

“The Road to Success Starts at OMS”

# **OXFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL**

## **2018-2019 STUDENT HANDBOOK**

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***PRINCIPAL***

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***ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL***

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***“The students and staff of the Oxford Middle School are expected to adhere to the sections of Massachusetts General Law as they pertain to schools and schooling.”***

***“The Oxford School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or homelessness.***

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## *MESSAGE from the PRINCIPAL*

Dear Students,

On behalf of the staff and me, we would like to welcome you to a new school year at Oxford Middle School. For some of you, this is your first year at OMS, but for many it is another chance to make new friends and renew old friendships. More importantly, it is another opportunity to excel academically, behaviorally and socially. It is important to remember the following:

- Respect of yourself and others
- Follow the rules
- Effort is required every day, every class

If you can do those things consistently, then your days at OMS will be filled with great success and positive growth.

Middle school is a very important time in your life. These school years can be difficult at times, but they will also prove rewarding in many ways. The teachers and staff are here to help in any and every way that they can. We have some of the finest teachers in Massachusetts ready to prepare you academically, behaviorally and socially for the challenges that lie ahead. I am confident that with hard work and dedication you will all reach your potential.

Our motto at Oxford Middle School is, “The Road to Success Starts at OMS.” The staff will provide you with the opportunity to succeed, but you will have to provide the determination, commitment and effort that will define the degree to which you will achieve. We encourage you to take advantage of every opportunity both in and out of school to prepare yourself for all that is ahead of you in life.

We look forward to working with you, your parents/guardians and our great community of Oxford to make your 2018/19 school year a rewarding and successful one.

Sincerely,

Amy Belhumeur, Principal

## **Vision Statement**

The Oxford Middle School will be a dynamic, safe environment that ensures learning for all students and addresses physical, social, emotional and academic needs. Together with community and family support we will foster lifelong learning.

## **Mission Statement**

To realize the goals of our vision, we will provide a rigorous curriculum with interdisciplinary instruction in an inclusive environment. Learning will extend beyond the boundaries of the classroom and include input from parents and community members. This foundation will support an academic and social bridge connecting the elementary and high school levels.

## ***ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS***

Our program of study for students will include core curriculum classes and unified arts/enrichment classes.

In order to be promoted to the next grade level students must pass all core curriculum subjects. Students must have a minimum grade of 50 in a core subject in order to be eligible for summer school. They may only makeup two (2) courses during summer school.

### **Core Curriculum**

English/ Language Arts  
Mathematics  
Science  
Social Studies

### **Unified Arts/Enrichments**

General Music  
Physical Education  
Health  
Art  
Science Explorations  
Math Innovations  
Library

## ***GRADING SYSTEM***

93 - 100 = A	77 - 79 = C+
90 - 92 = A-	73 - 76 = C
87 - 89 = B+	70 - 72 = C-
83 - 86 = B	65 - 69 = D
80 - 82 = B-	64 and below = F

## ***REPORT CARDS***

Report cards will be available online at the end of each quarter during the school year. These report cards evaluate a student's academic achievement, effort and conduct in each class. Teachers update their online gradebooks every two weeks.

## ***HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS***

### **High Honors**

90 or above in all core curriculum/unified art subjects and A, B, C, or D's in conduct and effort.

### **Honors**

80 or above in all core curriculum/ unified art subject and A, B, C, or D's in conduct and effort.

## ***RUBRIC for CONDUCT & EFFORT***

### **Conduct (Self-Direction and Relationships)**

Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Consistently interacts respectfully with authority figures and handles disagreements through constructive problem solving</li> <li>-Takes a positive leadership role among peers</li> <li>-Provides supports to peers when appropriate</li> <li>-Listens respectfully to diverse perspectives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Interacts respectfully with adults and peers most of the time</li> <li>-Follows school and classroom rules</li> <li>-Works collaboratively in groups</li> <li>-Works to resolve problems with adult support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Throughout the term, there have been 3-5 instances where class rules have been disregarded and/or disrespect has been shown to adults or peers</li> <li>-Needs frequent adult cues to maintain positive behavior</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Is frequently unable to follow rules and classroom norms, even with cuing</li> <li>-Lacks strategies to solve problems constructively</li> <li>-Lacks strategies to regroup after experiencing stress</li> </ul>

### **Effort (Self-direction and Motivation)**

Outstanding	Good	Fair	Poor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appears eager to learn course content</li> <li>-Sets challenging personal learning goals relative to course content</li> <li>-Maintains attention/focus when content is challenging</li> <li>-Sees mistakes as an opportunity to learn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Meets all expectations for learning course content</li> <li>-Handles most assignments independently but asks for help when appropriate</li> <li>-Participates regularly</li> <li>-Comes to class prepared and ready to learn</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Does only the bare minimum to get by</li> <li>-Presents as a passive learner</li> <li>-Relies on teacher/peer support, rather than tackling difficult content</li> <li>-Inconsistent participation</li> <li>-Occasionally comes to class unprepared</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Appears uninterested in course content</li> <li>-Consistently comes to class unprepared</li> <li>-Lacks strategies to deal with learning challenges and gives up easily</li> <li>-Does not participate in class discussions</li> </ul>

## ***HOMWORK***

Homework will be assigned as needed and when relevant to class work. The quality of the assignment rather than the quantity shall be the standard by which all homework assignments are assessed. Since homework is an extension of the classroom, neatness, structure, content and promptness are all standards used by the teacher in assessing homework. Parents should check the student planner daily for all assignments. Cheating or plagiarism on homework, or in preparation of research papers or projects, will not be tolerated. Any student who falls into this category will not receive credit.

## ***MAKE-UP***

Make-up work during an absence takes precedence over any other after school activity except an emergency. The completion of make-up work will be governed by the following policies:

1. If a student is absent one (1) day, he/she must make up the work within one (1) day after returning to school. A student absent from school for a period of one (1) week will have one (1) week, after returning to school, to make up the work. If a student is absent longer than one (1) week he/she must make-up work within two weeks of returning to school. Tests and quizzes must be made up after regular school hours.
2. Truancy and cutting of classes will result in a failing grade for the missed work. **NO make-up work will be permitted.**
3. Make-up work will be permitted when students are suspended out-of-school.
4. Any work not made up within the specified period of time will receive a failing grade.

