

# SANDERSON ACADEMY

*The Ashfield and Plainfield Elementary School*

## Student Handbook 2021 - 2022



**Mohawk Trail Regional School District**

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## Principal's Welcome

Welcome to the start of a new school year at Sanderson Academy. The staff members of our school are looking forward to partnering with you to help each child in our school grow and learn to their maximum potential.

This handbook is intended to provide families with important information about our school and how we operate. Additional information about our school can be found on the Sanderson portion of the District website ([www.mohawkschools.org/sanderson/](http://www.mohawkschools.org/sanderson/)). Check this site particularly for calendar, menu and other time sensitive information. If you have additional questions or comments please call the school at (413) 628-4404 or email me at [eliebowitz@mtrsd.org](mailto:eliebowitz@mtrsd.org).

Please remember that during school hours our building is locked, when you visit you will need to ring the doorbell and then check in at the Secretary's Office. This practice helps us maintain a safe environment for all of our children.

Thank you in advance for spending time reading and discussing this handbook with your child(ren). I am anticipating an exciting and productive school year together!

Sincerely,

*Emma Liebowitz*

Principal

## MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

*This statement of purpose with its supporting beliefs, goals and parameters will be used by the school district to guide the development of strategies, action plans and curriculum.*

### MTRSD STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Mohawk Trail Regional School District is committed to educate **every** student in its care by providing the skills, knowledge and values necessary for individuals to be capable and concerned participants in society.

### MTRSD BELIEFS

*Our belief statements articulate our school system's core values.*

#### **We believe that:**

The foundations of learning are literacy, mathematical competence and thinking.  
Public education has a responsibility to set high expectations and to be accountable for the achievement of those expectations.  
Each member of the school community is entitled to fair and equitable treatment.  
All students can learn.  
Learning is a life-long activity.  
Students learn in different ways.  
Physical, emotional and social health are essential to learning.  
Nurturing and supportive relationships strengthen academic growth.  
Respect for self and others are necessary for a productive learning environment.  
Education is the shared responsibility of students, parents, staff and community.

### MTRSD GOALS

*Our goal statements articulate our aspirations for our students.*

#### **In a safe, secure and supportive environment, all our students will:**

Demonstrate competence in literacy, mathematical skills and thinking.  
Achieve the educational standards identified for a Mohawk graduate.  
Develop the capabilities for positive and effective human relationships.  
Develop the capability to adapt successfully to continuous change.

## **MTRSD PARAMETERS**

*Our parameter statements specify the limits within which we will pursue our mission. They are self-imposed boundaries for our system.*

### **We will not:**

- Initiate any new programs that are not consistent with the statement purpose, beliefs and goals.
- Tolerate violence.
- Tolerate any barriers to the fair and equitable treatment of people.
- Tolerate ineffective performance by school district employees.
- Tolerate fiscal mismanagement.

## **MOHAWK TRAIL DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL**

Sanderson Academy is one of the four elementary schools in the Mohawk Trail Regional School District. The following district personnel are available at the Superintendent's offices (625-0192)

Superintendent of Schools	Sheryl Stanton
Director of Pupil and Personnel Services	Leann Loomis
Director of Curriculum and Assessment (PK-12)	Sarah Jetzon
Director of Transportation and Facilities	Robin Pease

## **MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

The Mohawk Trail Regional School Committee meets once a month to develop policies relating to the operation of the schools. School Committee meetings are generally held on the second Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at a location which is posted each month. All meetings are open to the public. Everyone is invited and encouraged to attend.

## SANDERSON ACADEMY STAFF DIRECTORY

Principal	Emma Liebowitz
Secretary	Denise Sessions
School Nurse	Loranna Almeida
Preschool Teacher	Amy Freeman
Preschool/Kindergarten Teacher	Melanie Manley
Kindergarten Teacher	Sarah Forbes
First Grade Teacher	Kathleem Wyckoff
Second Grade Teacher	Jeannie Robertson
Third Grade Teacher	Carole Fisher
Fourth Grade Teacher	Jennifer Lagoy
Fifth Grade Teacher	Claudia Johnson
Sixth Grade Teacher	Kristen Schrieber
Art Teacher	Carolyn Hawthorne
Music Teacher	Joan Fitzgerald
Instrumental/Band Teacher	Nick Lawrence
Physical Education Teacher	Liz Tyler
Speech/Language Pathologist	Patricia Aurigemma
Special Education Teacher	Barbara Unaitus
Special Education / Math Support Teacher	Alyssa Prew
Interventionist/Teacher	Bridget Lilly
Reading Teacher	Katy Morey
School Psychologist/Head Teacher	Nicole Duprey
Occupational Therapist	Leanne Kieras
Physical Therapist	Vicky Rockstroh
Special Education Liaison	Carolyn Goodnow
Library Manager	Robin Wilson
Head Paraprofessional	Anita Upright
Paraprofessional	Taylor Cote
Paraprofessional	Melissa Beckwith
Paraprofessional/Before School Staff	Amanda Shero
Paraprofessional	Susan Fuller
Paraprofessional	Julia Meservey
Paraprofessional	Becky Gougeon
Paraprofessional	April Guy
Paraprofessional	Veronica Smead
Paraprofessional	Robin Jenkins
Paraprofessional	Carrie Hill
Before/After School Coordinator	Alexis Svoboda
Head Custodian	Stacey Hudson
Cafeteria Manager	Wendy Mimitz
Cafeteria Assistant	Barry Hudson

## **DAILY SCHEDULE**

8:30 – 8:45	Students Arrive
8:45	School Starts
11:30 – 1:00	Lunch
2:30	Preschool Dismissal
3:15	Dismissal

## **CALENDARS, MENUS, NEWSLETTERS**

In the interest of streamlining communication, the primary methods of sharing information will be the school's website: [sanderson.mohawktrailschools.org](http://sanderson.mohawktrailschools.org) and emails to the school-wide list. Folders will be sent home every Thursday with the youngest child in the school. A weekly newsletter will include classroom updates, special announcements, and upcoming events.

## **BREAKFAST, LUNCH, SNACK**

The school provides breakfasts and lunches each day. For the 2021 - 2022 school year, there is no cost for breakfasts and lunches.

Students who bring their own lunch from home may receive a milk. All classes have a snack during the school day.

Lunch menus are published on the school's website [sanderson.mohawktrailschools.org](http://sanderson.mohawktrailschools.org) and emailed to caregivers. Copies are available upon request at the beginning of the month.

## **LEC (Local Education Council)**

As was mandated by the Education Reform Act of 1993, a council of parents, teachers and community members has been formed. The council serves as an advisory group to the Principal. Meetings are held on a monthly basis. Meeting dates and times will be posted on the monthly calendar. All meetings are open to the public. The duties of the council include: developing a school improvement plan, setting school-wide goals, and giving input on the yearly financial budget. Comments from the public are always welcomed. A copy of our current School Improvement Plan is posted on the school website.

## **SAFETY COMMITTEE**

The Sanderson Safety Committee includes representatives from the Ashfield and Plainfield Fire and Police Departments, parents and staff. The goal of this committee is to assist in providing a safe and secure environment for the Sanderson community. The Sanderson Safety Committee will meet throughout the year to continue to develop procedures and programs that will ensure the safety of all. These could be programs for a specific classroom or programs for the school population as a whole. Meetings of the committee are open to the public and exact times and location will be posted on the monthly calendars.

## **TEACHER SUPPORT TEAM/CHILD SUPPORT TEAM**

The Teacher Support Team (TST) and Child Support Team (CST) are made up of the Principal, School Psychologist, Specials Educations Teachers, Reading Teacher, Speech & Language Pathologist, School Nurse, Classroom Teacher and the child's parent(s) and meets weekly.

The purpose of the CST is to provide a forum for sharing ideas and suggestions with the goal of improving the academic, social and/or emotional growth of a particular child. It is important to bring concerns forward before a crisis stage is reached. The Team is supportive of everyone's needs and addresses concerns through recommendations for the classroom teacher, suggestions for the parents to try at home or interventions by one the specialists. Specific strategies or interventions will be decided upon by the team and recorded in the meeting minutes. Although this Team is a regular education function of the school, screenings by one or more of the Team members can be performed if the Team wishes and the parent gives permission. Follow up meetings will usually be scheduled and held, parents are always notified and are encouraged to participate in the CSTs work.

## **REGISTERING NEW STUDENTS**

Parents or guardians of new students to Sanderson Academy Elementary School should register their child(ren) at least one day before starting school. Copies of school medical records and all immunization records and birth certificates are required before a child enters school. Copies of school records from the child's previous school will be requested and copies of educationally significant documents such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or 504 Plan would be very helpful in our efforts to provide your child a smooth transition into Sanderson Academy. Discipline records may also be requested.



