos entienden.

[Tagalog] Titiyakin ng Pamublikong Paaralan ng Stoughton na, kung inyong hihilingin, ang mga partikular na bahagi ng Aklat-Pampaaralan at Pang Distritong Kodigo ng Pag-aasal, ay maaring makuha at maisalin sa wika ng mga magulang o ng mga estudyante na ang pangunahing salita ay hindi Ingles. Maaari ring hilingin ng mga magulang na mailathala sa naiintindihan nilang wika ang mga patalastas at mga ulat na magmumula sa paaralan.

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2017 - 2018 CALENDAR

JULY 2017

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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AUGUST 2017

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SEPTEMBER 2017

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OCTOBER 2017

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NOVEMBER 2017

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DECEMBER 2017

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JANUARY 2018

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FEBRUARY 2018

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MARCH 2018

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APRIL 2018

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MAY 2018

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JUNE 2018

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Please Note Significant Dates
No School Days

SEPTEMBER 2017

Sept. 5 - School Opens for all Unit A Staff Pre-K-12 (Full Day)

Sept. 6 - School Opens for all Students Gr. 1-12 (Full Day)

Sept. 7 - First Day for Kindergarten

Sept. 11 - First Day for Preschool

Sept. 21 - Rosh Hashanah - No School

OCTOBER 2017

Oct. 9 - Columbus Day - No School

NOVEMBER 2017

Nov. 7 - Professional Dev. Day - No School

Nov. 10 - Veteran's Day Celebrated - No School

Nov. 22 - Early Dismissal - Gr. 6-12 at 11:00 - K-5 at 11:45

Nov. 23 & 24 - Thanksgiving Break - No School

DECEMBER 2017

Dec. 25 - Jan. 1 - Vacation

JANUARY 2018

Jan. 1 - New Year's Day Observed - No School

Jan. 2 - School Reopens

Jan. 15 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No School

FEBRUARY 2018

Feb. 19 - 23 Vacation

MARCH 2018

March 30 - Good Friday - No School

APRIL 2018

April 16 - 20 Vacation

MAY 2018

May 28 - Memorial Day - No School

JUNE 2018

Graduation June 7, 2018

June 19 - Last Day (180 student days)

June 26 - Last Day (5 snow days)

Early Release Dates

Thursday, September 28, 2017

Thursday, October 26, 2017

Thursday, December 7, 2017

Thursday, January 25, 2018

Thursday, March 8, 2018

Thursday, April 5, 2018

Thursday, May 10, 2018

Thursday, June 7, 2018

School Hours for Early Release Days

SHS & OMS 7:35 - 11:32 / Elementary 8:30 - 12:20

Pre-school 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. No p.m. sessions

MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the Stoughton Public Schools! We look forward to an exciting and successful school year. We have prepared this handbook to assist in developing an understanding between the school and the home so that together we may provide your child with a rewarding and enriching educational experience.

We hope the information contained in this booklet will provide you with an understanding of our schools. Should you have any questions regarding the information contained in this booklet, please contact your elementary principal.

Sincerely,

Marguerite C. Rizzi, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

A PARENT'S PLEDGE

I KNOW THAT CHILDREN LEARN BEST WHEN FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS WORK TOGETHER.

AS A PARENT, I PLEDGE TO DO THE FOLLOWING:

Set aside some time for talking with and listening to my child every day.

Praise my child for good work in school and good behavior at home.

Help my child develop self-confidence and self-discipline.

Talk with my child's teacher about how my child is doing in school.

Talk with my child about schoolwork.

Set a regular time and place for schoolwork. During this time, there will be no television, no radio, no phone calls.

Encourage reading. I will read to my child, and I will listen as my child reads to me.

Make sure my child gets healthy meals, enough sleep and good exercise every day.

Love my child enough to say NO when necessary.

Help my child discover the joy that learning and thinking can bring at any age.

COMMUNICATION

School-Related Problems and Concerns

From time to time, parents may wish to bring problems or concerns to the attention of appropriate school officials. To assist parents in this regard, the following general guidelines may be helpful:

1. Any concern regarding a school-related matter should first be raised by the parent with the staff member most directly involved. For instance, questions regarding the content of instructional materials or homework assignments should be raised with the teacher involved.
2. If the matter remains unresolved, the parent may wish to speak with the building Principal. Appointments can be scheduled by contacting the office of the principal involved.
3. If the matter still is unresolved, the parent may wish to speak to the Superintendent. For an appointment, contact the Superintendent's Office.
4. If the matter still remains unsolved, the parent may wish to bring it to the attention of the School Committee by communicating directly with the Chairperson of the School Committee.

We urge that parents use the progressive steps outlined above as most problems can be addressed satisfactorily by the teacher or other staff member most directly involved. Starting out at the top inevitably results in no decision and the matter being remanded to the staff member most directly involved.

The following are examples (not an all-inclusive list) of issues which are more appropriately addressed at the levels indicated.

1. Teachers
 - a. Student homework assignments, quizzes, and tests;
 - b. Course content, instructional materials, academic progress, and extra help;
 - c. Issues related to classroom discipline, relationships with other pupils and the teacher;
 - d. Athletic issues with the teacher/coach involved and then, to the Athletic Director.
2. Guidance Counselors
 - a. Problems between school and home; teacher and pupil; pupil and other pupils;
 - b. Personal matters relating to student development, behaviors, and interactions with others.
3. Principals
 - a. Any issue arising out of a school building when no other staff member can be specifically identified;
 - b. Student placement issues (in a class, program, instructional level);
 - c. Instructional and co-curricular program issues (athletics, music, drama, etc.);
 - d. Matters related to the physical plant;
 - e. Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel;
 - f. Student records; school-wide discipline issues; bus conduct issues.
4. Superintendent/Assistant to the Superintendent
 - a. Questions regarding School Committee policies and administrative procedures;
 - b. School Committee meeting and agenda items;
 - c. Any school system records or documents;
 - d. Budgetary matters;
 - e. Hiring and supervision of staff;
 - f. Complaints, dissatisfaction, or concerns regarding school personnel or services which have not been resolved at the Principal's level;
 - g. Suggestions or requests for change in the curriculum;
 - h. Transportation matters (if not resolved by transportation coordinator/business manager).
5. School Committee
 - a. Matters pertaining to policy (class size; student trips; fund-raising activities, etc.);
 - b. Requests specific courses and programs are included in the program of studies;
 - c. Complaints regarding the Superintendent;
 - d. School Board minutes and agenda items (Chairperson of School Board);
 - e. Budgetary matters; long-range planning (facilities, programs, etc.).

GENERAL INFORMATION

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Marguerite C. Rizzi, Ed. D., Superintendent of Schools

Jonathan Ford, Deputy Superintendent of Schools

Robert Cancellieri, Principal
Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. Elementary School

Maureen Mulvey, Principal
South Elementary School

Lynne Jardin, Principal
Joseph H. Gibbons Elementary School

Lisa Whelan, Ph.D., Principal
West Elementary School

Faye Polillio, Principal
Helen H. Hansen Elementary School

CIVIL RIGHTS REPRESENTATIVES

District Civil Rights Coordinator

Mr. Jonathan Ford, Deputy Superintendent

Stoughton High School

Ms. Juliette Miller, Principal - Mr. Alan Bontya, Assistant Principal

O'Donnell Middle School

Mr. Matthew Colantonio, Principal - Ms. Hallie Burak, Assistant Principal

Dawe Elementary School

Mr. Robert Cancellieri, Principal - Mrs. Amy Saraiva, Teacher

Gibbons Elementary School

Ms. Lynne Jardin, Principal - Mrs. Meghan Hayes, Guidance Counselor

Hansen Elementary School

Mrs. Faye Polillio, Principal - Mrs. Jacqui Harrison, Teacher

South Elementary School

Mrs. Maureen Mulvey, Principal - Miss Julia Asztalos, Teacher

West Elementary School

Dr. Lisa Whelan, Principal – Kathleen Monaghan, Teacher

Jones Early Childhood Center

Mrs. Heather Tucker, Principal - Ms. Carolan Sampson, Assistant Principal

**Abbreviated Reference to the Legislation and Specific Criteria of
Civil Rights Laws and District Coordinator Information**

Law	Coordinator
<p>Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on race, color and national origin. 	<p>Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229</p>
<p>Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs based on sex. 	<p>Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229</p>
<p>Title I of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of employment. 	<p>Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229</p>
<p>Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming and activities. 	<p>Mrs. Heather Tucker Special Education Director 137 Walnut Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 7321</p>
<p>Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1993</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability. 	<p>Mrs. Christine Luzi Director of Guidance 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1251</p>
<p>Massachusetts General Laws, Ch. 76, S. 5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion and sexual orientation. 	<p>Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229</p>
<p>Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards. 	<p>Mr. Jonathan D. Ford Deputy Superintendent 232 Pearl Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229</p>
<p>603 CMR 46.00</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Governs the use of physical restraint on students in publicly funded schools. 	<p>Mrs. Heather Tucker Special Education Director 137 Walnut Street (781) 344 – 4000 x 7321</p>

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to challenge individuals to reach their potential in an educational environment that promotes excellence.

The Stoughton Public School System environment honors excellence, celebrates its diversity, and challenges its members to realize their potential. We set high standards using innovative and inclusive programs that enable students of varying learning styles to achieve success. The partnership between the school system and the community, with our vision of excellence, continues to be a source of community pride.

TELEPHONE/FAX SERVICE

All numbers preceded by (781)

Location	Telephone	Nurse	Fax
Superintendent's Office	344-4000		344-3789
Senior High School	344-7001	344-3914	341-6041
Adult Evening School	341-8701		344-3789
Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School	344-7002	344-4065	297-5263
Edwin A. Jones School	344-7003	344-4116	344-2782
South School	344-7004	344-5514	344-2876
West School	344-7005	344-2558	344-2973
Helen H. Hansen School	344-7006	341-8446	344-4927
Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. School	344-7007	344-6657	344-8271
Joseph H. Gibbons School	344-7008	341-3915	344-2653
Central Switchboard	344-4000		344-3789

SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Molly Cochran, Chair

Mary Kate Pina-Enokian, Vice Chair

Sandra Groppi

Anita Hill

Joseph McDonough

STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS WEB SITE

<http://www.stoughtonschools.org>

PROCEDURES

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL TIMES

Classes begin at 8:30 a.m. No students should arrive earlier than 8:00 a.m., when supervision begins. Please be aware that additional staff members are not on duty until 8:15 a.m. Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. will be considered tardy. After 8:30, parents need to accompany their children to the office to have them signed in.

Regular dismissal time is 2:45 p.m. Any changes in your child's dismissal procedure must be in writing. Emergency dismissal may occur due to unforeseen circumstances. Information on emergency dismissal must be up to date and on file in the office. Verbal permission will be acceptable only under these circumstances.

According to state law students arriving at school after 11:30 or leaving school before 11:30 are considered absent for the day.

Dismissal During School Hours

It is in the best interest of your child's education to schedule your child's doctor, dental and other appointments after school hours. If this is not possible, please send your child with a note to his/her teacher indicating who will be coming for dismissal and at what time. This note will be forwarded to the office. For your child's safety, if someone other than a known parent or guardian will be coming to pick up your child, we will require identification.

BICYCLE SAFETY and YOUTH HELMET LAW

According to the Massachusetts Youth Helmet Law MGL, Ch. 85, Sec. 11B, Any person 16 years of age or younger must wear a properly fastened bicycle helmet when riding as the driver or passenger of a bicycle, a skateboard, in-line skates or a scooter.

This law applies to riding on streets, bike paths, sidewalks and in parks, parking lots or other public ways. The helmet must fit the person's head and be secured by straps at all times.

Students must provide written permission from a parent or guardian in order to be allowed to ride a bicycle to and/or from school.

Students must have a means of securing their bicycle safely during school hours. The school accepts no responsibility for bicycles that are stolen or damaged when left unattended on school grounds.

BIRTHDAYS

Different schools and different teachers within them celebrate birthdays in their own individual ways. Please refer to the SPS Wellness Policy for approved practices for celebrating birthdays. *Please do not send birthday party invitations to school unless ALL of the children in the class are invited.* We also discourage birthday party conversations at school so that children do not feel left out.

BUILDING SECURITY

All school building exits will be locked during school hours. The main entrance to each school has a monitoring system. All visitors must report immediately to the school office upon entering a school building and wear a Visitor's Pass while in the building.

CLOTHING/DRESSCODE/APPEARANCE

All students from Kindergarten through Grade 5 have art and physical education classes once a week. To protect their clothing, children should bring in an old smock or shirt that can be left in school for art classes or arts and crafts projects done in their classroom. All students are required to wear sneakers for their physical education classes.

Children often benefit from having an extra sweater or sweatshirt in their backpack for changes in temperature both inside the building and at recess time.

A label with your child's name should be clearly marked on any outer wear such as jackets, coats, sweaters, hats, boots, and mittens. Please also label your child's lunch box.

We realize that style of dress is a matter of personal taste. However, we do expect that students will dress in a neat, clean, safe, and modest manner. Concern for personal appearance is an indication of self-respect and of courtesy toward others.