## ***INCOMPLETE GRADES***

Any incomplete grade must be made-up within **two weeks** of issuance of Report Cards or it automatically becomes a failure. The administration may extend this time period in extenuating circumstances with appropriate verification in individual cases.

## ***ACADEMIC PROBATION***

A student who fails two or more subjects, including Unified Arts at the end of a marking period based on the report card, will be placed on academic probation and therefore will not be eligible to participate in *any* extra-curricular activities at the Oxford Middle School until no more than one failure remains as documented on the next report card. Note that the Principal on rare occasions may make exceptions to this rule. After school detentions and after school tutoring, if assigned, are not considered extra-curricular and attendance is mandatory.



## ***ATTENDANCE POLICY***

Daily and punctual attendance is critical to academic success. Students need to be in the classroom to benefit from teacher instruction and from interactions and exchanges of ideas with peers in accordance with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Sec. 1.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility for ensuring that students attend and remain at school daily (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Sec 1). When a child is going to be absent, the school district requires the parent/guardian to call the school to inform them of their child's absence (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Sec 1A). To call your child out absent, please contact the Main Office: (508) 987-6074. Please note: a parent phone call does not excuse your child's absence. If a student is absent and the school is not notified, the school will call the student's parent/guardian (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Sec 1B). Therefore, it is important that parents/guardians provide their current contact information to ensure proper notification can be made. Appointments with doctors should be made after school hours or during vacations. Early dismissal should not be requested, except in cases of emergency. Note that students who are absent during the school day are not permitted on the school campus for any after school activities of any type on that day. Exceptions may only be granted at the discretion of an administrator. The following procedure will be followed:

**Step One:** When a student has a total of five (5) unexcused days of non-attendance the parent/guardian will be contacted to notify them of the unexcused absences and to develop action steps to improve student attendance (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 1B).

**Step Two:** When a student has a total of seven (7) full days of non-attendance or fourteen (14) half-day sessions within a given 6-month period and none of those days have been covered by a healthcare professional's note or other administratively approved excuse, then a letter will be sent to the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) warning the family that the student is at risk of requiring an intervention and requesting them to contact the school to arrange a meeting with the School Counselor. The meeting will focus on the concerns associated with the student's attendance and develop an action plan to support improved attendance (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 2).

**Step Three:** If a student continues to be absent from school and **the number of non-attendance days reaches thirteen (13)**, the student will be referred to the Elementary and Secondary School Intervention Program. ESSIP is an attendance program developed with the Dudley District Court, Department of Children and Families and Oxford Public Schools to work with the students and their families to explore ways to improve school attendance. Please be advised if a child is referred to ESSIP and attendance continues to be a concern a consult will be made between the school, DCF and the juvenile court as to further action.

A student who is absent from a core curriculum subject 19 or more times during the school year will not receive credit for that course. A scheduled doctor or dentist appointment during the school day is NOT considered an excused absence. Incomplete class work resulting from absence will be graded as a failure if not made up within the given time span. Excessive absences will be reported to the parents. In extenuating circumstances, the administration has the right to waive or excuse absences.

If a student receives a passing grade in all core subjects but has been absent between 19 and 25 days they will be required to make the days up at the discretion of Administration. Any student who has been absent more than 25 days will be retained regardless of grades.

### ***TARDINESS***

No student should be on school property before 7:15 a.m. Students must be in their homerooms by 7:50 a.m. Any student that enters after 7:50 a.m. will be considered tardy and must report to the office with a parent to sign them in to school. For every 5 tardies to school in a quarter, students will be assigned an after school detention. For every unexcused tardy after that in a quarter, a detention will be assigned. During the school day, students tardy to a class three times will be assigned a classroom detention with that teacher. Chronic tardiness to school or classes may result in parental conferences and/or in-school suspensions.

### ***EARLY DISMISSALS***

During inclement weather it is important to have a “**plan of action**” in place with your child before he/she leaves for school. The phone is not available to students to let parents know that we are dismissing early. The Oxford School Department notifies radio and television stations of a delay or early dismissal. An automated call will also be activated for this purpose.

### ***TRANSITIONAL SUPPORT ROOM (TSR)***

Formally known as ISS, the Transitional Support Room services students’ academic, social/emotional, behavior and physical needs on a daily basis. TSR serves as:

- Homeroom for students who are having behavior or medical issues and can’t be in a homeroom.
- Alternative Physical Education for students who can’t participate in gym due to medical issues.
- ISS for students who are assigned in- school suspension for behavior issues.
- Detention Center for students who are assigned after school detention for behavior or violations of rules and policies.
- Quiet Lunch for students whose behaviors do not allow them to eat in the cafeteria.
- Quiet Lunch for students who are not completing homework consistently or owe work.

## ***CODE OF CONDUCT***

Appropriate behavior and effort is synonymous with good citizenship. Students are expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect toward all faculty and staff members and toward fellow students. The general guidelines for proper student behavior should always be governed by a regard for the needs and rights of others. Each student and staff member has the following rights in school:

- To work in a pleasant, safe and orderly environment.
- To be free from insulting or abusive treatment from others.
- To have an atmosphere that encourages learning.

**School rules are designed to protect these rights. Oxford Middle School students at all times will do the following:**

- Respect and not break, damage or deface school property.
- Respect the personal property and materials of others.
- Respect the rights of others without fighting, teasing, name-calling, or bullying.
- Use language that is free of vulgarity and profanity.
- Be honest in words and deeds, will not lie, cheat, forge or plagiarize.
- Be on time to school and all classes, and bring with them necessary materials.
- Act in a way that does not disrupt learning.
- Conduct themselves in an orderly fashion, and walk, not run, in the hallways.
- While classes are in session, students are not to be out of their assigned rooms without a pass.
- Students are not to use the facilities of the auditorium or gymnasium, outside grounds, or be in other areas of the school without teacher supervision.
- Students may not leave school grounds without permission.
- Printed materials may be distributed only with permission of the administration, and posters, notices, pictures on walls require permission of the administration.
- Toys, including balls, spinners, Legos, etc. are not allowed in school. “Fidget toys” may be allowed only for those with prior administrative or student services approval.
- Students will avoid public displays of affection that is inappropriate in a school setting. Faculty or administrators will warn students engaging in behaviors judged to be inappropriate, and refer for disciplinary action if such behavior persists.