## **ENTRANCE AGE**

Students must be 3 years old by August 31<sup>st</sup>, to attend the Sanderson Academy Preschool Program.

Students must be 5 years old by August 31<sup>st</sup>, to attend the Sanderson Academy Kindergarten Program.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE, ABSENCES, TARDINESS AND EARLY DISMISSAL**

The Mohawk Trail Regional School District (MTRSD) School Committee believes strongly in the importance of regular attendance by all students. Excessive absences, whether excused or unexcused; tardiness; and leaving school before scheduled dismissal times have a negative effect on student performance.

The Committee adheres to, and is in full compliance with Chapter 76 of the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which defines school attendance regulations.

Parents/Guardians have legal responsibility to ensure that their children attend school during the school year.

Except in cases of illness and extenuating circumstances, students are expected to be present when school is in session. Parents are strongly urged not to schedule family vacation during school days and not to extend the scheduled vacation periods. Students attend school 180 days with vacations built into the school calendar.

The District shall develop regulations for managing attendance in accordance with this policy which shall be published in the student handbook. The administration shall, from time to time, have conversations with the Policy Subcommittee regarding these regulations.

Recommended by Policy Subcommittee 5/26/11

First Read: June 15, 2011

Second Read and Adoption: July 20, 2011

Mohawk Trail Regional School District School Committee

**JE-R**

## **Attendance Policy – Regulations**

[The following, which were originally included as part of the policy draft were discussed with administrators (Superintendent and Principals from BSE, Sanderson and Mohawk Trail) and recommended by the committee as being regulations, rather than policy.]

Parents/guardians must notify the school whenever a student is absent. An absence is considered to be excused if the absence is due to one of the following: 1) Illness, 2) Hospitalization, 3) Death of a family member, 4) Observance of religious holidays, 5) Crisis situations.

Whether excused or unexcused, a note from the parent/guardian must accompany the student on their return to school. A telephone call from the parent/guardian to the school is acceptable to document the absence if made by 9:00 AM the day(s) of the absence.

After three consecutive days of absence, school personnel will contact the family to determine the student's status. Students who have been out for three or more consecutive days may be required to provide the school with a doctor's note at the school's discretion.

MGL Chapter 76, Section 2 allows consequences for students when absences amount to more than seven full or fourteen half days in a six month period. The MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District have established the following guidelines for excessive student absences:

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

If a student at the middle/high school is absent for more than 9 class meetings for a full semester course (5 for a course that meets on alternating days) or 18 class meetings for a full year course, the student will not be issued a final passing grade for that course. If a student exceeds the number of absences stated in the policy, an appeal may be made to a board consisting of an administrator, counselors, and a teacher. A student should fill out an application for an appeal with their guidance counselor at least a week before the last day of the semester. Appeals may be requested due to extenuating circumstances that prohibited the student from staying below the attendance threshold. Appeals may be granted at the discretion of the committee, and may include conditions that the student must fulfill. If a student suffers from a case of serious or chronic illness documented by a physician's note, the committee may waive the attendance requirement.

A student who is absent from a class may not participate in extracurricular activities, such as athletics, on the day of the absence, unless participation is approved in advance by the principal. School-sanctioned field trips, assemblies, college visits with school permission, athletic competitions and other school-sanctioned activities will not be considered an absence.

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness is defined as arriving and/or entering the school building after the school day begins. Please consult the table below for start times for MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe schools:

SCHOOL	BUILDING OPEN FOR STUDENT ARRIVAL	SCHOOL DAY BEGINS	TARDY IF ARRIVING/ENTERING BUILDING AFTER:
MTRSD & HRSD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS	8:30 AM	8:45 AM	8:45 AM
MTRSD MIDDLE SCHOOL	7:15	7:44 AM	7:44 AM
MTRSD HIGH SCHOOL	7:15	7:44 AM	7:44 AM

If an elementary school student is tardy, the parent/guardian must sign them in at the school office. Middle and high school students must be in their first class of the day at 7:44 a.m.; those who arrive late must sign in at the front office and are considered tardy. Elementary school students who arrive at school after the mid-point of the school day (11:45 AM) will be marked absent for the day. High school and middle school students who miss more than 30 minutes of a 90-minute class period (15 minutes of a 45-minute period) will be considered absent from that class. This is due to the requirements of the time on learning standards set by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as managed by our student attendance system.

### **EARLY RELEASE FROM SCHOOL**

MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District recognize there are occasions and legitimate reasons for parents/guardians to request early dismissal from school. MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District strongly encourage parents/guardians to have their children complete the school day. Parents/guardians should make every effort to schedule appointments after school hours when possible. Elementary school students dismissed before the mid-point of the school day (11:45 AM) will be counted as absent for the day. High school and middle school students who miss more than 30 minutes of a 90-minute class period (15 minutes of a 45-minute period) will be considered absent from that class. This is due to the requirements of the time on learning standards set by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts as managed by our student attendance system.

### **CONSEQUENCES FOR EXCESSIVE TARDINESS TO SCHOOL:**

The MTRSD AND HRSD SCHOOL DISTRICTS have established the following guidelines for elementary school students who have excessive tardies:

- After seven tardies, a letter of notification will be sent home to the parents/guardians.
- After ten tardies, a 2<sup>nd</sup> letter will be sent requiring the parents to meet with the Principal, with a copy of the letter sent to the office of the Superintendent, MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District. Another copy of the letter may be sent to the designated MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District Truant Officer.
- After fifteen tardies, a 3<sup>rd</sup> letter will be sent home and a referral of the situation may be sent to the designated MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District Truant Officer and copy to the office of the Superintendent, MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District.
- After twenty tardies, a 4<sup>th</sup> letter will be sent home. A referral to the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families for investigation may occur at this point, with notification of the referral sent to the office of the Superintendent, MTRSD, HRSD and Rowe School District.

At the middle and high school, students who are tardy to 3 times to school or any class in a semester are assigned a Saturday Detention for the 3<sup>rd</sup> tardy and for every subsequent one until the end of the semester. Students who are frequently tardy to school may, if they drive themselves, have their driving privileges suspended or revoked.

Recommended by Policy Subcommittee 5/26/11

First Read: June 15, 2011

Second Read and Adoption: July 20, 2011

Mohawk Trail Regional School District School Committee

### **DISMISSAL PROCEDURE**

1. If your child is being picked up at the end of the day by anyone, you must write a note to that effect. The note must identify the person who will pick up your child and must be dated and signed. If there is a regularly scheduled pick up, one blanket note at the beginning of the year will suffice.
2. Your child will wait in the classroom to be picked up.
3. If you call the school to request a change in plans, it must be cleared directly by the principal or a staff member prior to 3:00 P.M.
4. If you arrive at school prior the regular dismissal time, please sign your child out by reporting to the office and signing the appropriate form. Your child will then be called in the classroom and come to meet you.

## **CALL-IN PROGRAM**

If your child is going to be absent from school, please notify the school office by 9:00AM. This can be done by calling (413) 628-4404 or emailing Secretary Denise Sessions at [dsessions@mtrsd.org](mailto:dsessions@mtrsd.org). If you do not communicate an absence the school nurse or school secretary may call.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS**

In the event of school closings due to inclement weather, a School Messenger Information System call will be made to all parents. In addition, the District's website: [mohawkschools.org](http://mohawkschools.org) and local radio and television stations will carry the necessary announcements. Whenever possible, a two-hour delay will be implemented. Please make an attempt to refer to one of the sources listed above if there is any question concerning the opening of school.

Occasionally, a decision to close school early may be made to ensure that children will arrive home safely. These decisions are made when weather conditions deteriorate during the school day. A School Reach call will be made to parents if school is closed early and the information will be available at the sources listed above. Please have a plan for someone to meet your child(ren) upon their arrival home.

## **TELEPHONE USE**

In order to keep our telephone lines open for school business, Sanderson Academy maintains a policy whereby children are not allowed to make or receive calls at school unless there is an emergency. All after-school plans should be made before children leave for school in the morning, and appropriate parental notes concerning changes from the standard routine must be brought in to school in the morning.

We will always deliver messages from a parent to children during the school day. However, unless there is an emergency, we try not to interrupt a child's academic program by having him/her come to the telephone. If a staff member receiving a call is in class, unless there is an emergency, a message will be taken and given to the staff member at a later time. The staff member will return the call as soon as possible.

## **ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Handheld personal electronic devices, such as iPods, iPhones and the like, are not allowed at school or on school buses without prior permission. Teachers will give specific guidance on the use of devices for educational purposes. Such items, if brought to school, may be safeguarded by the office or by the classroom teacher. Occasional exceptions to this rule will be made for extended bus rides associated with field trips.