Clothing or jewelry that displays obscene or profane language, offensive images, and/or illegal substances is not acceptable in school. Clothing such as halter tops, half shirts, tube tops, low cut shirts, spaghetti straps and shorts (no shorter than mid-thigh) are not allowed. Hats and hoods are not allowed to be worn in the building. Hats worn for religious or medical reasons are allowed.

For safety purposes, children should not wear shoes without backs or open toe sandals, as these may cause children to slip and fall during recess and on stairwells. Footwear, such as heeled shoes, that would scratch, discolor or mar any floor in the school is not acceptable. *Sneakers are highly recommended.*

If any items of clothing/footwear are deemed to be inappropriate or offensive, the principal may ask the student to change his/her clothing and/or call home to obtain more suitable attire.

CONFERENCES AND SCHOOL VISITS

By working together, parents, guardians and school staff can help to promote children's academic, social and emotional growth. Teachers and principals welcome conferences with parents and guardians throughout the school year. Arrangements for such conferences may be made by contacting the teacher and/or principal to schedule a mutually convenient and agreeable time.

Parent-Teacher Conferences for this year will be held on Early Release Thursdays on December 15, 2016 and March 9, 2017.

DEVICES IN SCHOOLS

Toys, and electronic devices are a hindrance to students' attention and safety during the school day, and possession of these items by students is prohibited in school.

Cell phones are a hindrance to students' attention during the school day. Cell phones are to remain off during the school day.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES, SKATEBOARDS, ROLLERBLADES, SCOOTERS, AND MOTORIZED VEHICLES

Students are not allowed to bring electronic devices (e.g. games, I-pods, CD players, Discman, Gameboys or MP-3's) to school.

The school will not be responsible for their loss or damage. Trading cards are not allowed in school. Cameras are not allowed in school without the permission of the teacher or the principal.

Students may not bring skateboards, rollerblades, scooters, or any motorized vehicles to school. They are prohibited on school property.

EMERGENCY FORMS

Emergency Forms, completed yearly by parents and kept on file in the Principal's Office, supply information in emergency situations when parents cannot be reached. Adults designated by parents will be contacted; if these persons are unable to supply information that will put school officials in touch with the parents, then the emergency form will be accepted as parental permission for treatment in medical emergencies. Notations concerning a child's allergies should be specifically mentioned on this form.

Telephone numbers and email addresses on the emergency form must be kept updated. In addition to your home, work, and cell phone numbers and email address, please list at least two other names and numbers of people who may be contacted in case we cannot reach you and who live or work in close proximity to the school. We also need to know the telephone numbers related to change of employment.

FOOD

Students are encouraged to bring a healthy and nutritious snack and lunch. Soda, gum and glass containers are not permitted.

GIFTS TO SCHOOL PERSONEL

Students and their parents are discouraged from the presentation of gifts to school employees on holidays and at the end of the school year.

The State Ethics Commission has provided new amendments to the regulations on gift-giving and acceptance. Public employees cannot accept gifts that are \$50.00 or more, during the course of the whole year. Disclosure of the gift may be required if the appearance of a conflict of interest exists. Although teachers appreciate your generosity, they are bound to the state regulations. Teachers are allowed to accept a gift with an aggregated value of up to a maximum of \$150 per year from current students/parents as long as the gift is identified only as being from the class and the identity of givers and the amounts given are not identified to the recipient. A teacher may accept a gift to the classroom that is to be used for the class and which will become the property of the school district.

The most appreciated gifts are those which the children make themselves or the writing of letters which express your gratitude or appreciation.

HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Recognizing that children learn at different rates and need different amounts of time to complete independent assignments at home, the homework guidelines for elementary school students are as follows:

Grades 1-5	Students will bring home assignments Monday through Thursday evenings.
Grade 1:	Approximately 10 minutes per night
Grade 2:	Approximately 20 minutes per night
Grade 3:	Approximately 30 minutes per night
Grade 4:	Approximately 40 minutes per night
Grade 5:	Approximately 50 minutes per night

- ❖ Assignments generally will not be given over the weekend unless students are working on a long-term project.

Nightly assignments may include spelling and vocabulary work; reading and writing assignments related to fiction, non-fiction, poetry, science, math, and social studies; comprehension questions; math practice and problem-solving.

Homework assignments are valuable for several reasons: 1) they continue to strengthen students' reading and writing skills; 2) they provide students the opportunity to practice their understanding of what they have learned in class; and 3) they ask students to respond to problems by integrating the content and skills they have learned in different areas of the curriculum.

We encourage you to set aside time each evening for your child to complete the assigned homework in a quiet place and to take an active interest in what he or she is learning in school.

If your son or daughter is spending an excessive amount of time on their homework that far exceeds the time guidelines listed above, please call your child's teacher.

In addition to homework assignments, students should read or be read to for at least 15 minutes each night. Your support in making reading a lifelong habit will help your child progress in every content area.

LEGAL DOCUMENTATION

Copies of ALL legal documents related to the child (e.g. custody, restraining orders) must be filed in the office at the registration of the child and again when any changes are made.

LOST AND FOUND

The collection site is maintained in the hallway near the lobby. Please remember to check here for missing items. If clothing and lunch boxes are labeled, your child is more apt to arrive home with his/her own.

Items lost on the school bus remain on the bus to be claimed on the next trip. Eyeglasses and musical instruments are the exceptions. These are taken immediately to the "Lost and Found" at the bus company.

MONEY

Money may be collected for various reasons by school personnel. All money should be put in an envelope and sealed. The child's name, room number, amount, and the purpose for which the money is being sent should be clearly written on the envelope. Money should be sent promptly. Correct change is much appreciated.

Only cash or bank checks (not personal checks) can be used for payment of bus transportation, lost books, preschool tuition, lunch and milk money and summer school. Electronic payments can be made for lunch using www.schoolcafe.com.

NO SCHOOL PROCEDURES/DELAYED OPENING

No School Procedures/Delayed Opening If school will be cancelled, or the start time delayed, a phone call will be made by our automated emergency phone notification system. Announcements will also be posted on the district-wide website. Stoughtonschools.org. Announcements will also be made on WBZ radio and Channels 4, 5, 7, 25 on television.

Please do NOT call the police station about possible school closings as this will tie up emergency lines.

Please do NOT call the school, as this also will tie up the phone lines. In some cases, there may be a delayed start in the opening of school in order to clean the roads/sidewalks of snow.

Please do not send your child(ren) in earlier than the delayed opening as there is no staff to supervise the children.

NOTES FOR TARDINESS, ABSENCE AND DISMISSAL

When is a note needed from a doctor?

1. If a child has been absent due to illness for five or more consecutive days, a doctor's note is required.
2. If a child has an appointment during the school day.

When is a note needed from a parent or guardian?

1. to indicate a child is going home other than his/her usual way
2. for dismissal during school day
3. if someone other than a parent/guardian is picking up a child
4. for any activity after school
5. for being tardy (or parent accompanies child to office)

PLEASE SIGN AND DATE ALL NOTES.

NOTICES

Notices will be distributed via email whenever possible, or unless indicated by a parent that a hard copy is needed. Notices are also available on each school web site in the electronic Backpack. Please find time to read each one. This is our means of communicating with you regarding milk money, school policies, parent-teacher conferences, and other special events.

PETS

Students are not allowed to bring animals to school.

REPORT CARDS

Several years ago, as part of a sweeping Education Reform Act in Massachusetts, Curriculum Frameworks in English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Engineering/Technology, History/Social Science, Fine Arts, Health/Physical Education, and Foreign Language were created to set Learning Standards for what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.

Report cards will be issued three times a year. They will include many specific items related to the knowledge and skills your child should attain by the end of the school year. Our marking system is standards-based. This means that the students will be assessed as to the progress they are making in achieving standards based on grade level expectations and state/federal guidelines for what is developmentally appropriate. As always, if parents/guardians have any questions regarding the content or categories of report cards, they are encouraged to contact the classroom teacher.

The numbers indicate the following:

- 4 Exceeding the grade level standard. Producing quality work consistently.
- 3 Meeting the grade level standard. Producing quality work.
- 2 Progressing toward the standard. Producing required grade level work with direction and assistance.
- 1 Beginning to develop the standard. Not yet able to produce required grade level work.
- M Modified work or program. Student is accessing the curriculum at his/her identified level of ability.
- N/A Standard not addressed this term.

An information guide regarding the standards-based report card, rubrics and a copy of the report card are available on line at stoughtonschools.org or a hard copy can be requested so that you can see how your child is progressing toward achieving the standards. Please keep in touch with your child's teacher to find out how you can be helping at home as well.

SCHOOL SAFETY PROCEDURES

Emergency Safety Procedures

The elementary schools have developed a set of procedures/protocols to be followed in the event of one of a variety of emergency situations. Those "events" are 1) Shelter in Place/Lockdown, 2) Safe Zone within Building, 3) Emergency Re-Entry into the building, 4) Evacuation/Fire. These procedures are practiced periodically, sometimes with the assistance of the Stoughton Fire Department. During a Shelter in Place drill, no one will be allowed to enter or exit the building. As always, the children's emotional safety is equally important to their physical well-being, therefore, all attempts are made to handle drills and actual situations in a developmentally appropriate, supportive fashion. A copy of the protocols is kept in each office and reviewed periodically by school personnel.

Dangerous Items and Weapons

Potentially dangerous or hazardous items, which could threaten the safety of children and/or adults, are prohibited in school, on school grounds, and on school buses. These items include, but are not limited to, guns, knives, razor blades, slingshots, baseball bats, laser pointers, or any toy weapons that might appear to be real. Students who bring such items to school may face disciplinary action.

The Stoughton Public School System is a chemical-free and weapons-free district. The guidelines for student behavior and the discipline code adopted for each building are designed to protect students from the irresponsible behavior of others. Most importantly, all students are directly accountable for the consequences of their behaviors.

To ensure the safety and security of all students into the schools, the Stoughton Public School System reserves the right to conduct warrantless searches of students, their possessions, and school lockers, providing that there is a reasonable basis for the search. Therefore, students should have no expectations of privacy in these areas. The School Committee also authorizes unannounced searches using drug-sniffing dogs in any one of the school buildings to make certain that illegal drugs are not being brought onto school grounds and into the schools.

Fire Alarms, Bomb Threats, and other Threats of Violence

Pulling a fire alarm, calling in a bomb threat or making threats of violence endangers the safety of students and staff. They are very serious offenses and may be grounds for suspension and possible expulsion.

SCHOOL INSURANCE

Forms for purchasing insurance are sent home with each child early in the school year. If you are interested, fill out the forms then mail them directly to the company in the envelope provided.

STOUGHTON SPECIAL EDUCATION PARENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (SSEPAC)

The Stoughton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (S-SEPAC) is a group mandated by Chapter 766 and established by the district to represent and support the needs and interests of parents and children with disabilities. The S-SEPAC advises the school committee and school administration on issues related to students with disabilities, educates families and community members about the needs of students with disabilities, provide information and support to parents of children with disabilities. Anyone, whether or not you are a parent of a child with disabilities, is invited to any of the meetings. The monthly meeting dates and agendas are posted on the school web sites.

TOBACCO FREE ZONES

All Stoughton Public School buildings and grounds are *tobacco-free zones*. This includes, but is not limited to the prohibition of cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco and smokeless cigarettes.

VOLUNTEERS/CORI/FINGERPRINTING

Parent volunteerism is a critical component of the education of Stoughton's children. There are many opportunities throughout the year for parents to volunteer in our schools. If you are interested in volunteering at your child's school, please fill out and return the volunteer request form that is sent home to every family in the fall. Your service as a volunteer is deeply appreciated. Students in the Stoughton Public Schools have the right to expect that all volunteers will keep information about the students confidential. As such you will be required to sign a Student Privacy Statement and Volunteer Confidentiality Agreement when you become a volunteer.

Along with the volunteer form, we will be sending a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information). Please be aware that the Massachusetts State Law requires every volunteer to fill out a CORI before he or she can participate in our volunteer programs, classroom activities or field trips. A CORI must be completed every year. You are encouraged to fill one out in September so that you are covered for the year.

The following is information with regards to the finger-printing policy for the Stoughton Public Schools.

Parents who help out at the school and do not have direct, unmonitored contact with children will not be required to undergo fingerprinting but you must have a current CORI on file.

In addition to a current CORI form, volunteers for daytime and overnight field trips will be required to undergo fingerprinting since they may have the opportunity for direct and unmonitored contact with children.

MorphoTrust USA has been contracted by the State to conduct fingerprinting. Registration for a fingerprinting appointment may be made online by visiting: <http://www.identogo.com/FP/Massachusetts> and select Online Scheduling. Appointments may also be made over the phone at (866) 349-8130. You will need to provide Stoughton Public Schools DESE Organization Code: 02850000. There is a fee of \$35.00 associated with this process.