## ***SCHOOL DRESS CODE***

All students are expected to dress in a manner that is appropriate for school. The Administration has the authority, according to Massachusetts General Law- Chapter 71 sec. 82+83, to determine inappropriate dress. Oxford Middle School’s dress code is written in a way to ensure effective and equitable enforcement of such in a manner that does not reinforce or increase marginalization or oppression of any group based on race, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, cultural observance, household income or body size/type. Therefore, the following rules apply to ALL students.

1. Dress that is detrimental or a distraction to the educational process is prohibited.
2. Students must be clean, neat and maintain a standard of decency in dress and appearance and should be appropriate to a working environment. For example, clothing such as pajamas and slippers are not permitted. Student haircuts/hairdos shall not cover or obscure the eyes for both safety and academic reasons.
3. Dress that interferes with a student's health or safety will not be allowed. Students are not to wear jewelry or other attachments (i.e. tongue, lip, nose or eyebrow loops and/or rings, or any body piercings) that pose a health problem or safety hazard to either the student or to other students. Inherently dangerous clothing or accessories such as "Heelies" (shoes with wheels in the heels) are prohibited.
4. Dress that has the potential to harm school property or others (i.e. studded clothing/accessories or chains) will not be allowed.
5. Clothing with obscene or inappropriate messages or symbols will not be allowed nor will clothing that reveal undergarments.
6. No hats, hoods, bandanas, or other hair coverings are to be worn in the school building or at school functions. This does not include headbands for the purpose of holding ones hair back.
7. All shorts, skirts, and dresses must reach mid-thigh (shorts should be at least 5 inches below the top of the leg or longer) for both boys and girls and/or provide appropriate coverage for school.
8. All shirts/tops must extend below the waist for boys and girls. Exposed midriffs, open back shirt/tops, open side shirts without a shirt underneath and plunging necklines are not allowed. Any tank tops worn must cover part of the shoulders (at least as thick as 3 fingertips, no spaghetti straps)
9. For security reasons, students are not allowed to wear bulky outerwear (coats) or carry backpacks throughout the day. These items must be kept in the students' locker. Students may wear light jackets, sweaters, and sweatshirts for warmth during cold months.
10. Undergarments may not be visible (i.e. boys – underwear/boxers; girls – bras, or underwear). All clothing should be opaque in nature, not able to see through.
11. Sagging and/or baggy pants are not to be worn. Pants need to be properly fitted and/or worn with a belt. Pants may not drag on or touch the ground.
12. Leggings, yoga pants are allowed but should be worn with appropriate clothing **over** them such as a skirt, shorts or dress that hits mid-thigh, or a shirt that extends past the waist.

The dress code will be enforced by all staff and any violations will be handled by the Administration.

### ***OMS BEHAVIOR PROTOCOL***

Teachers and staff will establish routines, structure and build positive relationships with students. Also, having well planned and prepared lessons that keep students engaged bell to bell is critical for classroom management. The following are our daily expectations:

1. **Respect** of yourselves and others
2. **Follow** school and classroom rules daily
3. **EFFORT** is a requirement. Students need to try every day, in every class.

If behaviors start to disrupt the teaching/learning process or environment in the classroom, the following will happen:

1. Teachers will use verbal and non-verbal cues to re-direct the negative behaviors. Also, the use of questions, “what are you doing”, “what are the rules” etc. will be used to get students to recognize what they are doing. These re-directions can be used as many times as needed or possible.
2. If behaviors do not improve after the redirections, the student will be given a choice to either stop the behavior/s in question or they will be assigned a teacher detention. If the student continues, a detention will be assigned to be served ASAP.
3. If after the assigning of the detention the disruptions continue, then the student will be given a choice to either stop the behavior/s or they will be sent out on a behavioral referral. If they continue to disrupt, they will be sent the Transitional Support Room on a behavior referral. From there, Administration will assign consequences.

## ***PEER MEDIATION***

Peer mediation is a way of helping to solve conflicts by talking to each other. It involves student mediators who are trained to listen to those in conflict and help them resolve their problem. The people in conflict are the “parties” or “disputants.” Mediators do not take sides or force the parties to do anything. The goal of mediation is to help the parties make up their own solution to the situation that they are willing to live with in the future. This is called an agreement or contract. Peer mediation may be used in lieu of or in conjunction with other disciplinary actions.

## ***STUDENT DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS***

The Oxford Public School District shall adhere to and follow the requirements as to student discipline, including in-school suspensions, short-term and long-term suspensions, established by Mass. General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37H1/2 and 37H3/4 and Code of Mass. Regulations Chapter 603, Sections 53.00 – 53.14. MGL Chapter 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾ (Conduct and Discipline) in its entirety is included in the back of this handbook.

Behaviors that may result in either in-school or out-of-school suspension, will include, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Incidents of violence such as fighting/hitting/kicking/shoving/spitting.
- b. Truancy or excessive tardiness to school or classes. Leaving school without permission.
- c. Profanity or blatant disrespect directed toward staff members.
- d. Insubordination.
- e. Incidents of destruction or stealing of school or private property. The student and/or

- parent will also be responsible for making restitution for any damage or losses.
- f. Instances of throwing or launching/propelling food, or any other item (such as pencils, balls, paper wasps, spit balls, etc.) in the cafeteria or any other place.
  - g. Skipping class or being in any unauthorized area.
  - h. Repeated disruptive behavior in class.
  - i. Failure to serve detention(s) or stay for Mandatory Tutoring.
  - j. Any act, or intent to act, which threatens the safety or well being of the student body and/or staff or of an individual member of the student body or staff.
  - k. Any act which constitutes a major disruption to the school day.
  - l. Possession, distribution, consumption and/or being under the influence of drugs (or possession of drug related paraphernalia including vaping mechanisms), including but not limited to cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapes and alcohol on school property or at a school sponsored event. This offense may result in expulsion from school and all information will be reported to the Oxford Police Dept.
  - m. Violation of weapons policy. This offense may result in expulsion. In addition, the names of the students involved will be reported to the Oxford Police Dept.
  - n. Bullying or harassment.