## **DRESS FOR SUCCESS GUIDELINES**

The staff at Sanderson Academy School strongly believes that students should come to school dressed appropriately for learning and for academic pursuits. They should also have clothing and footwear suitable for physical activity. The staff understands that reasonable differences in expectations will occur based upon the grade level of students. What is appropriate and reasonable attire for a primary student may not be appropriate and reasonable for an intermediate student and vice versa. Therefore, the following guidelines will be put into place at our school in order to help parents and students make good choices for school attire.

- Shorts, skirts and dresses should reach to at least mid-thigh (or no shorter than fingertip reach)
- Tops should cover midriff and allow no underwear to show. The straps of a top should be wide (spaghetti straps or strapless tops are not acceptable attire)
- Clothing with inappropriate pictures, words or messages will not be allowed in school.
- Appropriate and sensible footwear must be available at school each day. Students are required to have sneakers for Physical Education. Flip flops should not be worn
- Except for those pertaining to religious freedoms, hats and other head coverings are not allowed in school. They may be worn outside.
- Perfume and cologne is not allowed at school.

The Sanderson staff realizes that trends and style may change over time. If issues arise over such changes, they will be addressed at that time.

During the cold and potentially snowy parts of the year (roughly Thanksgiving to April vacation) please send your child to school dressed for active outdoor play. In general this means hat, coat, mittens/gloves, scarves, snow pants, and boots. We have outdoor recess daily, weather permitting, and many classes take advantage of our 40-acre campus for outdoor educational activities year round. Keeping an extra pair of socks at school during the winter months is also an excellent idea.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips play an extremely important role in the educational process in most schools. They provide learning experiences that would not be possible within the confines of the school building. Field trips also open students' senses and minds to the larger world beyond their home community. Field trips are strongly linked to the curriculum of the school, and students missing field trips inevitably miss a vital and memorable part of their learning. At times, we ask that families pay a fee to participate in the field trip. If you would like to have your child participate in these trips, but it presents a financial hardship, please contact the principal. In order for field trips to be successfully planned and carried out, the following guidelines will be followed at Sanderson Academy.

1. Field trips will be planned primarily by teachers as an extension of their classroom curriculum.
2. Teachers planning a field trip must fill out a field trip permission form that is available in the school office. All field trips must be approved by the principal. Additional approval from the superintendent must be obtained for all out-of-state field trips.
3. It will be the responsibility of the teacher to arrange for any needed transportation for a field trip and to raise whatever money will be needed to pay for all aspects of the trip. Some funds are usually available each year to help defray the cost of field trips. Any additional money needed may be obtained through fund-raising activities or by direct payment from parents or students.
4. A reasonable number of chaperones must accompany each class on a field trip (i.e., a 1:8 ratio for shorter day trips and a 1:5 ratio for extended trips).
5. Preparation time for each field trip should be commensurate with the length and distance of the trip. It will be the responsibility of the teacher in charge of the trip to arrange for parent meetings to discuss preparations for trips lasting longer than one school day.
6. It is the right of any parent to keep a child home from any school field trip. However, if a parent chooses to keep his/her child home, arrangements need to be made with the school for care of that child. A scheduled field trip constitutes the curriculum for the duration of the trip, and alternative plans need not be made solely by the school for children not accompanying the class.
7. If for any reason it is felt that a child should not be allowed to accompany his/her class on a field trip for disciplinary reasons, that child may be kept at school at the teacher's request. Parents would be notified of this decision.
8. All school rules and procedures are in place on any field trip. Children and chaperones are expected to behave on field trips in accordance with these rules and procedures unless changes in expectations have been made prior to the trip and are clear to all participants.

## **REPORTING PUPIL PROGRESS**

The staff at Sanderson Academy feels that it is extremely important for the school and home to maintain close contact during the school year. Therefore, we urge parents to either call the school or make an appointment to discuss any questions or concerns that they may have about their child's program, progress or school activities. Report cards are issued two times per year in January and June. The report cards are based on the State Curriculum Standards. In addition, two parent conferences are scheduled: one in the fall and one in the spring. We sincerely hope, however, that you do not wait for these regular reporting times to have a question or concern addressed.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTS**

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) tests are given in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics to students in grades three, four, five and six during the spring of each year. Additionally, students in grade five take tests in the area of science engineering and technology. Specific schedules will be posted on our web site and reported in the school calendars. Results of these tests are shared with parents in the fall. Reading and Mathematics assessments are also given to students in various grades at different times during the year. The results of these assessments are used by staff to make instructional decisions. Results are shared with parents during parent – teacher conferences.

## **LIBRARY AND SCHOOL MATERIALS**

All children are scheduled for regular library visits each week. At this time, students are encouraged to check out a book or other learning materials for their own pleasure. We request that parents cooperate in helping to see that all library books and other school materials taken home are returned in proper condition at the specified time. Parents will be asked to replace any books or other materials that are lost or destroyed by their children during the school year.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

Each fall the school schedules a school photograph session with Grynn & Barrett Studios of Holyoke MA. All students will be photographed and time will be available for photos to be taken of preschoolers also. Parents will receive a prepayment envelope near the time of the session and reminders will be sent home as the date nears. Families are UNDER NO OBLIGATION to purchase their child's photograph. You may purchase a group photograph of your child's class if you so desire.



## HOMEWORK

Relevant, meaningful and thoughtfully developed homework does provide children with a variety of important opportunities. These include the opportunity to practice skills, the opportunity to apply skills and/or knowledge, and the opportunity to develop responsibility and good work habits. Homework can also provide parents a window into their child's educational experiences and the opportunity to share in those experiences.

Homework or class work that may become homework is important in a student's overall success in his/her academic program. The Sanderson Academy Staff recognizes the importance of homework as a vital part of the learning of essential skills taught in the classroom. Our Staff will support this effort by following these principles:

- Assignments support classroom instructional objectives.
- Assignments are well defined and clear to the student.
- Assignments will be varied and require the use of a number of skills.
- Homework will not be assigned on designated religious holidays when students are absent because of religious observances.
- Homework should grow from classroom tasks, projects and concerns. Types of homework assignments may include practice or reinforcement of skills learned, long-term projects, unfinished class work assignments, enrichment activities, and reading a good book.
- Time required to complete an assignment should be developmentally appropriate.

While the student should assume the major responsibility for completing homework assignments, parents are encouraged to take an active interest in their child's homework by:

- Providing a study area that is quiet, comfortable and free of major disturbances.
- Working with their child (ren) to identify a time for doing homework or other studying.
- Making available, if possible, such resource materials as reference books, magazines, newspapers, and a dictionary.
- Answering student's questions.
- Checking the student's work for neatness, completeness and accuracy.

A well-developed and consistently followed plan for completing homework can contribute to increased student learning. Parents are encouraged to develop such a plan with their child(ren).

## **PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS**

The School Committee is dedicated to the best total and continuous development of each student enrolled. The professional staff is expected to place students at the grade level best suited to them academically, socially, and emotionally.

In evaluating student achievement, each teacher will make use of all available information, including results of teacher-made tests and other measures of skill and content mastery, standardized test results, and teacher observation of student performance. The Principal will direct and aid teachers in their evaluations and review grade assignments in order to ensure uniformity of evaluation standards.

Students will normally progress annually from grade to grade. Retention should be considered a last resort to be contemplated when other reasonable strategies have been tried. Only when specific benefits of retaining a student can be clearly identified, along with corresponding remedial actions, may a student be retained. Students identified as being at risk for retention, or actually retained, will continue to be closely monitored to ensure their maximum academic progress.

The decision to retain a student shall be made by the school principal following consultation with the child study team, which will include classroom teacher, building specialists, guidance counselor, principal and parents/guardians.

## **DISCIPLINE**

Effective and responsive discipline is essential to the operation of any school. Students, parents and staff alike need to have a definitive set of guidelines, which are used to govern behavior. At Sanderson Academy, our discipline policy is based primarily upon a belief that school needs to be a safe place in which everyone can learn and socialize, and upon a conviction that mutual respect is vital to personal and group interactions. It is further believed that, within a framework of defined expectations, consequences for inappropriate behavior will differ in degree in relationship to the severity of the behavior. It should be understood that this school discipline policy covers not only the time that students spend in the school building, but also those times when they are on the school bus, on a class field trip or involved in any school sponsored activity.

### **General Rules of Behavior**

1. Treat others as you would like to be treated.
2. Respect others and their learning.
3. Respect yourself and your own learning.
4. Respect and care for the environment.

- Everyone is expected to go out for recess unless they are working with their teacher or another staff member on a project. Everyone is expected to have proper clothing for outdoor recess with them each day.
- Gum, toy guns, jack knives, skateboards and handheld electronic entertainment devices are not allowed in school or on the playground.
- Head coverings (hats, visors, etc.) are not to be worn inside the building during the school day.