Fingerprints will not be taken without acceptable identification presented at your fingerprinting appointment. All documents must be verifiable and unexpired with an identifiable photo, the applicant's name and date of birth. The following are considered acceptable forms.

- Driver's license from any U.S. state or territory
- Valid State Identification Card from any U.S. state or territory
- U.S. Passport or U.S. Passport Card

Once fingerprinting has been completed, individuals will be provided with a fingerprinting receipt which can be brought to the school so a copy can be submitted to the Superintendent's office which will confirm your fingerprints have been captured.

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

We believe in encouraging consistent behavior by rewarding positive student behaviors. Our effort is to "catch them being good". In this way, we hope to help children develop good decision-making skills and become a credit to their families, school, and community.

To this end, the faculty and staff of the Stoughton Elementary Schools pledge themselves to make every opportunity available for students to be successful each day and to develop behaviors that are good for themselves and others.

To continue fostering the good manners parents teach their children at home, we encourage students to respond politely to their classmates and to staff members with words like "please, thank you, and excuse me." We also expect them to apologize when they have done something to upset or hurt someone else.

We expect children to use the following behaviors as part of their daily routine at school:

1. Greet others in a friendly way.
2. Talk softly.
3. Walk quietly everywhere in the building.
4. Save running for gym or recess activities.
5. Listen and follow directions.
6. Raise your hand to speak.
7. Speak one at a time. Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking.
8. Do not borrow unless you have asked permission.
9. Treat all people and property with respect.
10. Take pride in how your school looks. Help to keep classrooms, bathrooms and the cafeteria clean.
11. Use bathrooms with respect for other people's privacy.
12. Use all school equipment with care.

CAFETERIA BEHAVIOR

1. Reasonable behavior is expected at all times.
2. Students are expected to be polite and use appropriate table manners.
3. Students are to use a normal tone of conversation.
4. Cafeteria supervisors and student volunteers are to be shown respect and listened to carefully.
5. Students are to stay seated unless permission is given to move about the room.
6. Students are expected to clean up after themselves.

PLAYGROUND BEHAVIOR

We realize that time on the playground allows children an opportunity to release their energy. Lunch recess is supervised by staff members who monitor the safe use of equipment and are there to help anyone who is injured.

Safety is the key word at recess.

Students are expected to follow all school rules at recess and to pay special attention to these behaviors to maintain safety on the playground:

1. Students should know the boundaries of the play area and should not go beyond them.
2. Students should "play fair" and share the playground facilities and equipment.
3. Students are not allowed to handle or throw dangerous objects such as rocks, sticks and snowballs.
4. Students should immediately report any injuries to the recess supervisors.
5. Students should line up promptly when the bell rings to end recess or when it is announced.

SCHOOL SERVICES/PROGRAMS

BUILDING BASED SUPPORT TEAM

When a question arises about a student's success in school, teachers may request that the student is discussed by a team of teachers whose job it is to help the teacher provide the best environment for that child. Building Based Support Teams are an integral part of supporting all students, regardless of specific disabilities or services by bringing professionals together to brainstorm, offer suggestions and initiate accommodations to the curriculum or classroom environment. Parents/guardians will be informed when their child is brought up to a BBST meeting.

DISTRICT CURRICULUM ACCOMODATION PLAN

To further meet the needs of all students, school districts across Massachusetts including Stoughton, have developed a plan to help ALL students succeed in school. For more information on this plan, please contact your building principal or assistant superintendent.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

The Stoughton Public Schools offer a variety of services for the children of Stoughton who are 3, 4 and 5 years old.

Preschool: Integrated preschool classes for 3 and 4 year old children are located at the Jones School. Enrollment in an integrated class includes special needs children and peer models. Children with special needs are enrolled in the classes based on an evaluation and the recommendation of the Team that determines eligibility of a child for these classes. Peer models are selected for classes through a screening process and a lottery system.

Screenings: If a parent suspects his/her child may have a delay in cognitive, speech/language skills, and/or motor skills, he/she should contact the preschool office to obtain more information on a screening. Screenings are available annually for children 2.9 to 4 years old. Kindergarten children are also screened annually in the areas of readiness, speech/language, motor development and play skills. Parents are always notified about their child's screening results.

FERPA

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

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

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School principal [or appropriate school official] a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The School official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- 2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent, or eligible student, believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the School to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School principal [or appropriate school official], clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the School decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the School will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

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

One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and

law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the School has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

[Optional] Upon request, the School discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. [NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.]

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

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202- 4605

[NOTE: In addition, a school may want to include its directory information public notice, as required by § 99.37 of the regulations, with its annual notification of rights under FERPA.]

GENERAL CURRICULUM

The general curriculum of the Stoughton Elementary Schools follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. English/Language Arts, Math, Science/Technology and Engineering, and Social Studies are all taught in ways intended to provide the maximum learning experiences for children. Curriculum guidelines and frameworks are available from your school's principal.

GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

The elementary school guidance counselors work with parents, pupils, and teachers to develop open lines of communication. The purpose of counseling is to clarify personal, social, and academic issues.

Counseling may take place in a one-to-one, small group, or classroom setting. The nature of the information discussed is held in strict confidence. The opportunity to participate in counseling may be initiated by parent, teacher, or pupil. All pupil participation in ongoing guidance programs must be approved by the child's parent(s). However, the counseling staff may be brought in at any time, to help resolve conflicts or help maintain a positive climate in the school.

HOMELESS: Information for Families and Students

The Stoughton Public Schools, under the provisions of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, provide safeguards for all homeless children. Children and youths who "lack a *fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence*" are considered homeless for educational purposes. This includes those who:

- are "doubled up"- sharing the housing of friends or relatives due to the loss of housing, economic hardship or a similar reason;
- are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
- are living in emergency or transitional shelters;
- are abandoned in hospitals;
- are awaiting foster care placement;
- 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;
- are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings;
- are migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are living in circumstances described above;
- are *unaccompanied youths*- adolescents who are not in the physical custody of their parents.

To the extent feasible, homeless students are encouraged to remain at their school of origin, unless it is against the wishes of the parent, guardian or student. A student who becomes homeless has the right to attend:

- a) their school of origin – either the school the student was attending prior to the loss of permanent housing or the last school the student attended; or
- b) their local school – any public school that students living in the same attendance area have the right to attend.

Homeless students will be enrolled immediately, even if regularly required documentation is missing. Homeless students will not be kept out of school even if they are missing:

- ❖ immunization records
- ❖ proof of residency
- ❖ proof of guardianship
- ❖ previous academic records
- ❖ medical records
- ❖ social security card

The Stoughton Public Schools will assume responsibility for providing a homeless student(s) with transportation to his/her school of origin, if it is feasible for the student to stay in the school of origin and the parent or guardian request it. This provision applies as follows:

- a) If the student continues to live in the district where the school of origin is located, the district will provide or arrange for transportation.
- b) If the student moves outside of the district but wishes to continue attending the school of origin, the Stoughton Public Schools and the district where the student resides will work out a means of apportioning cost and the responsibility for transportation.
- c) Students who transfer to a school located in the attendance area of their temporary residence will receive comparable transportation services to any other student residing in the district.

Students are allowed to remain in their school of origin for the duration of their homelessness, or if they secure permanent housing, for the remainder of the school year.

Immediate assistance is available at each school from the Principal and the Guidance Department.

Additional assistance is available from the Stoughton Public School's Assistant Superintendent, who acts as the District's Homeless Liaison, at (781) 344 – 4000 x 1229.

HEALTH INFORMATION

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Law 603 CMR 23.06 (3), all students' health records will be destroyed within five years of the date a student withdraws from the Stoughton Public School System. The only exception is that the health record of any student who received an immunization in the Stoughton School System will be kept for at least ten years following the end of the calendar year in which the vaccination was administered.

Inspection of Hair for Signs of Head Lice

Children are not routinely screened for head lice in school. If you discover that your child has head lice, please notify the school nurse as soon as possible.

In accordance with the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses, the Stoughton Public School System adopts the following policy for the management of Pediculosis (Head Lice).

It is the position of the Stoughton Public School System that the management of pediculosis should not disrupt the educational process. Children found with live head lice or children with nits who have had no recent treatment will be dismissed to parents/guardians for treatment. Because no disease process is associated with head lice, students will not be excluded from school after the appropriate lice treatment. Upon the student's return, the school nurse will determine the evidence of treatment and the child may be readmitted even if some nits remain. Further monitoring for signs of re-infestation by the school nurse is appropriate.

Immunizations

Records are continually inspected so that all children will be immunized according to the requirements and standards set up by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Your school nurse will notify you if your child is due for immunizations. To avoid possible exclusion from school, please follow up with the school nurse as soon as possible if receiving a notice. In addition, children entering kindergarten are required to have proof of a lead screening test and ask that documentation of the TB risk assessment be provided.

Mantoux Testing

A policy adopted by the Stoughton School Committee states that any student entering the Stoughton Public Schools from a country deemed to have a high prevalence of tuberculosis (determination made by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health) is tested for tuberculosis before entering the school system.

Medications

When medicine must be given in school, please contact your school nurse to be advised of the proper procedure and to obtain required medication forms. Medication of any kind, prescription or over-the-counter, cannot be brought to school by a child. Medicine should be delivered to school in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container by a parent or a responsible adult. *Medicines will not be given unless they are in their properly labeled container.*

No over-the-counter medicine will be given in school that does not come from home with a note from the parent. Prescription medication requires the following: 1) signed Medication Order from a physician, 2) signed Administration Parent Consent form, 3) no more than a thirty-day supply of medicine delivered to the school nurse.

Physical Examinations

In accordance with Massachusetts General Law 105 CMR 200.000, physical examinations are to be done within one year prior to entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry and at intervals of either three or four years thereafter. The physical exam needs to be performed by the student's own health care provider who shall record the results of the physical examination on health record forms approved by the Department of Public Health and provide a copy of this record containing the results of the examination and any recommendations to the school. To comply with this regulation, all entering kindergarten students and grade 4 students need to provide a copy of a physical exam form to the school nurse. A student transferring from another school system shall be examined as an entering student and their health record from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement.

Mandated Screenings

Parents and legal guardians can choose to not have a child participate in any of the mandated screenings. A signed note must be sent to the school nurse identifying which screening the parent would like the child exempt from.

Height and Weight Measurements

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws and Regulations Pertaining to Growth Screening 105 CMR 200.000, the weight and height shall be measured for each student in grades 1 and 4, and that the student's Body Mass Index (BMI) score and corresponding percentile are calculated. The student's height, weight, BMI score and corresponding percentile shall be recorded and maintained in the student's school health record. Every effort shall be made to protect the privacy of the student during the screening. Trained school personnel or other personnel with access to the student's health information or records shall not disclose the height, weight or BMI calculations of an individual student, either verbally or in written form, to anyone other than the parent and/or legal guardian without written permission of the parent and/or legal guardian.

Scoliosis Screening

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 57, requires that all children grades 5 through 9 have postural screening annually. This screening is done in PE class. Notices will be sent to parents before screening begins with information regarding the entire screening procedure.

Vision/Hearing Screening

All students in Grades 1 – 5 are screened for vision annually and students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 are screened annually for hearing. All students entering kindergarten are required to show certification of a preschool vision screening examination by their health care provider. This examination should include screening for stereopsis. The parents of any child who fails the hearing and/or vision examinations will be notified. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child's hearing or vision, please contact your school nurse.

Additional Health Information

For your child's welfare and for the protection of others, we would like to ask your cooperation in keeping your child home from school if he/she exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- Fever within the last 24 hours
- Sore throat with swollen glands
- Other contagious symptoms such as vomiting; diarrhea; frequent productive cough; thick, nasal discharge; red, draining eyes
- Undiagnosed rash or skin eruptions

If your child is ill and will not be attending school, please contact the school nurse. If there are any changes to your child's health history, please contact the school nurse ASAP.

If your child is not covered by health insurance, please speak with your school nurse. She can provide you with information about the Children's Medical Security Plan, a health insurance plan for children under the age of 18.

Health Education

Health education seeks to protect, promote and improve the health status of students.

LUNCH/BREAKFAST PROGRAM

The Stoughton Elementary Schools offer a lunch and breakfast program to all students each day. Lunches vary from a main menu choice to bagel, pretzel, salads and cereals and include milk. Menus are sent home monthly. Milk and/or dessert can be purchased separately. Free and Reduced lunch and breakfast are available to qualified families. Applications are sent home at the beginning of each year, upon registration or request. Payment must be made in cash, bank check or money order - personal checks are not accepted. Electronic payments can be made for lunch using www.parentonline.net.

All elementary schools are now operating a computerized tally system with student PIN numbers. Prepaying up to a month at a time is welcome and encouraged to speed up the lunch lines. There is a link to the payment portal under the Food Services section of the Stoughton Schools web site at www.stoughtonschools.org. Questions can be directed to Edward Gilbert, Director of Food Services at 344-4000 x1051.

SERVICES UNDER SECTION 504

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

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

In order to fulfill its obligations under Section 504, the Stoughton Public Schools recognizes a responsibility to avoid discrimination in policies and practices regarding its personnel and students. No discrimination against any person with a handicap will knowingly be permitted within any of the programs and practices of the school system.