Parents of students to be suspended will be notified by phone and a written notification to follow. The type and duration of suspension will be determined by the Administration.

## ***EXPULSION***

Expulsion is the permanent removal from school of a student for disciplinary reasons. The Education Reform Act of 1993 and subsequent amendments authorize school principals to expel students who carry weapons or illegal drugs to school, assault school personnel or are convicted of a felony off school grounds. Cases of extreme harassment may also be grounds for expulsion. Currently, no law requires districts to provide expelled students with alternative education, unless they are students with special needs who under federal law are entitled to receive alternative education if excluded for ten days or more.

## ***APPEAL PROCESS***

As one segment of the total society, the school must safeguard the rights of all individuals; it must use the appropriate procedures - due process - for administering these rights. Right to a Hearing - Every student has a right to the details of the alleged offense or to read a description of the offense as reported to the principal or other official. The hearing, at which the student must be advised of his/her rights, is conducted prior to the imposition of a penalty, except in the case of emergency. Right to Appeal – For disciplinary issues involving out of school suspensions exceeding 10 days, students and their parents have a right to appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. For attendance issues where a student may be held back for missing excessive numbers of days, students and their parents have the right to appeal to a committee consisting of the principal, assistant principal, guidance counselor, and the school nurse. Decisions may be appealed to the Superintendent of Schools.

## ***FIRE DRILLS***

Fire drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. Remember these basic rules:

1. Check the posted instructions in each classroom indicating the route to leave the building in case of fire.
2. WALK. No talking, move quickly to your designated area.
3. Never leave your group unless told to do so by your teacher.
4. Never use the elevator.
5. Do not carry your books or other bulky materials.

## ***LOCKDOWN-DRILLS***

Lockdown and shelter in place drills are held at regular intervals throughout the school year. The District has adopted **A.L.I.C.E.** as our protocol:

1. **Alert-** The building will be notified of the exact threat that may be in the building
2. **Lockdown-** Staff and students to go to a locked room, move away from the door and remain silent.
3. **Inform-** Staff will wait for any real time updates to be prepared to make decisions of possible evacuation.
4. **Counter-** Staff and students will prepare to counter and disrupt the intruder if they enter the room.
5. **Evacuate-** Staff will determine if it is safe to evacuate or remain in lockdown until the crisis is over.

**Please note that there is no prescribed order to the above acronym and teachers are trained to make decisions in the best interest of everyone's safety. These drills and conversations will be ongoing with students, the community and parents. It is something we all hope never will be needed, but we need to be prepared and know how to react if needed.**

## ***HEALTH ISSUES***

The school will safeguard the health of every pupil and encourage him or her in sound knowledge and common sense health attitudes. In case of accidents or injuries the nearest member of the faculty or staff should give first aid. Referral of all injuries should be made to the school nurse. No treatment other than first aid will be given at school. If further treatment is required, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to provide it. In all but minor injuries referral to a physician is advisable.

Any teacher who considers a pupil physically unfit for class participation shall notify the principal or school nurse, who in turn will notify the parent/guardian. It is important that the school nurse be familiar with the health status of each pupil. Parents are requested to inform the school nurse of health needs requiring special attention.

Policies have been established to ensure the health and safety of children needing medicines during the school day. Medication will be kept in the Health Office and administered there by the nurse. Our school district requires that the following forms must be on file in your child's health record before we begin to give any medication at school (See SC Policy JLCD):

1. Signed consent by the parent or guardian to give the medicine
2. Signed medication order.

The written order form should be taken to your physician or nurse practitioner for completion and returned to the school nurse. This order must be renewed as needed and at the beginning of each academic year.

Medicines should be delivered to the school in a pharmacy labeled container by you or a responsible adult whom you designate. Please ask the pharmacy to provide separate bottles for school and home. No more than a thirty-day supply of the medicine should be delivered to the school.

Metered dose inhaler medication as prescribed by a physician for asthma and airway disorders will be stored in the Health Office unless otherwise ordered by the physician. As with other medication a signed permission slip is required.

State law requires immunization shots be given to all students. This is the responsibility of the parents/guardians. Failure to do so will result in exclusion from school.

### **General Guidelines Regarding Keeping Students at Home:**

**Fever:** Do not send your student to school with a fever of 100 or above. Likewise, a student with a fever must be dismissed. Do not medicate the fever and then send the student to school as the student is still likely to spread infection. A student must be fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to school.

**Vomiting:** Do not send your student to school if vomiting. Likewise, a student who is vomiting must be dismissed. A student must not have vomited for 24 hours before returning to school.

**Diarrhea:** Do not send your student to school with diarrhea. Likewise, a student with diarrhea must be dismissed. A student must be free of diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.

School Committee Policy on Life Threatening Allergies: EBA  
School Committee Policy on Concussions: JJIF



## ***ELEVATOR USE***

The use of the elevator at the Middle School is reserved for those students who are handicapped or temporarily incapacitated. Permission to use the elevator must come from the Administration and be approved by the school nurse.

## ***TRANSPORTATION***

School buses are provided by the town under contract with a bus company. Bus routes are established by the bus company and published prior to the start of the school year. Students who regularly ride the bus are assigned to a specific bus and requests to ride a different bus are not approved per District policy. Students riding the bus are under the jurisdiction of the Administration from the time they report to their bus stop in the morning until they leave the bus stop after being dropped off at the end of the day. Students who ride the bus and plan to walk home or elsewhere, or get a ride from a parent or approved adult, or stay late for detention, help, or extra-curricular activities must bring in a note from their parent or guardian explaining the circumstance and approving alternate transportation.