### **Discipline Plans**

Individual classrooms have specific plans for dealing with misbehavior that respect and reflect the developmental needs of the children and expectations of the teacher. Logical Consequences for misbehavior fall into three categories: Loss of Privilege, You Break It, You Fix It and Positive Time-Out (Take a Break). All plans allow for warnings and time outs with referral to the principal only if the behavior is repeated, dangerous or particularly inappropriate.

### **Suspension**

A staff member may immediately remove a student or students from the classroom or playground if there is a serious rule violation that:

- Constitutes an immediate threat to the health and safety of any person or persons.
- Grossly or repeatedly violates acceptable standards of behavior.

Two types of suspension may be used to deal with serious and/or repeated infractions of school rules:

- In-School Suspension
- Out-of-School Suspension.

### **In-School Suspension**

If the principal should see the same student for continued misbehavior two days in the same week or four days within a month, an In-School Suspension will take place. The Principal will notify parents. Schoolwork will be assigned and completed by the end of the day. A Behavior Plan will be developed with the opportunity for parental input. If there should be a second In-School Suspension, parents will be required to meet with the Principal and the child to evaluate and adjust the Behavior Plan developed previously. This will happen the day of the child's second In-School Suspension if at all possible.

### **Out-of-School Suspension**

Students may be suspended from school for their own welfare or the welfare of others. If a student is suspended they may not return to school or participate in any school activities until the suspension is over. The principal will immediately contact the parents and explain the reason for the Out-of-School Suspension. In addition, a letter will be sent home outlining the problem, giving the reason for the suspension and arranging a time for a meeting between the Principal, parents, the student and any other school personnel involved.

## **VII - SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICIES - APPENDIX**

Certain laws and policies, applicable to all schools in the district, are contained in this section. They are based on school policy and state law.

### **MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT HAWLEMONT REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

#### **STUDENT HANDBOOKS – COMMON POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

There are certain laws and policies applicable to all schools in the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and the Hawlemont Regional School District. This section of the student handbook contains the resulting policies and procedures common to all of the schools in the 2-Districts.

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## **I. SAFE SCHOOL POLICY**

### **A. Statement Of Purpose and Compliance**

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

### **B. Standard Of Safety**

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

### **C. Procedures To Meet Standards**

## 1. Administrative Action

- a. The Superintendent will assess current safety standards and procedures not less than once every three years.
- b. The assessment of current standards and procedures will be accomplished by the Superintendent, building Principals and other District personnel who shall review and update current practices with representatives of the police and fire departments in each town, the Districts' insurance carrier, and the Districts' counsel, in addition to other parties whom the Superintendent and Principals determine to be critical to the process.
- c. The Superintendent or his/her designee shall collect, review and disseminate the assessment report to the District Safety Committee, building-based safety committees and the School Committee.
- d. Those groups and individuals receiving the assessment report will promptly review it. The District Safety Committee and each building-based safety committee will subsequently meet and make recommendations to the Superintendent and the School Committees for the purpose of making the necessary improvements to the existing safety and security practices.
- e. The Superintendent and each building Principal shall annually, as part of the budget process, identify safety and security needs and request appropriations for security personnel, devices, equipment and updated training for all Staff.
- f. Building Principals in consultation with the Superintendent will provide pertinent safety information to Parents based upon a careful review of each circumstance.

## 2. School Committees Action

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

## II. STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES/DUE PROCESS

### A. How are Students protected from discrimination?

1. State law guarantees that no Student may be excluded from or discriminated against in any school program because of their race, gender, gender identity, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation pregnancy, or pregnancy related condition.

### B. What means are available to Students for expressing their opinion?

1. There are several ways in which Students may express their opinions. They may express their views through speech and symbols (arm bands, buttons, etc.) as long as such expression does not cause disruption in the school and there is no clear and present danger to the well being of Students and Staff. Students may petition the Administration at any time. Students may assemble peaceably on school property in order to express their views, although the Administration may restrict the time and place of assemblies and the distribution of written opinions during regularly scheduled school hours.

### C. What are a Student's rights in suspension or expulsion?

#### NOTICE OF PROPOSED SUSPENSION

Except in the case of an emergency removal or disciplinary offense defined under M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H or 37H½ or an in-school suspension as defined by 603 CMR 53.02(6), the school shall provide the student and parent/guardian with written and oral notice of the proposed out-of-school suspension, an opportunity to be heard at hearing, and the opportunity to participate at the hearing. Notice shall set forth in plain language:

- a) the disciplinary offense;
- b) the basis for the charge;
- c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent/guardian to attend the hearing;
- e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;

- f) the right of the student and student's parent/guardian to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. In order to conduct a hearing without the parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian. Reasonable effort is presumed if the principal sent written notice and documented at least two attempts to contact the parent/guardian in the manner specified by the parent/guardian for emergency situations.

All written communications regarding notice of proposed suspension shall be either by hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

#### SHORT-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

A short-term suspension is the removal of the student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive days or less. Out-of-school short-term suspensions which do not cumulatively over the course of the school year exceed ten (10) days of suspension shall be conducted in accordance with this section.

**Principal Hearing.** The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts. A parent/guardian present at the hearing shall have the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances.

Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal will make a determination whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequence. The principal will provide notification in writing of his/her determination in the form of an update to the student and parent/guardian, and provide reasons for the determination. If the student is suspended, the principal shall inform the parent/guardian of the type and duration of the suspension, and shall provide an opportunity for the student to make up assignments and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through 3, the principal shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in



the primary language in the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

#### LONG-TERM SUSPENSIONS: HEARING AND PRINCIPAL DETERMINATION

A long-term suspension is the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or for more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student has committed the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal will consider in determining whether alternatives to suspension such as loss of privileges, detention, an apology, a student contract, restitution, and/or probation are appropriate.

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

- i. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
- ii. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's and or parent's/guardian's expense;
- iii. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
- iv. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
- v. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

Based on the evidence submitted at the hearing the principal shall make a determination as to whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension (the use of evidence-based strategies and programs, such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports) what remedy or consequence will be imposed. If the principal decides to impose a long-term suspension, the written determination shall:

- i. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
- ii. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
- iii. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;

- iv. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
- v. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

The long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

If the student is in grades pre-k through grade 3, the principal shall send his/her determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons prior to imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

All written communications regarding the hearing and principal determination shall be either hand delivery or delivered by first-class mail, certified mail, or email to the provided by the parent/guardian for school communications (or other method agreed to by the principal and parent/guardian) in English, and in the primary language in the home if other than English, or by other means of communication where appropriate.

#### APPEAL OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION

A student who is placed on a long-term suspension shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent if properly and timely filed as outlined above. A good faith effort shall be made to include the parent/guardian at the hearing. The appeal shall be held within three (3) school days of the appeal, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, which the superintendent shall grant.

The student and parent/guardian shall have the same rights afforded at the long-term suspension principal hearing. Within five (5) calendar days of the hearing the superintendent shall issue his/her written decision which meets the criteria required of the principal's determination. If the superintendent determines the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than that of the principal. The superintendent's decision shall be final.

#### EMERGENCY REMOVAL

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

During the emergency removal the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions

and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

A decision shall be rendered orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day. The decision shall meet all of the due process requirements of a principal's determination in a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable.

#### IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION UNDER 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10

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

A Principal may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten (10) days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

#### SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION FOR DISCIPLINARY OFFENSES UNDER M.G.L. 71 §§37H and 37H½

The due process notification and hearing requirements in the preceding sections do not apply to the following disciplinary offenses:

Possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or assault of staff

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, and the principal determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal may, in his/her discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend a student for a period of time determined appropriate by the Principal if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal shall notify the student in writing of the charges, the reasons for the suspension (prior to such suspension taking effect), and the right to appeal. The Principal will also provide the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) the process for appealing the suspension to the Superintendent. The request for appeal must be made in writing within five (5) calendar days. The hearing shall be held within three (3) days of the request. The suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing before the Superintendent. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Felony conviction or adjudication/admission in court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency

The Principal may expel a student convicted of a felony, or who has an adjudication or admission of guilt regarding a felony, if the Principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for the proposed expulsion. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent, as well as the appeal process. The expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

The student shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal the decision no later than five (5) calendar days following the date of the expulsion. The Superintendent hearing shall be held with the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent has the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the Principal. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

#### **D. What are the Students' rights regarding the privacy and security of student records?**

##### **1. Definitions:**

- a. **Transcript.** The transcript shall contain administrative records that constitute the minimum data necessary to reflect the Student's educational progress and to operate the educational system
  - b. **Temporary record.** The temporary record shall consist of all the information in the student record which is not contained in the transcript. This information clearly shall be of importance to the educational process.
  - c. **Student record.** The student record shall consist of the transcript, the temporary record, and any other material concerning a Student that is organized on the basis of the Student's name or in a way that such Student may be individually identified.
  - d.
2. The school Principal or his/her designee shall be responsible for the privacy and security of all student records maintained in the school. The eligible Student and his/her Parents or Guardians shall have access to the student record. In no event, shall such access be delayed more than two consecutive school days after the request for a review has been made, unless the requesting party consents to a delay.
  3. Students 18 years of age or over may limit the right of access of their Parents or Guardians by making such request in writing to the school Principal, who shall honor such request and retain a copy of it in the student record.
  4. The student transcript will be kept for 60 years following the Student's graduation, transfer or withdrawal from the school system. The temporary record will be kept no more than five years after the Student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the school system.
  5. A copy of the Student Records Regulation is on file in the Principal's office and is accessible to any Student, Parent, or Guardian upon request.
  6. Except for the Student, Parent and/or Guardian as specified above, authorized school personnel, and certain exceptions detailed in the governing state regulation, no third party shall have access to

information in or from the student record without the specific, informed written consent of the eligible Student or Parent or Guardian. When granting consent, the eligible Student or Parent or Guardian shall have the right to designate which parts of the student record shall be released to a third party.