The Stoughton Public School System has specific responsibilities under the Act, which include the responsibility to identify, evaluate, and, if the child is determined to be eligible, to afford access to educational services. If the parent or guardian disagrees with the determination made by the professional staff of the Stoughton Public Schools, she or he has a right to a hearing with an impartial hearing officer. If you have any questions about Section 504, please feel free to call your building principal.

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. These services can include, but are not limited to, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Parents or teachers may refer students they are concerned about to the Special Education Department. 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). Upon 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 specialized instruction and /or related services. Such students are then 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 school guidance counselor, school principal, or the Stoughton Public Schools' Administrator of Special Education.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The Stoughton Public Schools provide complete evaluation services - a diagnostic assessment of the student's educational needs. When a student referral is received, parents are immediately notified concerning the need for a full or intermediate evaluation. They are also provided with a description of both processes and a delineation of their rights with a consent form with which to indicate their permission for an evaluation. The student is then evaluated by a team of specialists from the Stoughton Public Schools. Following this evaluation, the team meets with the student's parents to present its findings, to determine what auxiliary services are needed, and to develop an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). If necessary, specialists from approved facilities are contacted to provide additional specialized diagnostic services. When the plan is approved by the parents, it is immediately implemented.

SPECIAL SUBJECTS

Within each of our elementary schools, students participate in five specialty areas. They have a forty-two minute class each week in library, music, art, physical education and computers. In each area, specific skills are taught in coordination with grade level themes and state standards.

Art Education

Art is a natural and necessary part of our daily lives. Art expression promotes the development of the individual. At all levels, opportunities are provided to appreciate many techniques and to experience a variety of media. In the kindergarten, the manipulation and the use of art materials are a major factor in developing readiness skills. Students in grades K-5 receive art instruction weekly with a specialist.

Computer Education

The pace and growth of our computer education program is dramatically visible in the accomplishments of our young students. The children benefit from regularly scheduled instructional periods each week as they gain a broad array of skills: keyboarding, word processing, composition, programming, exploring databases, and responsible use of the Internet. Computer learning is also integrated into all areas of the curriculum.

Library Program

The literate elementary school student reads widely beyond the basic reading required in classroom subjects. Magazines, newspapers, and library books are all critical parts of the reading menu for a child.

Each elementary school has a library that contains a large, varied collection of books, periodicals and audiovisual articles. A staff of five library assistants coordinates library services in the five elementary schools.

Students have the opportunity to make use of the library when they meet the library staff on a weekly basis with their class. The library program also offers students time for research or to work on projects.

Music Education

The Music Program at the elementary level is divided into two categories, instrumental and vocal. The scope of the instruction extends from classroom to small groups of instrumental lessons and to various performing groups.

Every child is encouraged to participate and to develop his or her musical skill through the multi-faceted program. All areas of instrumental class instruction are provided at no charge through grade five. Woodwinds, brass, and percussion classes begin at the fourth grade level. Students in grades 4 and 5 who are participating in band either rent or purchase their instruments. Recorders are purchased by students in grade 3 at a nominal cost.

Physical Education

Physical Education classes in Stoughton Elementary Schools are an integral part of the child's educational experience. Skills, knowledge and attitudes are developed in many areas. The atmosphere in the gym is much like any other class and requires the same type of attention, concentration, cooperation, and 100 percent effort that is expected in other subjects.

Since students do not change clothes for the movement lessons, it is important that on their gym days, they come to school dressed to move. It is important that your child wear comfortable clothes that permit freedom of movement on all playing surfaces. Students must wear sneakers to participate.

REGISTRATION

Children must be five (5) years of age on or before August 31 of the ensuing school year to be admitted to kindergarten.

Children should register at the elementary school in the district where they live. Registration for kindergarten will be conducted in the various districts for two days in March each year. A child may accompany the parent at the time of registration, but it is not necessary.

You must provide the child's birth certificate, immunization record, and two proofs of residency (mortgage or lease statement and utility bill). The school department reserves the right to confirm actual living arrangements by home visits. See appendix E for the Residency Policy.

The hours for registration in March are 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 A.M. and 1:00 P.M. to 2:00 P.M. at these locations:

H. H. Hansen School	Main Lobby
South School	Main Lobby
West School	Library
J.R. Dawe School	Main Lobby
J.H. Gibbons School	Main Lobby

Grade One Admission

Only children who will be six (6) years of age on or before August 31 will be admitted to grade one on the opening of school in September.

TESTING

Throughout the year, teachers use a variety of tests to assess student progress. Elementary students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 participate in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) testing and partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC). Students in Grades 3, 4, and 5 take both Language Arts and Math tests with PARCC. Students in Grade 5 will also be tested in two other curriculum areas: Science and Technology/ Engineering, and History and Social Science.

TRANSFERS

New students transferring into the Stoughton Public Schools will be required to submit a transfer card from a certified school for enrollment at the appropriate grade level, and a certificate of immunization, according to School Immunization Law, Chapter 76, Section 15, of the General Laws of Massachusetts.

Parents/guardians must also submit proof of residency including but not limited to rental/ownership agreements, utility bills, notarized affidavits from homeowners. (See Appendix D)

TRANSPORTATION

Elementary students who live two or more miles from the school are eligible for free bus transportation.

Kindergarten students will not be dropped off at a bus stop unless a parent is present or a responsible adult or older student who has been designated by that parent/guardian is present. If parents/guardians want to give permission for an adult and/or older student to be responsible meeting their kindergarten student, they must submit name(s) of that person(s) in writing to the school office. Copies of these permission slips will be provided to the bus company. Throughout the year, please remember to keep this information updated.

Students not entitled to transportation may apply to ride as a Pay & Ride Student. You can pay online at www.stoughtonschools.org by using a credit card, or pay with cash or a money order at your child's school office. Pay & Ride transportation service is limited to space availability.

To avoid confusion or overcrowding on the buses, students must use their assigned stop for pick-up and drop-off. Non-bus students are not allowed to ride the bus, and bus students are not allowed to ride a bus other than the one to which they have been assigned. Exceptions to these rules will only be made in emergency situations with the expressed permission of the principal or his/her designee, provided there is space available.

Please be patient with bus pick-up and drop-off times during inclement weather. Severe rain/snow or other traffic conditions may cause buses to arrive at stops later than their usual times.

Rules and Behavioral Expectations for Bus Students

These policies are intended for daily riders as well as students on field trips. Many people have responsibilities for safety when students ride buses:

The bus contractor maintains equipment, hires and trains drivers. The driver is in charge of bus and students and may reprimand a child for any action that might cause harm to him or herself or others. Parents should assist school personnel in encouraging safe riding habits. Students will behave in a manner conducive to the safety of all passengers.

If questions arise, parents are encouraged to contact the school principal regarding school transportation policies.

Students riding the bus are expected to cooperate in the following ways:

1. Arrive at bus stop at least 10 minutes before scheduled pick-up time. Please understand that times of bus arrival may vary depending upon traffic or weather conditions.
2. Wait on sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, then stand well off the road.
3. Wait until approaching bus stops and doors are opened before moving toward the bus.
4. When boarding or leaving the bus, cross the street in front of the bus at a distance of about ten feet and only cross the street with the signal of the bus driver.
5. Enter the bus in an orderly fashion.
6. Remain seated until bus reaches its destination.
7. Board and leave bus only at designated stops.
8. Ride assigned bus only.
9. Refrain from throwing snow while waiting for or disembarking from the bus.
10. Have written permission from home if student is to be excused from riding his/her bus.
11. Maintain conduct and courtesy expected in any school situation.

Only the Principal or Superintendent or his/her designee may deny transportation as disciplinary action.

If a behavioral problem on the school bus is reported to the Principal, the student will be spoken to, there may be a loss of privileges (e.g. recess), and the parent or guardian may be contacted. Bus privileges may be suspended immediately if the first offense is of a serious nature.

If a student persists in inappropriate behavior on the school bus, which is excessively rude or disrespectful or which endangers his/her own or other's safety, the student's parent or guardian will be contacted and his/her bus privileges may be suspended.

1.

Bus Evacuation Situations

There are situations that require evacuation of a bus. These include:

- Fire or danger of fire
- Fuel spill or smell of fuel
- Unsafe position due to accident/mechanical failure
- Possibility of bus rollover
- Bus is likely to be struck by other vehicles

Evacuation of a bus may be accomplished by:

- Front (main) door evacuation
- Rear door evacuation
- Front and rear evacuation

There are several important facts to remember when evacuating the bus:

- Getting everyone off the bus in the shortest time possible is the most important part of evacuation.
- Once off the bus, move at least 100 feet from the bus to a safe location.
- Do not take books, backpacks, instruments or other belongings, except for identification.
- When exiting through the rear door, do not jump! "Sit and slide" off the bus.
- The first two students out through the exits (front and rear) should station themselves to assist the remaining students off the bus.
- Bus evacuation drills will be performed annually with all students participating.
- During any evacuation, everyone must pay attention to the driver or whoever is in charge. Everyone must follow instructions and cooperate in order to complete the evacuation quickly and safely.

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee does recognize that parents of children attending our schools have rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children between the ages of 6 and 16 attend school regularly, in accordance with State law. State law requires the school system to investigate cases of excessive school absence. For this purpose, the Committee defines excessive absence as more than ten (10) unexcused absences per school year. All absences (even those authorized by parents) are considered unexcused unless the required documentation is provided.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons:

- Illness or quarantine (with a doctor's note)
- Bereavement or serious illness in family
- For Observance of major religious holidays
- Legal (with documentation from the court, lawyer etc.)
- Other – a student may be excused for other absences with approval from the school administrator.

Documentation for the above absences should be provided to the school principal or designee within five (5) school days of the absence. Documentation provided after ten (10) school days may require a meeting with a principal or designee. Clear communication between parents and the school is imperative to ensure the safety of students and to reinforce a student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork. Accordingly, parents should provide a written explanation for the absence of a child. This should be provided in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

Family vacations are not considered excused absences. The School Committee strongly discourages families from taking vacation during the school year. When children are absent from school for the purpose of family vacations, their learning is interrupted and their progress may be affected. Teachers will not be required to provide work prior to a student leaving for vacation. The student will be required to make up all missed work upon their return to school.

Truancy is any intentional unauthorized or illegal absence from school or class. The term describes absences caused by students of their own free will, and usually does not refer to legitimate "excused" absences, such as ones related to medical conditions. This includes absence from any class or activity during the school day for which the student is scheduled. It also includes any after-school special help session or disciplinary session that the student has been directed to attend by a teacher or administrator. In such cases when a student has been identified as truant, the school will notify the parent or guardian, classify the day or class as an unexcused absence, and refer the student for discipline as established by the Code of Conduct.

If a child is absent, he or she cannot participate in after-school or evening events on the day(s) on which he or she is absent. The principal will have the authority to excuse a student's absence and allow the student to participate, based on the principal's understanding of the events surrounding the absence.

Each school Principal will be responsible for ensuring a pupil absence notification program is in place in their respective schools. The program shall be designed to ensure that each school notifies a parent or guardian of the child's absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the parent or guardian within 3 days of the absence.

Principals must ensure that notification is provided to the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences within a school year. At the secondary level, with regard to parental notification, for any student that has two or more unexcused periods of attendance within a single school day, the day in its entirety will be considered an unexcused absence and contribute to the total number of unexcused absences used to determine if parental notification is required. School Principals, or a designee, must make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop a plan that includes the specific action steps necessary to address the student's poor attendance. The plan, including the action steps, shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian, and may include suggestions from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies. If a plan cannot be agreed upon, the Principal may declare an impasse and ask the Superintendent, or a designee, to meet with the student and his / her

representative(s), as well as the school administration, to develop an appropriate plan. The plan developed by the Superintendent, or a designee, will be final and not be subject to appeal.

In a case where parents are unresponsive to the school administration's efforts to develop a plan and implement action steps designed to address poor attendance, or in the case where a plan is in place and poor attendance continues, excessive unexcused absences will require unilateral assessment and intervention by the school administration. Interventions may include involvement of a School Resource Officer and the Stoughton Police Department, case management services, and service referrals. In situations in which attendance does not improve despite additional intervention by the school administration, the school may take one or more of the following actions:

- A Failure To Send, Criminal Complaint, against the parent will be sought at the Stoughton District Court
- A 51A for parental neglect will be filed with the Department of Children and Families
- A Child in Need of Supervision (CHINS) petition will be sought at the Dedham District Juvenile Court.

For High School students (in addition to policy stated above):

1. Students enrolled in a semester course (~20 weeks) will be denied credit if they have more than five (5) unexcused absences during the course.
2. Students enrolled in a yearlong course (~40 weeks) will be denied credit if they have more than ten (10) unexcused absences during the course.
3. Students enrolled in a course other than a semester or yearlong course will be denied credit when they exceed a number of unexcused absences determined by multiplying the number of days in the course by 0.0555 and rounding to the nearest whole number.