## ***BUSES***

It is important to note that the bus driver has complete control of the bus. The following rules are to be observed when riding the school bus:

1. Stay in your seat and do not board or leave the bus while it is in motion.
2. 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> grade students are to sit from the middle of the bus to the front while 7<sup>th</sup> grade students are to sit from the middle to the back of the bus. Exceptions may be made with administrative approval.
3. All school rules apply on the bus.
4. Hands, arms and heads are to be kept inside the bus at all times.
5. After leaving the bus, students who must cross the road are to walk **in front** of the bus when told to do so by the bus driver.
6. Shoving, pushing, improper loud talking, and profanity are prohibited
7. Absolutely NO smoking, eating, or drinking on the bus .
8. Students who are not regular bus riders will not be permitted to travel on buses
9. Bus riders who wish to be excused from riding home on the bus must bring a note to school requesting that permission.

A student who violates any of the bus regulations will be issued a bus conduct report by the driver. These reports may result in a warning, bus seat assignment, bus suspension or any other school consequence to be determined by the Administration. Multiple or major offenses may result in the loss of riding the school bus for up to the remainder of the school year.

Ref: SC Policy EEAEC

## ***BICYCLES et al***

Students must return a signed contract in order to ride a bike to school. The contract will be provided by the school and needs to be signed by the student and parent/guardian. Bikes are to be stored on the bike rack throughout the day and we strongly encourage you to lock your bike. The school is not responsible if your bike is stolen. In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 85 Section 11b, bicyclists age 16 and younger are required to wear approved helmets. Upon arrival and dismissal from school, students must cross at the cross walk with their bikes just as walkers do. Students violating the above guidelines will lose the privilege of riding their bicycles to school or storing their bicycles on school property. Skateboards, scooters, roller-blades, etc. are prohibited in the school building at all times.

## ***PARENT DROP OFF AND PICK UP***

Parents dropping off and picking up their children are to use the south side of the driveway (the exit side). Cars are to pull around the grassy area in front of the flagpole, bypassing the driveway section that goes directly to the front door, leaving this section for busses and emergency vehicles. Cars picking up and dropping off should pull forward along the exit side and stay over to the right side leaving room for busses and emergency vehicles. Note that there is no “head-in parking” in this section of our lot and drivers are not permitted to park and leave their vehicle in this section of the lot at any time.

At the end of the day for school dismissal, cars are to line up in one of the three marked lanes in the parent pickup section of the lot. Cars are to pull forward in their lane as far as possible. For safety reasons, no cars in the parent pickup lanes are permitted to leave until all children are loaded, and then only as directed by an administrator or police officer who will direct traffic. Note that busses have priority during this period.

## ***FOOD SERVICE/LUNCH***

In the Middle School, each grade has its own lunch period. Monitors are provided to maintain order and insure a restful lunch. All pupils will report to the cafeteria whether they are buying a lunch or not during the lunch period. Some simple rules of courteous behavior to make the lunch period pleasant and relaxing are:

1. Throughout lunch, students are expected to be courteous and respectful to all including other students and staff members. Showing disrespect towards anyone in the cafeteria will not be tolerated.
2. Students are to remain at their tables during the entire lunch period, getting up only to get condiments, ask permission to go to the lavatory, or throw away trash. Walking from table to table to socialize is not permitted.
3. Pupils should purchase their own lunch and not have anyone else go through the line to obtain food for them.

4. Throwing of food or any objects, rough housing, and fighting will be dealt with severely, including possible assignment of in-school or out of school suspensions.
5. Students are responsible to make sure the table is clean and the area underneath on the floor is picked up when they leave.
6. Food should never be taken outside the cafeteria to be eaten. Drinks purchased in the cafeteria must be consumed in the cafeteria.
7. Students may go to the lavatory only with a pass from one of the cafeteria monitors and must return promptly so that others may be allowed the opportunity.
8. Break will be offered during the good weather days to students during the second half of their lunch block. Appropriate outside school behaviors are expected or outside privileges will be taken from individuals or classes, to be determined by the Administration.

Lunches may be pre-paid by the year or term. Payment plans are available as well as sibling discounts. Free/Reduced meal applications may be filled out at anytime during the school year to see if you qualify. Please contact the Food Service office. (508-987-6056)

## ***SPECIAL EDUCATION***

### **PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

In keeping with the intention of the State of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students which will enable them to lead fulfilling and productive lives, the District shall provide appropriate educational opportunities to all resident students in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes.

[Adopted - December 8, 1998]

[Reviewed - September 26, 2016]

## ***NATIONAL JUNIOR HONOR SOCIETY***

OMS-NJHS – 2016-2017 Handbook (online)

Qualifications for membership:

1. 6<sup>th</sup> grade candidates are nominated based on their grades from first and second marking periods of Grade 6.
2. 7<sup>th</sup> grade candidates are nominated based on their grades from third and fourth marking periods of Grade 6 and the first and second marking periods of Grade 7.

3. Candidates must attain a Year to Date average of 90 or above and no grade lower than an 85. Students elected to N.J.H.S. must maintain this average and continue to meet these guidelines in each subsequent marking period in order to continue their membership. Once dismissed from the society, a student is never again eligible for membership in the Middle School Chapter.
4. Candidates must have A, B, C or D's in both conduct and effort in all courses.
5. Candidates are evaluated on the qualities of scholarship, leadership, citizenship, character and service. Disciplinary records and report cards for candidates are screened to ensure selected students exhibit the highest standards of conduct and effort in all their classes.
6. Candidates are selected for membership by a five-member faculty council.
7. Members of OMS N.J.H.S. are required to complete at least 10 hours of individual community service by the conclusion of third marking period of their induction and subsequent years. These hours are in addition to group activities run by the chapter.

- Amended May 12, 2016

### ***STUDENT COUNCIL***

The Student Council plays a significant role at the Oxford Middle School. It acts as a liaison between the student body and the administration. Elections are held every academic year. Students may not be nominated to the Student Council if they were required to attend summer school, have had excessive absences/tardies, or have had major disciplinary actions assessed to them. Council members must maintain an average of 70, or above, in each core subject area.