**E. What should a Student do if he or she feels rights are being denied?**

1. First, the Student should try to talk the problem out with the individual administrator, teacher, coach or club advisor. If the problem cannot be solved in this way, the Student's Parents or Guardian should set up a conference with the individual staff member. If the Student and his/her Parents or Guardian are still not satisfied, they should set up a second conference with the individual staff member and his or her coordinator (or, in the case of a club advisor, with an administrator). This process of conferences should be continued through the Administration to the Superintendent and School Committee.
2. There are many avenues to express student opinions and many individuals or groups within the school to help a Student resolve problems; the basic student right is to a good education. All of our efforts are directed toward that goal. Students who sit down in good faith and work towards harmonious solutions to problems will find the entire Staff willing and ready to work with them to reach those solutions.

**III. STUDENT CONDUCT**

A. Good citizenship is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority, to conform to school rules and to those provisions of the law that apply to their conduct.

**B. The Principal may expel a Student under M.G.L. 71:37H for the following actions:**

1. Assaulting a Principal, assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff member on school premises or at school-related events including athletic games.
2. Being found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance.

**IV. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**  
**Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Retaliation Policy**

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

**1. Definitions:**

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

**B. INCIDENT REPORTING**

1. Students are expected to report all incidents or suspicions of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation to the Principal/Vice Principal in a timely manner. Verbal reports will need to be documented on the form contained within the student handbook, which will also be available on the District website and front offices of each school.
2. Confidential / anonymous reports can be emailed to: [concerns@mohawkschools.org](mailto:concerns@mohawkschools.org)

- a. (Note: No disciplinary action will be taken against a Student based solely on an anonymous report.)

### **C. ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSE**

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

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

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

### **E. LEGAL REF: MGL, CHAPTER 269: SECTION 19**

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



constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

2. Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.
3. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.
4. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its Students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report.

**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**Incident Report for Bullying, Cyber Bullying, or Harassment**

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_\_ Reporter:    Student    Staff    Parent/Community

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

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


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


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

## **VI. HEALTH SERVICES**

The Health Office is staffed daily by a Nurse. There is ALWAYS a Registered Nurse on call if there is a Licensed Practical Nurse covering the health office. The nurse is available to do the following:

1. Provide first aid and illness assessment.
2. Provide initial emergency care.
3. Administer medications.
4. Perform treatments and procedures.
5. Perform mandated screenings.
6. Act as a health resource for Students, Parents, and Staff.
7. Maintain the health records, which include at a minimum medical history, immunizations, physical examinations, screening results, and emergency information.
8. Develop Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP) for students diagnosed with life-threatening conditions.

The school nurse also helps to identify health care and social needs, makes appropriate referrals, attends IEP and 504 meetings if a health issue is involved, and serves on committees.

## A. When Should Your Child Stay Home From School?

1. If your child has a fever of 100 degrees or higher, please keep your child home until fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.
2. If your child is experiencing vomiting and/or diarrhea he/she should be kept at home until symptoms have resolved and he/she is able to keep down food and liquid for at least 12 hours.
3. If the white part of your child's eye appears red and you notice a green or yellow discharge from the eye, call your healthcare provider. Your child may have conjunctivitis ("pink eye"), a common but contagious eye infection. Your child may need antibiotic eye ointment which will need to be used for 24 hours before he/she can return to school.
4. If your child has an unusual rash or a rash associated with a fever, have your child evaluated by your healthcare provider. A rash may be a sign of a bacterial or viral illness, an allergic reaction to a medication, food, or something in the environment (plants, chemicals, detergents).
5. If your child has a contagious illness such as strep throat, flu, or chicken pox. Discuss with the child's provider and school nurse on how long your child should remain home.
6. If your child has a persistent cough, which is not improving, we recommend that he/she be evaluated by your healthcare provider.

## B. Hand Sanitizer

To prevent the spread of germs, including COVID-19, CDC recommends washing hands with soap and water whenever possible because it reduces the amount of many types of germs and chemicals on hands. But if soap and water are not readily available, using a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol can help you avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

- Choose only FDA approved hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol (often listed on the label as ethanol, ethyl alcohol, isopropanol, or 2-propanol).
- Rub the gel over all the surfaces of your hands and fingers ***until your hands are dry***.
- Keep alcohol-based hand sanitizer out of your eyes.
- ***DO NOT*** rinse or wipe off the alcohol-based hand sanitizer before it's dry

Hand sanitizer stations will be available throughout the school in areas of high visibility of staff, in classrooms that do not have a sink, and at entrances to buildings.

If parents/guardians do not wish for their student to use the hand sanitizer provided by the school, please send in an **opt-out letter** to the nurses office to have on file. Students with this letter will be expected to wash their hands using soap and water throughout the day.

**C. Motion Sickness**

If your child has a history of motion sickness and is going on a school field trip, if you would like them to have Dramamine, you will need to provide a sealed container with the medication with your child’s name on it, and sign a permission slip for the nurse to administer the Dramamine.

**D. Immunization Requirements:**

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS 2021-2022

	By two years old	By Kindergarten	By 7th Grade	By 11th Grade
<b>DtaP/DTP/DT/Td</b>	<b>4 doses</b> of DTaP/DPT	<b>5 doses;</b> 4 doses are acceptable if the fourth dose is given on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday.	<b>Tdap</b> and history of DTaP primary series or age appropriate catch-up vaccination.	
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	<b>3 doses;</b> laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable			
<b>Hib</b>	<b>1-4 doses;</b> the number of doses is determined by vaccine product and age the series begins	N/A	N/A	N/A
<b>MMR</b>	<b>1 dose</b> given after the first birthday	<b>2 doses</b> second dose must be given $\geq 28$ days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable		
<b>Meningococcal</b>	N/A	N/A	<b>1 dose;</b> 1 dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) required. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.	<b>2 doses;</b> second dose MenACWY (formerly MCV4) must be given on or after the 16th birthday and $\geq 8$ weeks after the previous dose. 1 dose is acceptable if it was given on or after the 16th birthday. Meningococcal B vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.
<b>Polio</b>	<b>3 doses</b>	<b>4 doses;</b> fourth dose must be given on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday and $\geq 6$ months after the previous dose, or a fifth dose is required. 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday and $\geq 6$ months after the previous dose		

<b>Varicella</b>	<b>1 dose</b> on or after 1st birthday	<b>2 doses;</b> second dose must be given $\geq 28$ days after first dose; a diagnosed history of chickenpox or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
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[105 CMR 220.000 Immunization of Students Before Admission to School](#)

*Immunization exemptions are granted if documentation is provided that states that immunizations conflict with religious beliefs or that there is a medical contraindication. The school nurse can provide you with the appropriate forms to complete. Such exemptions must be renewed annually at the start of the school year.*

**E. Parent/Guardian Responsibilities:**

1. If your child is sick or has an accident of sufficient seriousness to warrant it, the school will get in touch with the Parent/Guardian to take the child home and arrange for needed medical attention.
2. **If your child will be absent, it is your responsibility to call and inform the school.**
3. Please notify the school nurse if there are any changes in your child's health, if your child will be out of school for an extended period of time, or if your child has a contagious disease (we may need to take precautions to protect the health of others).
4. **Please complete and return the Annual Medical Update/Emergency form that is sent home at the beginning of each school year.** It is extremely important that this form be completed fully and returned to the school nurse. This information is essential to the nurse so that she has an accurate and current picture of your child's health status and so that she can also contact you or your designee in the event that your child is ill or injured.