Students in the high school may earn back days of unexcused absences by attending Saturday School (a day for a day), or its equivalent, as made available by the high school administration. Unexcused absences that result from truancy are not considered eligible to be earned back by attending Saturday School, or its equivalent, unless specifically authorized by the high school Principal.

Additionally, high school seniors may be excused for up to four (4) days for college visits. High school juniors may be excused to attend one (1) session of the annual NACAC National College Fair or its equivalent. Appropriate documentation from a college visit or college fair attendance will be required in order to receive credit for the days.

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 76:1; 76:2; 76:16; 76:20; 119:39E; 119:51A

Approved by School Committee: March 22, 2016

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN

In 2007, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts released a document entitled Direct from the Field: A Guide to Bullying Prevention to serve as a tool to meet the needs of teachers, students and parents in addressing issues related to bullying. The passage below is part of the introduction of this guide and serves to set the framework for understanding the complexity of the issues.

Equipping administrators and teachers to respond more effectively is part of the answer, but the problem is complex and defies simple solutions. The majority of bullying incidents happen outside of the eyes and ears of school personnel – on buses, on sidewalks, on the way home, at sporting events and in bathrooms and locker rooms. Complicity among young people not to share knowledge of incidents of bullying with adults is common, often due to fear of retaliation. Ironically, while targets are disempowered by this code of silence, bullies gain power and prestige from it.

Multiple national studies show it is critical to create an environment of caring and respect in the classroom and school – an environment where children and adults have zero tolerance for acts of disrespect. A culture of caring and respect is fundamental; and to create such a culture, character education and the teaching of pro-social values like tolerance, altruism, empathy and self-assertiveness are essential.

As leaders and educators in the Stoughton Public Schools, we are committed to providing an educational climate that is conducive to student engagement and learning. Our roles and responsibilities as educators will continue to include: (1) providing curriculum and programming that allow students the opportunity to develop social and behavior skills appropriate to a school environment; and (2) when a student disrupts the educational environment for others, employing a wide range of interventions appropriate to the nature of the conduct and age of the student. There is no place for student – to – student harassment and bullying within the Stoughton Public Schools as these attacks on human dignity are antithetical to the healthy educational, social and emotional growth of our students.

PRIORITY STATEMENT

The Stoughton Public Schools (SPS) expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and demonstrate a respect for diversity. The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan (Plan) is a comprehensive approach to specifically addressing the issues related to bullying and cyber-bullying. The SPS is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor, to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet postings.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are explicitly prohibited:

1. on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school; and
2. at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, through the use of technology or an electronic device, which is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses; infringe on their rights at school; or materially, and substantially, 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.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. Reporting bullying or retaliation.

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

Use of an Incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in each student handbook for students and parents or guardians; 2) 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 3) 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.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, 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 made available to parents or guardians.

1. Reporting by Staff

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

2. Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians and Others

The school or district expects students, parents, guardians and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the principal or designee. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents, 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.

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation.

1. Student Safety

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of, and after, the investigation, as necessary.

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

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to parents or guardians

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

b. Notice to Another School or District

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

c. Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. 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.

C. Investigation

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

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

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

D. Determinations

The principal or designee will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigating, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the principal or designee will take steps, reasonably calculated, to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The principal or designee will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any; and 2) determine what responsive action(s) 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) which may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, school officials are generally prohibited from informing the complainant of specific disciplinary action taken against a student—unless it involves a "stay away" or other directive that the victim should be aware of so as to report violations.

E. Responses to Bullying

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the building administration will utilize a wide range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior.

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

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;
- adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and

- making a referral for evaluation.

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

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

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which will be rendered in compliance 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 will be subject to disciplinary action.

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. If it has been determined that bullying has taken place on the school grounds, the principal or designee will take measures 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.

ONGOING PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The Plan is the District's blueprint for enhancing capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, will periodically:

- assess the adequacy of current programs;
- review current policies and procedures;
- review available data on bullying and behavioral incidents;
- assess available resources including curricula, training programs and behavioral health services.

Periodic needs assessments will be conducted and include: 1) surveying of students, staff, parents and guardians on school climate and school safety issues; and 2) the collecting and analyzing building-specific data on the prevalence and characteristics of bullying (e.g., focusing on identifying vulnerable populations and "hot spots" in school buildings, on school grounds, or on school buses). This information will be used to identify patterns of behaviors and areas of concern; and will inform decision-making for prevention strategies including, but not limited to, adult supervision, professional development, age-appropriate curricula and in-school support services.

The assessment process will assist the schools and district in identifying resource gaps and the most significant areas of need. Based on these findings, the schools and district will:

- revise or develop policies and procedures;
- establish partnerships with community agencies, including law enforcement;
- set priorities.

Members of the SPS administrative and support team will have the responsibility of providing over site on the Plan. Areas of responsibility have been identified for school and district leaders to ensure the successful implementation and ongoing improvements to the plan. The delineation of responsibilities is as follows:

- A. Principals will be responsible for:
 - receiving reports on bullying;
 - choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use;
 - implementing the curricula that the school will use;
 - providing annual professional development to the faculty and staff;

- collecting and analyzing school data on bullying;
- creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors;
- planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors;
- amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct;
- reviewing the Plan annually and making suggestions on potential revisions;
- leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials;

B. The Assistant Superintendent will be responsible for:

- planning for the ongoing professional development, as necessary to implement the Plan;
- approving the curricula that the school or district will use;
- developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the Plan, including an Internet safety policy and designating key staff to be in charge of the implementation of them;
- reviewing and updating the Plan each year, as necessary.

C. The Director of Technology will be responsible for:

- working with the principals to develop the necessary component within the data management system that will allow schools to record and track incident reports, quickly access information related to targets and aggressors, and collect and analyze school data on bullying.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Principals, or their designee, will provide annual training to all school staff on the Plan. This training will include staff responsibilities 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 that is being offered at all grades throughout the school. Staff members hired after the start of the school year will be provided 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. District will also provide all staff with an annual written notice of the Plan by publishing information about it in the individual school's faculty handbooks.

In addition to annual trainings, ongoing Professional Development will be provided to build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. The content of schoolwide and district-wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

- developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
- developmentally (or 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 cyber-bullying;
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

Professional development will also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities which 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.

ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying Resources. Any student who is at risk for being bullied, or for bullying will be referred to their appropriate counselor. The counselor will assess the issue(s) and if appropriate will provide the student with ongoing emotional support and coping strategies. The counselor, in conjunction with the building administration, may refer the student and/or family to outside agencies for more intensive services. When necessary, the counselor will connect the student with a principal or assistant principal who will assume responsibility for dealing with any administrative needs associated with the issue.

B. Counseling and Other Services. In addition to individual counseling, there are a number of services offered at each school. Both elementary and middle schools follow Second Step, a research based violence prevention program. At the high school level there are a series of eight week psycho-educational groups, developed in response to the specific needs of the system. Many of these groups have been geared directly towards support for targets and aggressors. System wide, the counseling staff would work with the ELL teachers if assistance

were needed to identify culturally and linguistically appropriate resources within the school and district.

- C. Students with disabilities. As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.
- D. Referral to Outside Services. The Stoughton Public Schools updates and review annually a district wide Counseling Referral list comprised of local and state agencies, as well as private therapists. Referrals to outside service providers are made when deemed necessary by the District.

ACADEMIC AND NON – ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The Stoughton Public Schools will provide a bullying prevention curricula, which will be informed by current research which, among other things, may emphasize the following approaches:

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

Teachers will be asked to implement practices that have been shown to support bullying prevention efforts. The following approaches have been identified as integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment:

- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely.

COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

- A. Parent education and resources.

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

- B. Notification requirements.

Each school will include in its student handbook information on the student-related sections of the Plan, the dynamics of bullying, cyber-bullying and the District's Internet safety policy. The handbook will also provide the parents or guardians of enrolled students with information on the anti-bullying curricula that is being used at the school. All notices and information will made available to parents or guardians in both hard copy and electronic formats; and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians, upon request. The school and / or district will post the Plan and related information on its website.

DEFINITIONS

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

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor, to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 370 for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff or paraprofessionals.

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on the basis of age, activities, race, color, religion, national origin, homelessness, gender, gender identification, sexual orientation, physical disability, or handicap. The Plan also provides protection for all students regardless of their legal status. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law, or school or district policies.

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

Adopted by the School Committee: November 23, 2010
Reviewed and Updated by the School Committee: March 22, 2016

COMPUTER USE POLICY

Student Computer, LAN and Internet Use Policy

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to set forth policies and guidelines for: access to the Stoughton Public School's district computer system; acceptable, safe use of the Internet; and implementation of the requirements of CIPA (the Children's Internet Protection Act).

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

In making decisions regarding access to the school district computer system and to the Internet, the school district considers its own stated educational mission, goals, and objectives. Electronic information research skills are now fundamental to preparation of citizens and future employees. Access to the school district computer system and to the Internet enables students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, bulletin boards, and other resources while exchanging messages with people around the world. The school district expects that faculty will blend thoughtful use of the school district computer system and the Internet throughout the curriculum and will provide guidance and instruction to students in their use.

III. LIMITED EDUCATIONAL PURPOSE

The school district is providing students and employees with access to the school district's computer system, which includes Internet access. The purpose of the system is not to provide students and employees with general access to the Internet. The school district system has a limited educational purpose, which includes use of the system for classroom activities, professional or career development, and limited high-quality, self-discovery activities. Users are expected to use Internet access through the district system to further educational and personal goals consistent with the mission of the school district and school policies. Uses which might be acceptable on a user's personal account on another system may not be acceptable on this limited purpose network.

IV. USE OF SYSTEM IS A PRIVILEGE

The use of the school district system and access to use of the Internet is a privilege, not a right. The school district has the right to place reasonable restrictions on the use of equipment, resources and material students and employees access or post through the system. Students and employees are also expected to follow the rules set forth in the district's rules and regulations governing conduct, disciplinary code, and the law in their use of the district's equipment and network. This access has not been established as a public access service or a public forum. All access and rights are privileges granted by the district, and users should expect no privacy rights. Depending on the nature and degree of the violation and the number of previous violations, unacceptable use of the school district system or the Internet may result in one or more of the following consequences: suspension or cancellation of use of access privileges; payments for damages and repairs; discipline under other appropriate school district policies or collective bargaining agreements, including suspension, expulsion, exclusion or termination of employment; or civil or criminal liability under other applicable laws.

V. UNACCEPTABLE USES

- A. The following uses of the school district system and Internet resources or accounts are considered unacceptable:
1. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit material.
 2. Users will not use the school district system to transmit or receive obscene, abusive, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, disrespectful, or sexually explicit language.
 3. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that are inappropriate to the educational setting or disruptive to the educational process and will not post information or materials that could cause damage or danger of disruption.
 4. Users will not use the school district system to access, review, upload, download, store, print, post, or distribute materials that use language or images that advocate violence or discrimination toward other people (hate literature) or that may constitute harassment or discrimination.
 5. Users will not use the school district system to knowingly or recklessly post false or defamatory information about a person or organization, or to harass another person, or to engage in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
 6. Users will not use the school district system to engage in any illegal act or violate any local, state or federal statute or law.
 7. Users will not use the school district system to vandalize, damage or disable the property of another person or organization, will not make deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt equipment, software or system performance by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, will not tamper with, modify or change the school district system software, hardware or wiring or take any action to violate the school district system's security, and will not use the school district system in such a way as to disrupt the use of the system by other users.
 8. Users will not use the school district system to gain unauthorized access to information resources or to access another person's materials, information or files without the implied or direct permission of that person.
 9. Users will not use the school district system to post private information about another person or to post personal contact information about themselves or other persons including, but not limited to, addresses, telephone numbers, school addresses, work addresses, identification numbers, account numbers, access codes or passwords, and will not repost a message that was sent to the user privately without permission of the person who sent the message.

10. Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the school district system or any other system through the school district system, attempt to log in through another person's account, or use computer accounts, access codes or network identification other than those assigned to the user.
 11. Users will not use the school district system to violate copyright laws, or usage licensing agreements, or otherwise to use another person's property without the person's prior approval or proper citation, including the downloading or exchanging of pirated software or copying software to or from any school computer, and will not plagiarize works they find on the Internet.
 12. Users will not use the school district system for the conduct of a business, for unauthorized commercial purposes or for financial gain unrelated to the mission of the school district. Users will not use the school district system to offer or provide goods or services or for product advertisement. Users will not use the school district system to purchase goods or services for personal use without authorization from the appropriate school district official. Users will not use the school district system for political lobbying.
 13. Users will not install, update, or modify software or hardware on any component of the district system without the express written consent of the Administrator of Technology.
 14. Students will not download files from sources outside the district without specific permission.
- B. If a user inadvertently accesses unacceptable materials or an unacceptable Internet site, the user shall immediately disclose the inadvertent access to an appropriate school district official. This disclosure may serve as a defense against an allegation that the user has intentionally violated this policy. A user may also in certain rare instances access otherwise unacceptable materials if necessary to complete an assignment and if done with the prior approval of and with appropriate guidance from the appropriate teacher.