### ***SCHOOL ACTIVITIES***

Intramural Sports	Yearbook	Student Council
Chorus	Band	National Jr. Honor Society
Theater	Babysitting Class	Art Club
Boys/Girls Soccer	Ultimate Frisbee	Lego Robotics League
Coed Cross Country	Field Hockey	Boys'/Girls' Basketball

**... And other activities to be announced**

For all extra-curricular activities, after participants and spectators have arrived at the event, they are not allowed to leave and then return to the event. For example, students watching a basketball game may not leave the game to go across Main Street for a soda and then return. All school rules apply during school sponsored activities.

## ***FIELD TRIPS***

Field trips must be approved by the principal according to the District policy. Students participating in field trips are expected to conform to the rules and regulations of the school and behave in a manner that brings credit to the Oxford Middle School. A student who receives an out-of-school suspension at any time during the school year will not be allowed on a field trip, however, the Administration can make exceptions for students whose teacher feels deserves an opportunity to go based on improved behavior. Other students who have poor behavioral records may be excluded from the field trip on a case-by-case basis upon agreement of the teachers and the Administration. NOTE: Adults participating in a field trip, including parents or other chaperones, must have passed an appropriate background check (a CORI check) and be on file as an acceptable chaperone.

Ref: SC Policy IJOA, IJOD

## ***ASSEMBLIES***

Cultural and educational performances will be held throughout the year. All students are to adhere to the following rules during assemblies:

1. Enter the auditorium quietly – be polite – be courteous
2. Be a good audience – applaud – do not whistle, boo, or stomp feet

When an administrator/staff member raises his/her hand this means it is time to look and listen.

## ***PASSES***

Students are not permitted in the halls or other areas of the school or school grounds during classes without a pass from an authorized staff member or unless accompanied by a teacher. Students found in unauthorized areas are subject to disciplinary action. Students using lavatories at any time during the school day are required to have a valid hall pass. *Use of lavatories between classes is not allowed.*

## ***ELECTRONIC DEVICES***

Electronic devices such as MP3 players, iPods, cellular phones, cameras, dvd players, laptop computers, iPads, games, or any other misc. electronic devices to be determined by administration, must be kept in your locker during school hours. Bringing any of these types of items to school is discouraged because if they get lost or stolen it is entirely the responsibility of the student. Any of these types of items seen during the school day (starting when the student enters the school until the student leaves the school for home) will be confiscated by the faculty and turned into the front office. Administration will not notify parents/guardians, they will be required to pick up the device at the end of the school day or make other arrangements. Repeated offenses may incur further consequences. Devices that may hurt people, such as laser pointers and devices designed to deliver an electric shock to people may also result in disciplinary action.

## ***LOCKER ASSIGNMENTS***

Hallway and gym lockers are assigned for the school year. Students should keep their lockers neat and clean and will be responsible for any damage or defacement of their assigned lockers. For security of both personal items and the school, lockers must be locked at all times. The school will provide each student combination locks for use on hall and gym lockers at the beginning of the school year for a refundable \$5 deposit, or in cases of financial hardship, an hour of community service. Except in unusual circumstances, school issue locks must be used by all students. Lockers will not be shared or exchanged between students. Students should not store valuables in their lockers and the school will not be responsible for items stolen or misplaced from lockers. e. The administration has the right to search a locker or lockers when they have reason to believe that contents of such locker or lockers might jeopardize the safety or well being of the school population or the school building. The contents of a student's locker are the responsibility of that student.

## ***GUM CHEWING - CANDY – SODA - ENERGY DRINKS***

The chewing of gum or the eating of candy is not allowed in the school. Students are not allowed to purchase drinks from the vending machines during school hours. Drink bottles are allowed in the cafeteria during lunch, in a classroom during snack time at the teacher's discretion, or if the student has a note from the school nurse. Students are allowed to carry clear water bottles with water only during the school day. Because of the Massachusetts time and learning requirement birthday celebrations and the like are discouraged during the school day, at the teacher's discretion. Energy drinks have no place in our school and are not permitted.

## ***LOST and FOUND***

If you lose an article report it to the office. Do not bring any valuables or large sums of money to school. Never leave valuables or money in your lockers. The school is not responsible for lost items.

## ***CARE of BOOKS***

Books are very expensive. When you receive a book, your teacher will track its condition, the number and your name for record purposes. Students are responsible for all books. If you lose or destroy a book given to you during the school year, your parents will be responsible for the replacement cost. All books MUST be covered for the entire year.

## ***RELEASE for PICTURES & VIDEOS***

Please note that by signing the receipt of handbook form, you are acknowledging that your child's picture may be taken or video-taped during the school year to acknowledge and promote events/happenings at OMS. If you do not want your child photographed or videoed, please note that on the receipt of handbook form.

## ***VACATIONS***

**All vacations should coincide with the school vacations.**

Teachers cannot give assignments to students ahead of time if the material has not been taught; however, the student is responsible for missed work. It is impossible for students to make-up what takes place in a classroom for one week or longer. They miss out on the teaching, classroom discussions, and the reinforcement of material taught. Days missed from school for any reason count against the maximum allowable missed days before a student must be retained. The school *strongly* advises against planning to miss school for any reason other than actual emergencies.

## ***FUND RAISING ACTIVITIES***

Fund raising other than school sponsored fund raising such as the magazine drive or book fair is disruptive and inappropriate in a school environment. For this reason, students are not allowed to engage in fund raising activities during the school day. Any extra-curricular fund raising such as concessions sold at sports or social events such as dances, 50-50 raffles and such are to be specifically approved by the Administration. (SC Policy JJE)

## ***DISTRICT WELLNESS POLICY***

The Oxford Public Schools is committed to providing a school environment that enhances learning and development of life long wellness practices. (SC Policy ADF)

As stated in Section 204 of Public Law 108-265 CHILD NUTRITION and WIC REAUTHORIZATION ACT of 2004.