**F. Medication Policy**

1. Prescription medications can be given during school hours if the school nurse has a health care provider's order and a signed parental permission form. Please ask the school nurse for the appropriate forms.
2. Medication must be delivered to the school in a pharmacy- or manufacturer-labeled container by a Parent, Guardian, or a responsible adult. **Students are not allowed to bring medication to school.**
3. All medications are to be kept in the nurse's office unless a Student is authorized by the school nurse to "self-administer" and carry medication on his/her person.
4. In order for a Student to "self-administer" medication at school the following conditions must be met:
  - a. The health care provider provides written permission.
  - b. The Parent/Guardian signs a consent form for self-administration.
  - c. The nurse agrees that it is safe for the Student to self-administer. The final decision rests with the nurse.

## **G. State Mandated Screenings**

1. **Hearing/Vision:** Students are screened yearly. In addition, Students may be screened at any time during the school year upon request. Vision and hearing screenings are provided by school nurses and are not as comprehensive as exams by health care providers. Therefore, they should not be considered a replacement. The purpose of the screening is to identify students who need additional testing and then inform the Parents/Guardians through a referral.
2. **Height/Weight:** All Students are screened yearly.
3. **Postural Screening:** Students are screened in Grades 5 and 6.

## **H. Physical Examination Requirements**

1. Physical exams are required in Preschool and Kindergarten (annually) and in Grade 4. Physical exams are also required for new students entering into the MTRSD. Physical exam forms are available from the school nurse.
2. Students without complete documentation of the required immunizations and physical exam will be excluded from the start of school.

## **I. School Health Insurance**

Lefebvre Insurance, Inc. provides school insurance. Information is sent home at the beginning of the school year.



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

- A. The School Committees of these three districts will send representatives to a Joint Transportation Committee, which will be responsible for contracting for transportation services, and examining and making recommendations relative to transportation. Management of transportation services will be handled through the office of the Superintendent by the Director of Transportation. The above listed school districts have the responsibility to provide eligible K-12 Students with safe and efficient transportation. Parents have the responsibility to help Students get to bus stops.

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

1. Bus routes will be established with consideration given to the concentration of Students, the road conditions, location of schools, safety and economy of operation, and so that Students are transported in the most efficient manner. Elementary Students will ride the bus no longer than one hour. High School Students will ride no longer than 1-¼ hours. All bus routes will follow public roads.
2. The Districts will comply with all applicable state laws for minimal standards of service. Students living more than one and one-half miles from a schoolhouse, as measured by commonly traveled roads, will be provided service. The Districts have the right to establish bus stops up to 1 mile from a Student's residence.
3. In some cases, Parents may be contracted with to provide transportation.
4. Students will ride their assigned bus unless they provide parental/guardian permission slips to the school office to ride a different bus. They may only ride another bus when seats are available. Students may not stand on the bus.

### **C. Due Process**

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

#### **D. Student Conduct**

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

#### **E. Special Needs Transportation**

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

#### **F. Service on Major Highways**

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

#### **G. Time of Arrival**

1. Bus transportation will be arranged so that Students arrive in time for school. However, supervision is not provided for Students until fifteen minutes before the start of school. Elementary Students should not arrive earlier than fifteen minutes before the start of school unless enrolled in a before school program.

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

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

## **I. Transportation of Choice Students**

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

## **J. School Bus Regulations**

1. Bus operators are in charge of the bus and the passengers. They are responsible for the safety of the pupils and for their conduct on the bus. Riding the bus is a privilege that can be denied temporarily or permanently, if a pupil's behavior warrants it. The operator reports to the bus company all violations of rules, and a pupil may become ineligible for transportation if his/her behavior creates a problem on the school bus. It is necessary for Students to observe the following rules:
  - a. Be at the stopping places on time and ready to get into the bus with the least possible delay, in order to keep the bus on schedule.
  - b. Do not stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
  - c. Remain at least five feet from the bus when it stops to pick up, and move toward the bus only when the door opens.
  - d. Students having to cross the road when boarding or leaving are to cross in front of the bus, NOT IN THE REAR, upon the driver's signal. All Students are to use extreme caution by looking at traffic both ways before crossing the road.

- e. After boarding the bus, take a seat as quickly as possible. The driver may assign you a special seat.
- f. Students will not be allowed to board or leave the bus at any other place other than their regular stop without written consent from their Parent(s).
- g. Students must provide the driver with written authorization in order to ride anywhere other than that to which regularly assigned.
- h. Obey the bus driver at all times while under his/her supervision.
- i. Do not bring animals, firearms, weapons, explosives, any objects prohibited from school grounds or any dangerous objects on the bus.
- j. Maintain an acceptable manner of conduct at all times. Smoking, vulgarity, and loud, boisterous or other improper conduct will not be permitted.
- k. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- l. Do not extend arms or head out of the bus windows at any time.
- m. Keep aisles clear of lunch boxes, musical instruments, books, etc.
- n. Assist the bus driver in keeping the bus clean by not eating or drinking while on the bus.
- o. Remain absolutely quiet when approaching a railroad crossing.
- p. Do not play a radio on the bus.
- q. Do not tamper with operating mechanisms on the emergency door.
- r. Do not operate the service (front) door; this is the responsibility of the driver.
- s. Do not damage or deface any part of the bus. Parents can be held responsible for repairs.

## **K. School Bus Safety Rules and Procedures**

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

## **L. Warning Ticket System (Note: This system is in addition to any other disciplinary consequences contained in the student handbook.)**

1. 1st Ticket – Warning.
2. 2nd Ticket – Riding privilege suspended for three school days.
3. 3rd Ticket – Riding privilege suspended for five school days.

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

## **VIII. SPECIAL EDUCATION: IDEA**

**A. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education and related services to eligible infants, toddlers, children and youth with disabilities. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-2) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B. The school(s) in the Districts have programs for children ranging from those who need a minimum of support services to those who require the full-time service of a special needs teacher. For further information, please contact the school Principal or the school system's Director of Pupil Services at (413) 625-0192.

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

The District shall follow appropriate procedures with regard to the discipline of students with disabilities, which includes students on IEPs and Section 504 Accommodation Plans. All discipline of special education students shall be in accordance with the provisions of 20 U.S.C. § 1415(k) and 34 CFR §§ 300.530-300.536.

## **C. Suspension of Special Education Students**

1. Students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook. Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws requires that additional provisions be made for Students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and those whose program described in an Individual Education Plan (IEP).
2. The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs Students:
  - a. The IEP for every special needs Student will indicate whether the Student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code or if the Student's handicapping condition requires modification. Any modification will be described in the IEP.
  - b. The Principal (or designee) will notify the Special Education Office of the suspendable offense of a special needs Student and a record will be kept of such notices.
  - c. When it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs Student will accumulate to ten days in a school year, a review of the IEP will be held to determine the appropriateness of the Student's placement or program. The team will make a finding, Manifestation Determination, as to the relationship between the Student's misconduct and his/her handicapping condition and either:
    - 1) Design a modified program for the Student, or;

- 2) Write an amendment to provide for the delivery of special education services during the suspension and any needed modification of the IEP, relative to discipline code expectations.
  
3. There are certain situations in which school personnel may order a change in placement of a special education student without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. These situations include when a special education student:
  - a. Carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency;
  
  - b. 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 a State or local educational agency; or
  
  - c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

In these situations, school personnel may remove the special education student to an appropriate Interim Alternative Educational Setting (IAES) for not more than forty-five (45) school days without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. A student may also be placed in such a setting on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is substantially likely to injure him/herself or others.

If a special education student commits an offense, which causes the student to be expelled from school, the school district continues to be responsible for providing the student with a free appropriate public education in another educational setting.

## **IX. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**



A. Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed in the following statements of School Committee intent to:

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

B. The School Committee's policy of non-discrimination will extend to Students, Staff, the general public and individuals with whom it does business. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, or sexual orientation. If you have a complaint or feel that you have been discriminated against because of your race, color, sex, gender, gender identity, religion, national origin, disability, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition or sexual orientation, please register your complaint (using the attached form) with the Title IX compliance officer in the office of the Director of Pupil Personnel Services.

**MOHAWK TRAIL REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**Discrimination Report Form**

Discrimination Type: (check all that apply)

Race            Color            Sex            Religion            National origin  
Disability    Gender Identity    Sexual orientation    Pregnancy/Pregnancy related condition

Complainant \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

What was your response to the incident?

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

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

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

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

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

### **A. PURPOSE**

To create for all Students of the Mohawk Trail Regional District and Hawlemont Regional District a study environment free of sexual harassment.

The Mohawk Trail Regional District and Hawlemont Regional District are committed to safeguarding the right of all persons associated with the Districts' schools, including Students, employees, School Committee members and volunteers to a work and educational environment that is free from all forms of sexual harassment. Therefore, the Mohawk Trail Regional District and Hawlemont Regional District condemn and prohibit all sexual harassment on its premises.

All individuals associated with the Districts, but not necessarily limited to the School Committees, the Administration, the Staff, Students and members of the public while on campus, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting as a member of the school community or while on school property will be in violation of this policy.

Appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal, will be taken in any instance where an employee violates this policy. Sexual harassment by a Student will result in disciplinary action up to and including expulsion. Sexual harassment by others will result in their being excluded from School premises or if it is required that they enter the premises, they will be accompanied by a School District representative at all times.

Any Student who believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment should make a complaint to any administrator, the Title IX Coordinator, or directly to the Superintendent, so that appropriate action may be taken at once. If the sexual harassment is criminal in nature, the offense shall be reported to the police department as well as the Title IX Coordinator. If the sexual harassment requires the intervention of State social service or protective agencies, the proper authorities will be contacted. In these circumstances, the School's attorney will be immediately contacted to give advice and guidance on how to process these actions with the appropriate authorities.

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

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

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

The Title IX Coordinator for the Mohawk Trail Regional and Hawlemont Regional School Districts is:

Leann Loomis  
24 Ashfield Rd.  
Shelburne Falls, MA 01370  
(413) 625-0192 x15

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

## **B. SEXUAL HARASSMENT DEFINITION**

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

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

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to:

1. Assault, inappropriate touching, intentionally impeding movement, comments, gestures, or written communications of a suggestive or derogatory nature.
2. Continuing to express sexual interest after being informed that the interest is unwelcome. (Reciprocal attraction between peers is not considered sexual harassment.)
3. Coercive sexual behavior used to control, influence or affect the educational opportunities, grades and/or the learning environment of a Student such as implying or actually withholding grades earned or deserved, suggesting that a poor performance evaluation will be prepared, or suggesting that a scholarship recommendation or college application will be denied.
4. Offering or granting favors or educational benefits, such as grades or recommendations, in exchange for sexual favors.

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

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

## **C. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

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

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

- a. Any Student of the District who believes that he/she has been subjected to sexual harassment is to report the incident(s) to any administrator, Title IX Coordinator, or directly to the Superintendent. The administrator and/or Superintendent are to immediately contact the Title IX Coordinator. A written record of the complaint will be made by the party receiving the complaint. A separate file system will be maintained, apart from the Student's personal record, regarding these complaints and as to all matters relating to the complaints.
- b. If the alleged harassment involves the Title IX Coordinator, the Superintendent of Schools will act as the Title IX Coordinator.
- c. If the alleged harassment involves the Superintendent of Schools, the Secretary of the School Committee will act as the Title IX Coordinator.
- d. The Superintendent and the Title IX Coordinator will look at the totality of the circumstances and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. They will attempt to resolve the problem by conferring with both parties in order to obtain a clear understanding of the facts. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible.
- e. Students may be accompanied, at any phase of this process or subsequent hearing before the Committee, by a Parent, Guardian or representative of their choosing. Parents will be immediately notified by the Title IX Coordinator of the existence of a Student's report of sexual harassment.
- f. The Title IX Coordinator will explain each phase of the Informal and Formal Complaint Process to a Student who wishes to file a complaint and will assist the Student in the processing of the complaint. In addition, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the Student of additional forums for resolution of the complaint such as the Office of Civil Rights (O.C.R.) and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (M.C.A.D.).
- g. Under normal circumstances, the Title IX Coordinator's investigation will be completed within five working days of the initial complaint. Upon completion of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator shall issue his/her findings in writing to the Student and the alleged harasser.

## **D. COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

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

- a. A complainant may file a formal complaint immediately or may do so after the Superintendent's and the Title IX Coordinator's efforts to reach a settlement under the informal process have proven unsuccessful.
- b. The complaint will state clearly and concisely the complainant's description of the incident and it will also indicate any remedy sought. The complaint must be signed by the complainant. The Superintendent's office will send the respondent a copy of the complaint within five working days after it is received. A separate file system shall be maintained as to all matters relating to the complaint. Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent possible.
- c. The respondent will have ten working days to respond in writing. This statement will contain full and specific references to each claim in the complaint, admitting, denying or explaining the complainant's allegations. The respondent must sign his or her statement which will then be appended to the original complaint. Within three working days, the Superintendent's office will forward both statements to the complainant and the respondent.
- d. There will be two modes of resolution for formal complaints. A complaint may be settled through mediation or through a hearing. If the complainant and respondent agree to pursue mediation, a date mutually acceptable to both parties will be set within ten working days. If the mediation results in a mutually acceptable agreement, copies of the agreement will be forwarded to both parties. If the mediation does not result in an agreement, the case will be forwarded to the Superintendent for a hearing unless the Superintendent is the alleged harasser in which case the hearing will be before the School Committee.
- e. When a hearing is requested, the Title IX Coordinator will inform the Superintendent or the School Committee, as the case may be, and the case will be heard at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the School Committee pursuant to the provisions of the Commonwealth's Open Meeting Law and/or before the Superintendent pursuant to M.G.L., c. 71, § 42.

## **E. FORMAL HEARING**

1. The purpose of the Superintendent or School Committee Hearing is to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated, and, if so, to determine the appropriate consequences for the violation.
2. Both parties will be given a full and fair hearing. The proceeding, although formal, is not a court proceeding and the Superintendent or School Committee is not bound by the procedures and rules of evidence of a court of law. In most instances, complainants and respondents will be expected to speak for themselves, although, if desired, each party may be accompanied by counsel or an advocate.

3. The presiding officer of the hearing may have counsel present for purposes of assisting in the orderly conduct of the hearing and the questioning of witnesses. The complainant and the respondent will be asked to clarify the issues and to define the areas of disagreement. To encourage a fair and focused hearing, at the start of the proceedings the points of agreement and disagreement will be reviewed. The Superintendent or the Committee, as the case may be, will hear testimony and consider whether the School Committee Policy on Sexual Harassment has been violated, and, if so, will recommend appropriate consequences.
4. The presiding officer will:
  - a. ensure an orderly presentation of all evidence;
  - b. ensure that the proceedings are accurately recorded by means of a tape or stenographic recording; and
  - c. see that a decision is issued no later than ten working days after the conclusion of the hearing or, when written arguments are submitted, ten working days after their submission.
5. The Superintendent or the Committee, as the case may be, will:
  - a. conduct a fair and impartial hearing which ensures the rights of all parties involved;
  - b. define issues of contention;
  - c. receive and consider all relevant evidence which reasonable people customarily rely upon in the conduct of serious business;
  - d. ask relevant questions of the complainant, respondent, and any witnesses if needed to elicit information which may be of assistance in making a decision; and
  - e. ensure that the complainant and respondent have full opportunity to present their claims orally or in writing, and to present witnesses and evidence which may establish their claims.

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

1. After all the evidence, testimony, and written arguments have been presented, the committee will convene for deliberations to determine whether the school system's policy on sexual harassment has been violated. If the Committee finds after a roll call vote that the policy has not been violated, that fact



will be registered in the records of the hearing, and the written decision will be forwarded to the complainant and the respondent no later than fifteen working days after completion of the hearing.

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

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

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

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

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

## **XI. PROHIBITION OF TOBACCO AND TOBACCO RELATED PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

- A. Smoking and the use of tobacco products, including tobacco related products such as e-cigarettes and vaping devices by Students, Staff, volunteers and visitors are prohibited on all school property at all times in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, section 37H. District policy prohibits Student's possession of tobacco products, including tobacco related products including but not limited to e-cigarettes, vaping devices, or paraphernalia on school property and at school sponsored trips or events. School property includes school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, school parking lots and school buses, any property controlled by the School Committees.

## **XII. DANGEROUS WEAPONS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY**

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

## **XIII. INTERNET USE POLICY**

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

- 1. The following explains Mohawk Trail Regional School District and the Hawlemont Regional School District, policy for acceptable use of the schools' and districts' technology. Use of computer networks

and the Internet, including wireless access, are revocable privileges dependent upon compliance with school/district policy and these procedures.

2. A user's failure to comply with the policy shall result in limited network/Internet access, suspension of access, and/or other disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

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

1. Use the network to access and/or transmit material in violation of any U.S. or Commonwealth law, including copyrighted material.
2. Access, download, display, transmit, produce, generate, copy or propagate any material that is obscene or pornographic; advocates illegal acts; contains ethnic slurs or racial epithets; or discriminates on the basis of gender, gender identity, national origin, sexual orientation, race, color, ancestry, religion, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, handicap or age.
3. Degrade, damage or disrupt equipment or system / network performance (for example excessive bandwidth use that disrupts the network for other users).
4. Gain unauthorized access to network resources.
5. Permit or authorize any other person to use their name or login password.
6. Use an account of any other person or vandalize another user's data.
7. Waste electronic storage space by saving unnecessary files or programs.
8. Download, install, load or use programs without written permission of the technology coordinator/administrator.
9. Use the Internet for personal commercial purposes or for political lobbying.
10. Use inappropriate, offensive, foul or abusive language.
11. Harass or annoy any other party with obscene, libelous, threatening or anonymous messages, objectionable information, images or language.