VI. CONSISTENCY WITH OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES

Use of the school district computer system and use of the Internet shall be consistent with school district policies and the mission of the school district.

VII. LIMITED EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY

- A. By authorizing use of the school district system, the school district does not relinquish control over any of the components of the system, materials stored in the system, or contained in files in the system. Users should expect only limited privacy in the contents of personal files on the school district system.
- B. Routine maintenance and monitoring of the school district system may lead to a discovery that a user has violated this policy, another school district policy, or the law.
- C. An individual investigation or search will be conducted if school authorities have a reasonable suspicion that the search will uncover a violation of law or school district policy.
- D. Parents have the right at any time to investigate or review the contents of their child's files and e-mail files. Parents have the right to request the termination of their child's individual access at any time.
- E. School district employees should be aware that data and other materials in files maintained on the school district system may be subject to review, disclosure or discovery under local, state, or federal law.
- F. The school district will cooperate fully with local, state and federal authorities in any investigation concerning or related to any illegal activities and activities not in compliance with school district policies conducted through the school district system.
- G. In the event there is an allegation that a student has violated the District Acceptable Use Policy, the student will be provided with a written notice of the alleged violation and will be provided with notice and opportunity to be heard in the manner set forth in the district's policies. Disciplinary actions may be taken.
- H. Employee violations of the District Acceptable Use Policy will be handled in accordance with law, School Board Policy or collective bargaining agreement(s), as applicable.

VIII. INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

- A. The proper use of the Internet, and the educational value to be gained from proper Internet use, is the joint responsibility of students, parents and employees of the school district.
- B. This policy requires the permission of and supervision by the school's designated professional staff before a student may use a school account or resource to access the Internet.
- C. The Internet/Acceptable Use Agreement form must be read and signed by the user and the parent or guardian. The form must then be filed at the school office.

IX. System Security Obligations

- A. Users are responsible for the use of their individual access account and should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from being able to use their account. Under no conditions should a user provide his/her password to another person.
- B. Attempts to log on to the District's private network or any other network as a system administrator, is prohibited without the express written consent of the Administrator of Educational Technology.
- C. Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of violating this or any other Acceptable Use Policy may be denied access to the District's private network.
- D. Users will avoid the inadvertent spread of computer viruses by following the School District virus protection procedures and will not disable or otherwise tamper with district anti-virus software.
- E. Users should immediately notify a teacher or system administrator of any possible security problem.
- F. Students will promptly disclose to their teacher or other appropriate school employee any message received that is inappropriate.

X. CONTENT FILTERING

As required by CIPA and in recognition of the need to establish a safe and appropriate computing environment, the district will use content filtering technology to prevent access, to the degree possible, to objectionable or unsuitable content that might otherwise be accessible via the Internet. The district's content filter will be set to prevent access to: obscene material, child pornography, material harmful to minors, and other material that is deemed locally to be "inappropriate for minors". Filtering technology is not foolproof and the use of filtering technology does not relieve employees and students of their responsibilities under this policy.

XI. LIMITATION ON SCHOOL DISTRICT LIABILITY

Use of the school district system is at the user's own risk. The system is provided on an "as is, as available" basis. The school district will not be responsible for any damage users may suffer, including, but not limited to, loss, damage or unavailability of data stored on school district diskettes, tapes, hard drives or servers, or for delays or changes in or interruptions of service or miss-deliveries or non-deliveries of information or materials, regardless of the cause. The school district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of any advice or information obtained through or stored on the school district system. The school district will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through unauthorized use of the school district system or the Internet.

XII. USER NOTIFICATION

- A. All users shall be notified of the school district policies relating to Internet use.
- B. This notification shall include the following:
 - 1. Notification that Internet use is subject to compliance with school district policies.
 - 2. Disclaimers limiting the school district's liability relative to:
 - a. Information stored on school district diskettes, hard drives or servers.
 - b. Information retrieved through school district computers, networks or online resources.
 - c. Personal property used to access school district computers, networks or online resources.
 - d. Unauthorized financial obligations resulting from use of school district resources/accounts to access the Internet.
 - 3. A description of the privacy rights and limitations of school sponsored/managed Internet accounts.
 - 4. Notification that, even though the school district may use technical means to limit student Internet access, these limits do not provide a foolproof means for enforcing the provisions of this acceptable use policy.
 - 5. Notification that goods and services can be purchased over the Internet that could potentially result in unwanted financial obligations and that any financial obligation incurred by a user through the Internet is the sole responsibility of the user or, in the case of a minor, the minor's parents.
 - 6. Notification that should the user violate the school district's acceptable use policy, the user's access privileges may be revoked, school disciplinary action may be taken and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.
 - 7. Notification that all provisions of the acceptable use policy are subordinate to local, state and federal laws.

XIII. PARENT RESPONSIBILITY; NOTIFICATION OF STUDENT INTERNET USE

A. Outside of school, parents bear responsibility for the same guidance of Internet use as they exercise with information sources such as television, telephones, radio, movies and other possibly offensive media. Parents are responsible for monitoring their student's use of the school district system and of the Internet if the student is accessing the school district system from home or a remote location.

B. Parents will be notified that their students will be using school district resources/accounts to access the Internet and that the school district will provide parents the option to request alternative activities not requiring Internet access. This notification should include:

1. A copy of the user notification form provided to the student user.
2. A description of parent/guardian responsibilities.
3. A statement that the Internet Use Agreement must be signed by the user, the parent or guardian, and a supervising teacher prior to use by the student.
4. A statement that the school district's acceptable use policy is available for parental review.

XIV. ADMINISTRATION

1. The administrator of educational technology has the responsibility and authority for the development, publication, implementation and ongoing administration and enforcement of the processes and techniques required to protect the Stoughton Public School District's computer systems from unauthorized access, loss or misuse.
2. School principals have the responsibility to establish a system to ensure adequate supervision of students using the system and to maintain executed user agreements for students. They are also responsible for interpreting and enforcing this policy at the local level.
3. Local management has the responsibility to interpret and enforce this policy for employees including maintaining executed user agreements.

XV. IMPLEMENTATION; POLICY REVIEW

- A. The school district administration may develop appropriate guidelines and procedures necessary to implement this policy for submission to the school committee for approval. Upon approval by the school committee, such guidelines and procedures shall be an addendum to this policy.
- B. The administration shall revise the student and parent notifications, if necessary, to reflect the adoption of these guidelines and procedures.
- C. The school district's Internet policies and procedures are available for review by all parents, guardians, staff, and members of the community.
- D. Because of the rapid changes in the development of the Internet, the school committee shall conduct an annual review of this policy.

SAMPLE DOCUMENT: INTERNET USE AGREEMENT

USER

I have read and do understand the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet and agree to abide by them. I further understand that any violation of the policies above is unethical and may constitute a violation of law. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action may be taken, and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

User's Full Name (please print):

User Signature:

Date:

PARENT OR GUARDIAN (required when users are minors)

As the parent or guardian of this student, I have read the school district policies relating to acceptable use of the school district computer system and the Internet. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the school district to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold the school district or its employees or agents responsible for materials acquired on the Internet. I hereby give permission for my child to use the district system and to access the Internet. I certify that the information contained on this form is correct.

Parent or Guardian's Name (please print):

Parent or Guardian's Signature:

Adopted by the School Committee March 22, 2016

DISCIPLINE POLICY

School rules need to be established and followed in order to promote a safe, orderly, and productive learning environment. Unacceptable behavior will not be tolerated. School rules apply to all behavior in the classroom, within the school, on school grounds, on school buses, and at all school-sponsored activities. Parents and guardians should be aware that some offenses may be a violation of law, as well as of school policy.

All student discipline is intended to conform to Mass General Laws, especially Chapter 71, sections 37H, 37H ½ and 37H3/4. The degree of discipline will depend on the prohibited conduct. For most offenses, the policy of the schools is to attempt corrective action before taking more extreme disciplinary action. In addition, the decision-maker will consider any information which he/she feels is relevant, including prior disciplinary record, academic progress, seriousness of the incident, mitigating circumstances, and any other facts which are relevant.

Generally, the policy of the school is to begin with discussing the prohibited conduct with the student(s), which may be followed by notification of parents and/or guardians, loss of privileges, detention, suspension from school, or expulsion from school.

Expulsion and suspension are very serious disciplinary actions. Expulsions can only be acted upon by the School Committee upon recommendation of the principal/superintendent. However, certain offenses require that suspension and expulsion, be done by the principal in the first instance, and may not be delegated to any other person. Those offenses for which a Principal may suspend or recommend the expulsion of a student include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Damaging or destroying school property, the property of other students or staff.
2. Assault and/or battery on a student, principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher assistant, teacher aide, or other staff member. This may include using physical or verbal violence to settle difference and/or threatening the safety of oneself or others in school, on school property or on the bus.
3. Bringing inappropriate or potentially dangerous items to school, as discussed in the section of "Dangerous Items and Weapons."
4. Pulling fire alarms, calling in false alarms or tampering with the defibrillator.
5. Calling in a bomb scare.
6. Staying out of school without permission of a parent or legal guardian (truancy).
7. Leaving the classroom, the school building or the school grounds without permission.
8. Possessing and/or distributing unauthorized medications or like substances.
9. Possessing, selling, and/or using drugs and/or alcohol.
10. Using obscene, abusive, disrespectful, inappropriate language or actions.
11. Cheating and/or plagiarism.
12. Circumstances in which a student has been charged with or convicted of a felony.
13. Harassing another member of the school community or retaliating against anyone who has brought harassment or inappropriate behavior to the attention of school personnel.
14. Gathering as group to harass or injure other students.(See Appendix F)

DISCIPLINARY DUE PROCESS

1. **Short Term Disciplinary Sanctions:** Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in a student's suspension from school for ten (10) consecutive school days or less, the student and parent will be given oral notice of the offense with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond. In the event that the principal determines that the student will be suspended from school, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified in writing.
2. **Long Term Disciplinary Sanctions:** Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that might result in the student's suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or expulsion, the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be given written notice of a hearing at which they may be represented by an attorney at their expense and may examine and present witnesses and documentary evidence. Following this hearing, the decision maker (principal/school committee) will issue a written decision. The parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the right to appeal any decision imposing a long-term suspension from school. Where the student is suspended in accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, the student shall have ten (10) days from the effective date of the suspension to file a written appeal with the superintendent of schools. For imposed pursuant to M.G.L. c.71 §37H1/2, the student shall have five (5) days from the effective date of the exclusion to file a written appeal with the superintendent. For imposed by the school committee in accordance with M.G.L. c.76 §17, the student shall have the right to file a written request for reconsideration by the committee within ten (10) days of the effective date of the suspension. Pending the outcome of any such appeal, the disciplinary sanction imposed shall remain in effect. M.G.L. c. 76 §17, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, M.G.L. c. 71 §37H1/2.
3. **Students with Disabilities:** Students who have been identified as students with disabilities in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act or who the school has reason to believe might be eligible for special education services are entitled to additional procedural protections when a disciplinary suspension is considered. Prior to the imposition of any disciplinary sanction that would result in a change in placement; the student's Team will meet to determine whether the student's conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. If the Team determines that the conduct was a manifestation of the student's disability shall review any existing behavior plan or, if no such behavior plan exists, conduct a functional behavioral assessment. In many cases, a student with a disability will be entitled to services identified by the student's Team as necessary to provide the student with a free appropriate public education during periods of disciplinary exclusion exceeding ten (10) school days in a given year. For additional information regarding the rights of students with disabilities in the context of school discipline please contact the Stoughton Public Schools' Director of Special Education or the building principal.

EDUCATION SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Students on short-term suspensions will be able to make-up assignments and coursework missed during the period of their removal from school. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have the opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education plan.

M.G.L. c. 71 §37H, §37H1/2, §37H3/4

DISCIPLINE AND STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Federal Law and Regulations require that additional provisions be made for students with disabilities. The principal shall notify the Administrator of Special Education of the suspendable offense of a student with either an IEP or a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.

School personnel may exclude a student with a disability from school for a disciplinary violation for not more than 10 consecutive days (to the extent those alternatives are applied to students without disabilities), and for additional removals of not more than ten days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct (as long as those removals do not constitute a change in placement) equivalent to discipline imposed on students without disabilities for the same offense. IDEA 2004, Section 615 (k) (1) (B). After a child with a disability has been removed from his or her placement for ten school days in the same year, during any subsequent days of removal, the child must continue to receive services that enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and the child must receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. See 34 CFR 300.530(d).

Within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district, the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the district) must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine if:

- (a) If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- (b) If the conduct in question was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP.