To accomplish these goals:

- Child Nutrition Programs comply with federal, state and local requirements. Child Nutrition Programs are accessible to all children.
- Nutrition education is provided and promoted by the Administration and classroom teachers, support staff, and health educators reinforcing eating of breakfast and bringing healthy snacks to school and/or lunch items.
- Physical activity outside of physical education classes will be promoted and encouraged.
- All school based activities are consistent with local wellness policy goals.
- All food and beverages made available on campus (including vending, concessions, a la carte, rewards, student stores, parties, and fundraising) during the school day are consistent with the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans and all food safety and security guidelines.
- A designated person or committee will oversee the implementation and evaluation of the policy recommendations.

## ***NONDISCRIMINATION***

Oxford School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, pregnancy, pregnancy related condition, or homelessness.”

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 and youth and adults, all of 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 aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The 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 identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, or pregnancy related condition. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy, or pregnancy related condition, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

SOURCE                    MASC

LEGAL REF:                Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964  
                                  Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment



Opportunity Act of 1972  
Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375  
Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972  
Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972  
Rehabilitation Act of 1973  
Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975  
M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972)  
M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011  
M.G.L. 76:16  
BESE regulations 603CMR 26:00 Amended 2012  
BESE regulations 603CMR 28.00

[Adopted - November 1, 2001]  
[Reviewed - October 2007]  
[Revision Adopted - April 9, 2012]  
[Revision Adopted - March 28, 2016]  
[Revision Adopted - September 25, 2017]  
[Revision Adopted – May 14, 2018]

## ***NON-DISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF SEX***

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school system does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school system's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

LEGAL REF: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 45 CFR, Part 86

M.G.L. 76:5; 76:16 (Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971)

Board of Education Regulations Pertaining to Access to Equal Educational

Opportunity, adopted 6/24/75, amended 10/24/78.

[Adopted – November 1, 2001]

[Reviewed – October 2007]

[Reviewed – March 28, 2016]

## ***DRUG AND WEAPONS POLICY***

A student shall not possess, use or attempt to use any drug or weapon on school premises or at any school sponsored event. In order to protect the students of the Oxford Public Schools, by law, Oxford Middle School will adhere to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71 Section 37H.

Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including but not limited to, a gun, a knife, or a controlled/counterfeit substance or paraphernalia as defined in Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

Any student who assaults an OMS staff member on school grounds or school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from school or the school district by the principal.

Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his/her appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provision of this section.

## ***ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS***

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property or at any school function.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents of this policy in accordance with state law. Additionally, the district shall file a copy of this policy with DESE in accordance with law in a manner requested by DESE.

SOURCE: MASC March 2016

LEGAL REF: M.G.L.71:2A; 71:96; 272:40A

CROSS REF: IHAMB, Teaching About Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs  
GBEC, Drug Free Workplace Policy

[Adopted - October 5, 2016]

### ***SMOKING ON SCHOOL PREMISES***

Use of any smoking products and materials including, but not limited to, tobacco, electronic devices, vaping, e-cigarettes, and cannabis within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by an individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H

[Adopted - June 23, 1997]

[Reviewed - October 2007]

[Revision Adopted - May 9, 2016]

## ***TOBACCO PRODUCTS ON SCHOOL PREMISES PROHIBITED***

Use of any tobacco products, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco and snuff and electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes or other similar products that rely on vaporization or aerosolization, within the school buildings, school facilities, on school grounds or school buses, or at school sponsored events by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications.

Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the District policy and requirements of state law.

SOURCE: MASC July 2016

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H; 270:6

[Adopted – May 14, 2018]

## ***TITLE XII EDUCATION***

### ***Chapter 76, Section 21***

*\*there may be an addendum following final approval by DESE*

Section 21, Principals and headmasters shall ensure that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Principals shall develop a school-wide education service plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and on-line or distance learning. In developing the education service plan, principals may seek the cooperation or input of relevant health and human service, housing and non-profit agencies education collaboratives, and other service providers. Any school or school district that expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days shall provide the

student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. Students exempt from attending school under section 1 of chapter 76 shall not be subject to this section.

Instructional costs associated with providing alternative educational services under this section shall be eligible for reimbursement under section 5A of chapter 71B, subject to appropriation. The reimbursements shall be in addition to amounts distributed under chapter 70 and shall not be included in the calculation of base aid, as defined in section 2 of said chapter 70, for any subsequent fiscal year. Instructional costs eligible for reimbursement shall include only those costs directly attributable to providing alternative educational services under this section, such as salary of educational personnel, salary of related services personnel, costs for specialized books, materials or equipment, tuition costs, if the student is receiving services from other than the local public school, consultant costs if directly attributable to the student's instructional program and instructional costs of extended day or year services if such services are a part of the education service plan. Such costs shall be prorated as appropriate to reflect group activities or costs for part-time services. Instructional costs shall not include transportation costs, administrative or overhead costs, the cost of adapting classrooms or materials that are used by more than 1 student, the costs of fringe benefits of personnel employed by the school district, nor the costs associated with the development of the education service plan or service coordination for the student. Instructional costs associated with an education service plan shall be reported to and approved by the department and shall be reimbursed according to the formula and procedures in said section 5A and of said chapter 71B.

## ***SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY***

### ***Oxford School Committee***

#### Introduction

It is the goal of the Oxford School Committee (The "Committee"), as chief executive officer of the Town of Oxford Public Schools ("The District") to promote an environment that is free of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of employees as well as students occurring in the environment or in other settings in which employees and/or students may find themselves in connection with the School District is unlawful and will not be tolerated. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated. To achieve our goal of providing an environment free from sexual harassment, the conduct that is described in this policy will not be tolerated and we have provided a procedure by which inappropriate conduct will be dealt with, if encountered by employees and/or students. **(For purposes of this policy, the word "employee" means anyone in the service of the Committee, either on a paid or volunteer basis.)**

Because the District takes allegations of sexual harassment seriously, it will respond promptly to complaints of alleged sexual harassment and, where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose such corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting an environment that is free of sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of sexual harassment.