12. Forward chain letters.
13. Forward e-mail messages of broad interest—including virus alerts and jokes—to the entire school community.
14. Knowingly make use of pirated software or violate software licensing agreements.
15. Engage in the practice of “hacking” or knowingly engage in any other illegal activity using the network.
16. Engage in any form of cyberbullying.
17. Engage in any other inappropriate use of the system.

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

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

**XIV. NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT LAW**

A non-custodial parent may have access to the student record in accordance with the following provisions:

(a) A non-custodial parent is eligible to obtain access to the student record unless:

1. the non-custodial 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
2. the non-custodial parent has been denied visitation; or
3. the non-custodial 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
4. there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the non-custodial parent.

(b) The District will place documents in the student's record 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).

(c) In order to obtain access, the non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the school Principal.

(d) Upon receipt of the request the District will immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, 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).

(e) The District will 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 will be marked to indicate that they shall not be used to enroll the student in another school.

(f) 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.

## **XV. POLICY ON PUBLIC COMPLAINTS**

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

## **XVI. PUBLIC COMPLAINTS ABOUT SCHOOL PERSONNEL**

- A. Complaints about school personnel will be investigated fully and fairly. However, before any such complaint is investigated, the complainant must submit his/her complaint in writing. Anonymous complaints will be disregarded.
- B. Whenever a complaint is made directly to the School Committee as a whole or to a committee member as an individual, it will be referred to the school Administration for study and possible solution.
- C. The Superintendent will develop, for approval by the Committee, procedures that assure prompt and fair attention to complaints against school personnel. The procedures will require that the employee who is the object of a complaint be informed promptly and be afforded the opportunity to present the facts as he/she sees them.
- D. If it appears necessary, the Administration, the person who made the complaint, or the employee involved may request an executive session of the School Committee for a formal hearing and decision. Statutory restrictions on executive session will be observed.

CROSS REF.: BEC, Executive Session

## **XVII. COMMUNITY USE OF SCHOOL FACILITIES**

- A. The policy of the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and the Hawlemont Regional School District, is to make its facilities and resources available to the community. Community groups may make application for the use of facilities to the Principal of the school or the Superintendent if the Principal is unavailable. The BUILDING RENTAL APPLICATION/CONTRACT FOR SCHOOL FACILITIES form is available in the school office. In scheduling use of facilities, school-sponsored activities have priority over non-school-sponsored functions.
- B. Groups using school facilities must comply with the use regulations (KF-R) and pay any applicable rental fees. Groups wishing to use school facilities on a regular and sustained basis may be required to negotiate a separate agreement with the School Committee.

## **XVIII. STUDENT RECORDS**

- A. Parents and Students are guaranteed the right to inspect, as well as, seek addition to or deletion from all records, which are kept or requested to be kept by the School Department, concerning individual Students. The records include the Student's transcript and any other recorded information, which is identified by the Student's name. A signed log is kept in each cumulative record for all Students.
  
- B. Pursuant to M.G.L. c.71, §§ 34D & 34E, and the regulations promulgated there under, no third party, other than authorized school or Department of Elementary and Secondary Education personnel, law enforcement personnel as may be legally allowed under state or federal law or regulations, and state or federal agencies to assist in the carrying out of their statutory or regulatory duties shall have access to information in or from a Student record without the specific informed written consent of the eligible Student or the Parent/Guardian.
  
- C. Upon receipt of a court order or lawfully issued subpoena, or upon receipt of a request from a Court or the Department of Youth Services for information regarding a Student, the school, prior to compliance, shall notify the eligible Student or Parent/Guardian of the order, subpoena or request in such reasonable time that he/she may seek to have the process quashed.
  
- D. Except for certain limited and specifically defined individuals, i.e., certain court officers, health officials and authorized school personnel, no individual or agency may have access to school records of the Student(s) without "the specific informed written consent" of the Student or his/her Parent/Guardian. This means that if a Parent/Guardian or Student wishes transcripts or records forwarded to school, colleges, or prospective employers, a written release must be delivered to the Principal of the school or appropriate custodian of the Student's school records.
  
- E. In case of a Student 14 through 17 years of age, or of one who has entered the ninth grade, both the Student and his/her Parent/Guardian , or either one acting separately, shall exercise these rights. Any Student 18 years of age or older may exercise these rights alone.
  
- F. Schools may release for publication a Student's name, class, information about participation in officially recognized activities and sports, honors, awards, and post-high school plans.



- G. Complete copies of the state regulations concerning Parents' and Students' rights to records may be obtained in the building Principal's office.

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

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal Law, requires that Mohawk Trail Regional School, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personal identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Mohawk Trail Regional School may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the District to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of this directory information is to allow the Mohawk District to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain publications. Examples include:

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

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965(ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three information categories-names, addresses and telephone listings-unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without prior written consent.

### **XIX. EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

- A. The Superintendent or his/her designee may close the schools or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of Students and personnel. It may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all Students from attending school, delay the opening hour or to dismiss Students early. The Superintendent has the authority to cancel school in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of Students and personnel. The Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect a single school, only that school will be closed.
  
- B. In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principle ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:
  - 1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted
  
  - 2. Driving, traffic and parking conditions affecting public and private facilities
  
  - 3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of emergency conditions that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous
  
  - 4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of Students
  
- C. The Superintendent or his/her designee will weigh these factors and take action to close schools only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, Parents and Staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, Staff members will comply with School Committee policy in reporting to work.

**XX. NO IDLING POLICY (MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS)**

- A. No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons:
  - 1. traffic conditions
  
  - 2. queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging Students

3. turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up
  4. maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles
  5. for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles
  6. and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below referenced regulations.
- B. The term “school grounds” shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground.
- C. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the Districts to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle.
- D. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such air intake system, unless the Mohawk Trail Regional School District and the Hawlemont Regional School District, have determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair Student safety or are not cost effective.

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

## **XXI. DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

- A. The Mohawk Trail Regional School District is committed to providing safe and healthy school environments in which our students can learn. The use of drugs and alcohol can negatively impact a student physically, emotionally, socially, academically, and legally. Scientific studies have shown that drugs and alcohol have particularly harmful effects on developing adolescent brains. Therefore, the district provides substance use education as part of their comprehensive health curriculum and has created this policy to define the district's position on drugs and alcohol use on school grounds and at school-sponsored activities. The regulations of the drug and alcohol policy provide written guidelines for handling incidents of consumption, possession, and/or distribution.

B. In accordance with M.G.L. c.71, Section 37H and c. 272, Section 40A, drug and alcohol use by students, staff and visitors is prohibited on all school properties at all times. District policy prohibits students, staff and visitors from ingesting, possessing, or distributing drugs and alcohol on school grounds or at school sponsored functions at any time. Possession or distribution of drug paraphernalia is also prohibited. School property includes school buildings, school facilities, school grounds, school parking lots and school buses and any other property controlled by the school committee.

C. Definitions:

1. Ingestion - Ingestion is the eating, drinking, inhaling or absorbing of drugs or alcohol into the body. Ingestion may or may not have occurred on school property or at a school sponsored function. Ingestion may be detected through the presence of odors behavioral changes, and/or changes in physical appearance.
2. Possession - Possession is the unlawful custody of alcohol or a controlled substance.
3. Distribution - Distribution is the unlawful transfer of alcohol or a controlled substance from one person to another. The transfer does not require the knowledge of the receiver nor does it require a transaction by sale.
4. Drugs - The term "drug(s)" as used in this policy includes any narcotic substance, hallucinogen substance, any substance taken for the purpose of "getting high" or becoming intoxicated, and all chemical and controlled substances as defined by state or Federal law, including, but not limited to substances commonly known as marijuana, LSD, cocaine, crack, heroin, amphetamine and methamphetamine, and barbiturates. The term "drug(s)" also includes all prescription medicines, except when used or possessed in accordance with the school medication administration policy.

## **XXII. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION**

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, at the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses we offer that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.
2. inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the principal 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. The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each principal by September 1 of each year.

### **XXIII. POLICY ON PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Mohawk Trail Regional School District complies with the Department of Education (DOE) restraint regulations, 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. ("regulations"), as required by law on school ground and at school-sponsored events and activities. Physical restraint shall only be used by trained staff in emergency situations of last resort, after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

The principal or director or his/her designee shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint, which shall be made available for review by the parent or the Department upon request. The principal or director of the program or his/her designee will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parent of the restraint within 24 hours of the event, and will notify the parent by written report sent either within three (3) school working days of the restraint to an email address provided by the parent for communications about the student, or by regular mail postmarked no later than three (3) school working days of the restraint. If the school or program customarily provides a parent of a student with report cards and other necessary school-related information in a language other than English, the written restraint report shall be

provided to the parent in that language. The principal shall provide the student and the parent an opportunity to comment orally and in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.