The conduct must be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability if the district; the parent, and relevant members of the child's IEP Team determine that a condition in either paragraph (i) or (ii) of this section was met. The TEAM will make a finding, a, manifestation determination, as to the relationship between the student's misconduct and his/her disability condition, conduct a functional behavioral assessment if appropriate, and modify or amend the IEP to provide special education services during the suspension, or to include a behavioral intervention plan. If the district, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team must:

1. Either:
 - (a) Conduct a functional behavioral assessment, unless the district had conducted a functional behavioral assessment before the behavior that resulted in the change of placement occurred, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for the child;
 - or
 - (b) If a behavioral intervention plan already has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
2. Except as provided in 34 CFR 300.530(g) of this section, return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the district agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

There are some special circumstances in which the district may unilaterally remove a student and place them in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability. Specifically, school personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, if the child:

1. Carries a weapon to or possesses a weapon at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district;
2. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district; or
3. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of the district.

On the date on which the decision is made to make a removal that constitutes a change of placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the district must notify the parents of that decision, and provide the parents the procedural safeguards notice described in 34 CFR 300.504. The building principal will notify the Administrator of Special Education; then will notify the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as required by law as to the course of action. Subsequent amendments to state or federal law will supersede contrary handbook provisions.

A student not yet eligible for Special Education may be protected under IDEA 2004 regulations if the district can be deemed to have had knowledge that the student had a disability. The district must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred:

1. The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate educational agency, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services;
2. The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to Sec. Sec. 300.300 through 300,311; or
3. The teacher of the child, or other personnel of the district, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the director of special education of the agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

The district would not be deemed to have knowledge if;

1. The parent of the child:
 - a. Has not allowed an evaluation of the child pursuant to 34 CFR 300.300 through 300.311; or
 - b. Has refused services under IDEA; or

2. The child has been evaluated in accordance with Sec. 300.300 through 300.311 and determined to not be a child with a disability under this part.

If the district does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability (in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section) prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors. If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures under 34 CFR 300.530, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.

Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the agency and information provided by the parents, the agency must provide special education and related services in accordance with this part, including the requirements of 34 CFR 300.530 through 300.536 and IDEA 2004 section 612(a)(1)(A).

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement in this context or the manifestation determination under or a district that believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in [injury](#) to the child or others, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals. See <http://www.doe.mass.edu/bsea>

GRAFFITI AND DEFACEMENT OF SCHOOL PROPERTY

Any student who defaces school property will be subject to disciplinary action. "Graffiti" means any inscription, word, figure, design, painting, writing, drawing or carving that is marked, etched, scratched, drawn, painted, or otherwise applied to school property. Offensive graffiti may constitute a violation of federal Civil Rights law. Examples of offensive graffiti include, but are not limited to, all derogatory words or symbols associated with any ethnic, racial, religious or socially recognized group.

All instances of graffiti will be reported to the building administration. The degree of discipline for defacement of school property/graffiti will be based upon the seriousness of the incident (refer to discipline section of the student handbook). In addition, any graffiti of an offensive nature will be reported to the Stoughton Police Department and possible police action may be taken against the individual(s) involved in the incident.

HARASSMENT and NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Stoughton Public School System is committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability. Harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals at school or at school-sponsored events is unlawful and is strictly prohibited. The Stoughton Public School System requires all employees and students to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner with respect for their fellow employees, students and all members of the school community.

A. Definition of Harassment

B.

1. In General

Harassment includes communication such as jokes, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct which offends or shows disrespect to others based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

Individuals should consider how their words and actions might reasonably be viewed by other individuals. It is also important for individuals to make it clear to school administrators when a particular behavior or communication is unwelcome, intimidating, hostile or offensive.

2. Sexual Harassment

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a) Acceptance of or submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term of condition of employment or education.
- b) The individual's response to such conduct is used as a basis for employment decisions affecting an

- employee or as a basis for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student.
- c) Such conduct interferes with an individual's job duties, education or participation in extra-curricular activities.
- d) The conduct creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work or school environment.

B. Harassment and Retaliation Prohibited

Harassment in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden. This includes harassment by administrators, certified and support personnel, students, vendors and other individuals in school or at school related events. In addition, retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to the attention of the school or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this policy is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Stoughton Public Schools. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the administration and/or school committee, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

C. Investigation

Any individual who believes he/she has been harassed or who has witnessed or learned about the harassment of another person in the school environment, should inform the principal or the civil rights representative for the school building as soon as possible. The individual may also contact the civil rights coordinator.

The Stoughton Public Schools will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment as set forth in Section A. If it determines that harassment has occurred, it will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated. Confidentiality will be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law and under applicable collective bargaining agreements. In certain cases, the harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under state law. The Stoughton Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse and will report suspected criminal activity to the appropriate authorities.

D. Closure of a Complaint

When an investigation has been completed, administrators will inform the complainant of the results and a report of the investigation will be on file with the civil rights coordinator. The Stoughton Public School System urges all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment or discrimination to the attention of school principals or the building civil rights representative or the civil rights coordinator so that they can resolve the issue. Individuals may also contact the state agencies responsible for enforcing laws prohibiting harassment or discrimination in schools: the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA (781-388-3300) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA (617-727-3990). The agency responsible for enforcing the federal law prohibiting harassment on the basis of sex is the Office of Civil Rights within the United States Department of Education, which is located at the John W. McCormack Building, Post Office Square, Boston, MA (617-223-9662)

E. Appeals

A party may appeal the administrator's decision in writing to the superintendent of schools within 15 days after receiving a copy of the finding of the Level II investigation. The civil rights coordinator's decision will be reviewed to ensure the adequacy of the investigation and conclusions. Parties will be given an opportunity to submit additional relevant information. The superintendent of schools will make a final decision and provide it in writing to the respective parties within 30 days.

F. Notice of Non-discrimination

The Stoughton Public Schools provides equal education and employment opportunity without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, or sexual orientation.

The Stoughton Public Schools complies with all applicable State and Federal Laws, including but not limited to, Title VI, Title VII, Title IX, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Massachusetts General Laws, c.151B, c.151C, c.76, §5, and c.71B.

The Stoughton Public Schools has duly appointed individuals responsible for the overall monitoring, auditing,

and ensuring compliance with this policy. For compliance issues regarding employment activities, employees should contact: Superintendent of Schools, Stoughton Public Schools, 232 Pearl Street, Stoughton, Massachusetts 02072.

For compliance issues regarding educational activities, contact the assistant superintendent. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against in any of the district's educational or employment, activities can file a written grievance with the appropriate officer.

LATEX POLICY

Our goal is to make our school system latex free. That means that students and faculty members cannot use any latex balloons for projects, decorations or celebrations.

POLICY ON PARENT NOTIFICATION REGARDING SEXUAL EDUCATION

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that parents/guardians are notified whenever curriculum involving human sexual education or human sexuality is implemented or maintained. Parents may exempt their children from any portion of said curriculum through written notification to the school principal. There shall be no penalty toward any child because of the exemption.

The Superintendent of Schools shall ensure that the program's instructional materials for said curriculum are reasonably accessible to parents, guardians, educators, school administrators, and others, for inspection and review.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in dispute.

Adopted by School Committee, March 22, 2016

RESIDENCY POLICY

It is the policy of the Stoughton School Committee that proof of residence must be established by the student and/or his/her parent/guardian in accordance with the following criteria:

New residents will be required to sign a Residency Statement and submit two or more of the following as proof of residence:

1. A deed or lease agreement for property in Stoughton.
2. A mortgage statement verifying the owner's name and address.
3. A rental receipt or notarized letter from the property owner which includes the name and address of the landlord.
4. A residential utility and/or telephone statement. If resident does not subscribe to a land-line, a cell phone invoice, indicating a Stoughton address, is required instead.
5. Other pertinent information as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools.

It is important to note that simply owning property within the Town of Stoughton does not establish residency for a child and allow them to attend the Stoughton Public Schools.

Students living with persons other than their parent/guardian, who have met residency requirements and signed a Residency Statement, will be required to have the persons they are living with submit the following proof of residence:

1. Court documentation of guardianship;

2. Notarized documentation that the student is maintaining permanent residency with the person(s) indicated at the given address;
3. Students with unusual circumstances may appeal to the Superintendent and all decisions are final.

The parent/guardian of students whose residency changes within the community are also required to update their child's proof of residence.

The School Department reserves the right to confirm actual living arrangements. This includes conducting home visits. The purpose of such visits will be to assist in the determination as to whether or not the student resides at the indicated address. For the purposes of maintaining residency, a student must spend at least 51% of their school nights at their Stoughton address. To ensure that parents/guardians are aware of the residency requirements, the parent/guardian is required to sign the Residency Statement provided with this policy.

If the results of a residency investigation conducted by the District determines that a student does not reside in Stoughton, the parent/guardian of that student, or any person who falsely claims that a student lives with them, will, when deemed appropriate by the principal or superintendent, be required to pay the full cost of the student's tuition to the Stoughton Public Schools for the period of their enrollment, as well as any related legal fees. In addition to incurring civil liabilities, any person who knowingly registers or attempts to register a student not living in Stoughton, or maintains the enrollment of a student who no longer resides in Stoughton, will be found in violation of the residency requirement and will, when deemed appropriate by the principal or superintendent, be referred to the proper agency for criminal prosecution.

When families already living in Stoughton find that their individual circumstances will create a violation of this policy, a Principal or district administrator shall have the authority to investigate and evaluate their specific circumstances, and based upon their discretion, may provide a reasonable short-term accommodation.

An anonymous Residency Tip Line (781-297-1050) is available for families, staff and students to report possible residency violations. People may also report residency violations to: a Building Principal, a Central Office Administrator, the Administrator of Special Education, and/or the Athletic Director. Each of these individuals will be responsible for reporting the alleged violation to the Superintendent.

Southeastern Regional Technical High School, Norfolk County Agricultural School, Foxboro Charter School, and any other vocational collaborative or charter school enrolling students residing in Stoughton, will be notified upon revisions of this Residency Policy.

This Residency Policy will be included in all Parent/Student Handbooks, as well as distributed to all parents/guardians upon registering a new student in the Stoughton Public Schools.

This residency policy does not apply to homeless students who are required to be enrolled immediately.

Approved by the School Committee: March 22, 2016

RESTRAINT POLICY

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring himself or herself, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR 46.02.

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or

imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
- Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements; including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
- Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
- Methods for engaging parents in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
- A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00,
- A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.

Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in-depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting;

The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion restraint".

This policy and its accompanying procedures shall be reviewed and disseminated to staff annually and made available to parents of enrolled students. The Superintendent shall provide a copy of the Physical Restraint regulations to each Principal, who shall sign a form acknowledging receipt thereof.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:37G; 603 CMR 46.00

SERVICE ANIMAL POLICY

The term service animal shall apply to any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability. Other species of animals, whether wild or domestic, trained or untrained, are not service animals for the purposes of this definition. The work or tasks performed by a service animal must be directly related to the handler's disability. Examples of work or tasks include, but are not limited to, assisting individuals who are blind or have low vision with navigation and other tasks, alerting individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to the presence of people or sounds, providing non-violent protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, assisting an individual during a seizure, alerting individuals to the presence of allergens, retrieving items such as medicine or the telephone, providing physical support and assistance with balance and stability to individuals with mobility disabilities, and helping persons with psychiatric and neurological disabilities by preventing or interrupting impulsive or destructive behaviors. The crime deterrent effects of an animal's presence and the provision of emotional support, well-being, comfort, or companionship do not constitute work or tasks for the purposes of this definition.

§ 35.136 Service Animals

- (a) General. Generally, a public entity shall modify its policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a service animal by an individual with a disability.
- (b) Exceptions. A public entity may ask an individual with a disability to remove a service animal from the premises if:
- (1) The animal is out of control and the animal's handler does not take effective action to control it; or
 - (2) The animal is not housebroken.
- (c) If an animal is properly excluded. If a public entity properly excludes a service animal under § 35.136 (b), it shall give the individual with a disability the opportunity to participate in the service, program, or activity without having the service animal on the premises.
- (d) Animal under handler's control. A service animal shall be under the control of its handler. A service animal shall have a harness, leash, or other tether, unless either the handler is unable because of a disability to use a harness, leash, or other tether, or the use of a harness, leash, or other tether would interfere with the service animal's safe, effective performance of work or tasks, in which case the service animal must be otherwise under the handler's control (e.g., voice control, signals, or other effective means).
- (e) Care or supervision. A public entity is not responsible for the care or supervision of a service animal.
- (f) Inquiries. A public entity shall not ask about the nature or extent of a person's disability, but may make two inquiries to determine whether an animal qualifies as a service animal. A public entity may ask if the animal is required because of a disability and what work or task the animal has been trained to perform. A public entity shall not require documentation, such as proof that the animal has been certified, trained, or licensed as a service animal. Generally, a public entity may not make these inquiries about a service animal when it is readily apparent that an animal is trained to do work or perform tasks for an individual with a disability (e.g., the dog is observed guiding an individual who is blind or has low vision, pulling a person's wheelchair, or providing assistance with stability or balance to an individual with an observable mobility disability).
- (g) Access to areas of a public entity. Individuals with disabilities shall be permitted to be accompanied by their service animals in all areas of a public entity's facilities where members of the public, participants in services, programs or activities, or invitees, as relevant, are allowed to go.
- (h) Surcharges. A public entity shall not ask or require an individual with a disability to pay a surcharge, even if people accompanied by pets are required to pay fees, or to comply with other requirements generally not applicable to people without pets. If a public entity normally charges individuals for the damage they cause, an individual with a disability may be charged for damage caused by his or her service animal.
- (i) Miniature horses.
- (A) A public entity shall make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of a miniature horse by an individual with a disability if the miniature horse has been individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of the individual with a disability.
 - (B) Assessment factors. In determining whether reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures can be made to allow a miniature horse into a specific facility, a public entity shall consider:
 - (1) The type, size, and weight of the miniature horse and whether the facility can accommodate these features;
 - (2) Whether the handler has sufficient control of the miniature horse;
 - (3) Whether the miniature horse is housebroken; and
 - (4) Whether the miniature horse's presence in a specific facility compromises legitimate safety requirements that are necessary for safe operation.
 - (C) Other requirements. Paragraphs 35.136 (c) through (h) of this section, which apply to service animals, shall also apply to miniature horses.

STUDENT RECORDS

All information kept by a school or school district on a student in a way that the student may be individually identified is considered the student's record. The record is divided into two parts: the transcript and the temporary record.

1. The transcript will include only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information will include name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed. A transcript will be kept by the school district for at least sixty years after a student leaves the system.
2. The temporary record will contain the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results; class rank; school-sponsored extracurricular activities; evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons; disciplinary records; and other information. The temporary record will be destroyed within five years after the student leaves the school system.

Log of Access

A log shall be kept as part of each student's record. If parts of the student record are separately located, a separate log shall be kept with each part. The log shall indicate all persons who have obtained access to the student record, stating: the name, position and signature of the person releasing the information; the name, position and, if a third party, the affiliation if any, of the person who is to receive the information; the date of access; the parts of the record to which access was obtained; and the purpose of such access. Unless student record information is to be deleted or released, this log requirement shall not apply to:

1. authorized school personnel under 603 CMR 23.02(9)(a) who inspect the student record;
2. administrative office staff and clerical personnel under 603 CMR 23.02(9)(b), who add information to or obtain access to the student record; and
3. school nurses who inspect the student health record.

Access of Eligible Students and Parents

The eligible student or the parent, subject to the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07 (5), shall have access to the student record. Access shall be provided as soon as practicable and within ten days after the initial request, except in the case of non-custodial parents as provided in 603 CMR 23.07 (5). Upon request for access, the entire student record regardless of the physical location of its parts shall be made available.

1. Upon request, copies of any information contained in the student record shall be furnished to the eligible student or the parent. A reasonable fee, not to exceed the cost of reproduction, may be charged. However, a fee may not be charged if to do so would effectively prevent the parents or eligible student from exercising their right, under federal law, to inspect and review the records.
2. Any student, regardless of age, shall have the right pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, section 34A to receive a copy of his/her transcript.
3. The eligible student or the parent shall have the right upon request to meet with professionally qualified school personnel and to have any of the contents of the student record interpreted.
4. The eligible student or the parent may have the student record inspected or interpreted by a third party of their choice. Such third party shall present specific written consent of the eligible student or parent, prior to gaining access to the student record.

Access of Authorized School Personnel

Subject to 603 CMR 23.00, authorized school personnel shall have access to the student records of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the eligible student or parent shall not be necessary.

Access of Third Parties

Except for the provisions of 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a) through 23.07(4)(h), no third party shall have access to information in or from a student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student or the parent. When granting consent, the eligible student or parent shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to the third party. A copy of such consent shall be retained by the eligible student or parent and a duplicate placed in the temporary record. Except for information described in 603 CMR 23.07(4)(a), personally identifiable information from a student record shall only be released to a third party on the condition that he/she will not permit any other third party to have access to such information without the written consent of the eligible student or parent.

1. A school may release the following directory information: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major field of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, and post-high school plans without the consent of the eligible student or parent; provided that the school gives public notice of the types of information it may release under 603 CMR 23.07 and allows eligible students and parents a reasonable time after such notice to request that this information not be released without the prior consent of the eligible student or parent. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10.
2. Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena the school shall comply, provided that the school makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent or eligible student of the order or subpoena in advance of compliance.
3. A school may release information regarding a student upon receipt of a request from the Department of Social Services, a probation officer, a justice of any court, or the Department of Youth Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 119, sections 51B, 57, 69 and 69A respectively.
4. Federal, state and local education officials, and their authorized agents shall have access to student records as necessary in connection with the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws, or programs; provided that except when collection of personally identifiable data is specifically authorized by law, any data collected by such officials shall be protected so that parties other than such officials and their authorized agents cannot personally identify such students and their parents; and such personally identifiable data shall be destroyed when no longer needed for the audit, evaluation or enforcement of federal and state education laws.
5. A school may disclose information regarding a student to appropriate parties 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. This includes, but is not limited to, disclosures to the local police department and the Department of Social Services under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, section 37L and M.G.L. c. 119, section 51A.
6. Upon notification by law enforcement authorities that a student, or former student, has been reported missing, a mark shall be placed in the student record of such student. The school shall report any request concerning the records of the such child to the appropriate law enforcement authority pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 22A, section 9.
7. Authorized school personnel of the school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to such student's record without the consent of the eligible student or parent, provided that the school the student is leaving, or has left, gives notice that it forwards student records to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such notice may be included in the routine information letter required under 603 CMR 23.10.
8. School health personnel and local and state health department personnel shall have access to student health records, including but not limited to immunization records, when such access is required in the performance of official duties, without the consent of the eligible student or parent.

Access Procedures for Non-Custodial Parents

As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 34H, a non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions.

1. A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

- A. the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation, or
 - B. the parent has been denied visitation, or
 - C. the parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record, or
 - D. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.
2. The school shall place in the student's record documents indicating that a non-custodial parent's access to the student's record is limited or restricted pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07(5)(a).
 3. In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school principal.
 4. Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after 21 days, unless the custodial parent provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 CMR 23.07 (5)(a).
 5. The school must delete all electronic and postal address and telephone number information relating to either work or home locations of the custodial parent from student records provided to non-custodial parents. In addition, such records must be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.
 6. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school shall notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent.

Amending the Student Record

The eligible student or the parent shall have the right to add information, comments, data, or any other relevant written material to the student record.

The eligible student or the parent shall have the right to request in writing deletion or amendment of any information contained in the student record, except for information which was inserted into that record by an Evaluation Team. Such information inserted by an Evaluation Team shall not be subject to such a request until after the acceptance of the Evaluation Team Educational Plan, or, if the Evaluation Team Educational Plan is rejected, after the completion of the special education appeal process. Any deletion or amendment shall be made in accordance with the procedure described below:

1. If such student or parent is of the opinion that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify or correct objectionable material in the student record, either student or parent shall present the objection in writing and/or have the right to have a conference with the principal or his/her designee to make the objections known.
2. The principal or his/her designee shall within one week after the conference or receipt of the objection, if no conference was requested, render to such student or parent a decision in writing, stating the reason or reasons for the decision. If the decision is in favor of the student or parent, the principal or his/her designee shall promptly take such steps as may be necessary to put the decision into effect.

VIDEO SURVEILLANCE POLICY

The Stoughton Public Schools are committed to providing a safe and secure educational environment for its students, staff and visitors, as well as safeguarding and controlling access to district facilities and protecting its assets. The video surveillance system may be used for inquiries and review related to criminal activity and/or violations of district policies/procedures. As part of this commitment, the district has installed video surveillance and recording systems in all school buildings. To obtain a copy of the complete, approved Video Surveillance Policy, please contact the Gibbons School main office.

WELLNESS POLICY

It is the policy of the Stoughton Public Schools to promote actions that create a healthy and safe environment for all students, faculty, staff and citizens. It is our goal to develop and protect our students' physical, emotional, and social well-being through a coordinated school health and wellness program based on the premise that improved health optimizes student performance potential. This includes providing a healthy environment, school nurse services, nutritious school meals, health and physical education, and opportunities for physical activity. It is the intent of this policy to enable students and staff to become independent and self-directed learners by taking the initiative to meet their own health, physical, and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate.

All students in grades PreK-12 should have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis. Foods and beverages sold or served at school will meet the nutritional recommendations of the ***U. S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*** and ***MGL 105CMR225.000, Nutrition Standards for Competitive Foods and Beverages in Public Schools***.

Furthermore, it is our expectation that specific actions and decisions will take into account the health needs and well-being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the district's belief that education and open and informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children in assuming more individual responsibility for healthy decisions, and maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the School Committee that the guidelines reflect student development as children advance from the primary grades through secondary school.

Nutrition and Wellness

Our goal is to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students and staff by using the following strategies and guidelines:

- Offer healthy meals that promote good health and provide students with the appropriate daily nutrition that is consistent with the ***U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans***
- Provide information for students that teaches the skills they need to develop healthy eating habits
- Ensure that healthy snacks and all competitive foods under the control of the school department are consistent with the standards set by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. These standards shall apply to competitive foods and beverages sold or provided on school grounds 30 minutes before the beginning of the school day until 30 minutes after the end of the school day. We would encourage individual school organizations to follow the guidelines and recommendations as set forth in this policy at all times.
- Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages provided in:
 - School cafeterias offered as a la carte items
 - School buildings, including classrooms and hallways
 - School stores
 - School snack bars
 - Vending machines
 - Concession stands
 - Booster sales
 - Fundraising activities
 - School-sponsored or school-related events
 - Any other location on school property
- The Stoughton Public Schools shall, in accordance with applicable guidelines:
 - Make readily available plain, potable water to all students during the day at no cost to the students
 - Offer for sale, fresh fruit and non-fried vegetables at any location where food is sold. This does not include non-refrigerated vending machines and vending machines dispensing only beverages
 - Prohibit the use of Fryolators in the preparation of food at any time in any school building
- The Food Service Director will serve on the Wellness Committee and outreach to community resources.

The School Breakfast and Lunch Programs

- The school breakfast and lunch programs will continue to follow the USDA Requirements for Federal School Meal Programs
- Nutritional information will be made available to students for non-prepackaged competitive foods and beverages sold in the cafeteria
- Recess will be scheduled before lunch at the elementary level whenever possible.
- Students will have access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before meals.
- Adequate time to eat meals will be provided.

Food in the Schools and Classrooms

- The use of all food items as part of a student incentive or reward program is not allowed.
- Distribution of food items (that do not meet the nutritional guidelines) for consumption in the classrooms is not allowed
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to send healthy snacks for students Pre-K through grade 5.
- Snack is not allowed at the Middle and High School unless medically necessary.
- There will be no sharing of food at any time of the school day.
- Classroom parties for holidays and other special occasions will not include food items.
- Birthdays may be acknowledged with non-food items (i.e pencils, stickers, erasers, classroom book)
- Students at the secondary level are not allowed to bring in food or drink other than water to the classroom for consumption.
- All food related, fundraising projects for sale and consumption by students are not allowed during the school day.
- Booster organizations, PTO's and school councils operating concessions at school functions after the instructional day must offer, for sale, at least 2 healthy food choices to include fresh fruit and non fried vegetables.

Physical Education and Activity

A. Integrating Physical Activity into the Classroom

Stoughton Public Schools offers Physical Education at all levels. Recess and/or activity time is offered as well in grades K – 8. These offerings are in place to attempt to reach the nationally recommended amount of daily physical activity (i.e. at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to embrace the culture in place in the district that emphasizes regular physical activity as a personal behavior.

Classroom teachers are encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks between lessons or classes as appropriate.

B. Pre-K – 12 Physical Education Program

It is a goal of the Stoughton Public Schools that all students in grades K – 12 including students with disabilities, special health care needs and in alternative education settings will receive regularly scheduled physical education. A certified physical education teacher will teach physical education classes.

At all levels, systems are put into place that allow for maximum participation in physical education class. Students will spend well over fifty percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity. At all levels, proper warm-up/stretching/cool down time is implemented to ensure healthy and safe exercise.

C. Daily Recess

All elementary students in our five elementary schools will have 15 – 20 minutes of supervised recess daily. Whenever possible, all of the students' recess time will be spent outside. Physical Education teachers will be encouraged to review recess activities with all students at least twice each year.

D. Physical Activity Opportunities

Stoughton Public Schools will offer a wide range of extracurricular physical activity programs.

E. Physical Activity and Punishment

Using physical activity (e.g. running laps, pushups) or withholding opportunities for physical activity (e.g. recess, physical education) as punishment to our students is discouraged by the Stoughton Public Schools administration.

F. Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours

School spaces and facilities availability is based on the Facility Use Policy.

Staff Education and Wellness

The Stoughton Public School District will encourage healthy eating, physical activity and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among school staff.

Communication

As a means of distributing wellness information to staff, students and families, a Health Services website is available on the Stoughton Public School Website (www.stoughtonschools.org) and will be reviewed and updated as needed.

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