#### Definition of Sexual Harassment

“Sexual harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of employment or a student’s status; or

submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a basis for employment decisions or student status decisions; or

such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an employee’s and/or students work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating an environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female employees and/or students may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its persuasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances – whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life; comment on an individual’s body, comment about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one’s sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one’s sexual activities.

All employees and/or students should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of sexual harassment complaint is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Committee.

#### Complaints of Sexual Harassment

If any of our employees and/or students believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee and/or student has the right to file a complaint with the appropriate person listed below. This may be done in writing or orally.

The District has designated Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers. If you would like to file a complaint you may do so by contacting the current Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers as follows:

#### Personnel

As to any complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by building level staff, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are the Principal/Director of the school where you believe the incident to have occurred, or the Director of Student Services as alternate.

As to any complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by other Central Office staff, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are the Superintendent of Schools, or the Director of Student Services as alternate.

As to any complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by a Principal, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are the Superintendent of Schools, or the Director of Student Services as alternate.

As to any complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by the Director of Student

Services, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are the Superintendent of Schools, or the School Committee Chairperson as alternate.

As to any complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by the Superintendent of Schools, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are the School Committee Chairperson, or the School Committee Vice Chairperson as alternate.

As to any complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by a student, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are the Principal/Director of the building in which the harassment took place, and the Director of Student Services as alternate.

If any employee or student believes he or she has been subject to sexual harassment, the employee or student should initiate a complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment by contacting the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer as soon as possible. The employee or student should file the complaint promptly following any alleged incident of harassment. The employee or student should be aware that the longer the period of time between the event giving rise to the complaint and the filing, the more difficult it will be for the District to reconstruct what occurred. The employee or student will be requested to write out his or her complaint to document the charge or to sign a written statement. Employees or students will not have to go through the regular chain of reporting procedures when reporting sexual harassment. If the employee or student is uncomfortable contacting the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer because he or she believes the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer may not receive the complaint impartially, the employee or student may contact the Alternate Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer.

Sexual Harassment Grievance Officers are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

#### SEXUAL HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION

On receiving the complaint, the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. When the Sexual Harassment Grievance Officer has completed his/her investigation, he/she will, to the extent appropriate inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.



If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the District will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate the District will also impose disciplinary action.

### DISCIPLINARY ACTION

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of our employees and/or students, the District will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling to termination from employment, or, for students, from counseling to suspension or expulsion and may include such others forms of disciplinary action as the District deems appropriate under the circumstances.

### STATE AND FEDERAL REMEDIES

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint regarding alleged sexual harassment with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim (EEOC – 180 days; MCAD – 6 months).

#### **The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”)**

One Congress Street – 10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 565-3200

#### **The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (“MCAD”)**

Boston Office:

One Ashburton Place – Room 601

Boston, MA 02108

(617) 727-3990

Springfield Office:

424 Dwight Street, Room 220

Springfield, MA 01103

(413) 739-2145

[Adopted - July 7, 2003]

[Revision Adopted - September 28, 2009]

[Revision Adopted - September 25, 2017]

## ***HARASSMENT POLICY***

The Oxford Public School District is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of discrimination. In keeping with this commitment, harassment will not be tolerated by anyone, including any school employee, student, parent, or visitor.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical, or visual, that is based upon a person's protected status, such as sex, color, race, ancestry, religion, national origin, age, medical condition, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, veteran status, citizenship status, gender identity, or any other protected group status.

Harassment occurs when:

- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work or education performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or educational environment.
- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or success as a student.
- Submission or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or educational decisions affecting such individual.

### Harassment Investigation

On receiving a complaint, the Harassment Grievance Officer (Principal or designee) will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. The investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. The Harassment Grievance Officer will also interview the person alleged to have committed harassment. When the Harassment Grievance Officer has completed his/her investigation, he/she will, to the extent appropriate inform the person filing the complaint, the person alleged to have committed the conduct, and, in the case of students, their parents or legal guardians of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, the District will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate the District will also impose disciplinary action.

## Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed by one of the District's employees and/or students, the District will take such action as is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may include counseling, termination from employment, or, for students, counseling, suspension, expulsion, or other forms of disciplinary action as the District deems appropriate under the circumstances.

[Adopted - August 15, 2001]

[Reviewed Date - September 2009]

[Revision Adopted - September 28, 2009]

[Reviewed - March 28, 2016]

[Revision Adopted - September 25, 2017]

## ***BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PLAN***

### I. Policy

A. It is the policy of the Oxford Public Schools to take pro-active, reasonable measures designed to provide a learning and working atmosphere for students, employees and other members of the school community free from sexual harassment, bullying, hazing and intimidation. These terms are referenced herein as "harassment", which is more particularly defined below. The District in the strongest possible terms condemns harassment, whether based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other reason.

B. It is a violation of policy for any administrator, teacher or other employee, or any student or other member of the school community, to engage in or condone harassment in school, on school grounds or at or in a school-related function, activity, communication or contact, or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of harassment.

C. This policy is not designed or intended to, nor shall it, limit the school's authority to take disciplinary action to take remedial action when such harassment occurs out of school, but has a sufficient nexus to school under applicable law, or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school-related activities.

Reports of harassment, including but not limited to cyber-bullying by electronic or other means, occurring in or out of school will be reviewed, and, when a sufficient nexus to school or school-related work exists, will result in discipline.

D. It is the responsibility of every employee, student and parent to recognize acts of harassment and take reasonable action to see that the applicable policies and procedures of this school district are implemented. All members of the school community are and must act as partners in such efforts if we are to have any reasonable chance of success in preventing or minimizing activity of this type, which is harmful to both the victim and the perpetrator. The children attending our schools are in critical, formative stages of their lives. To the extent that we, working together, are able to show them a better way, they will reap immeasurable, lifelong benefits.

E. Any employee or student who believes that he or she has been subjected to harassment has the right to file a complaint and to receive reasonably prompt and appropriate handling of the complaint. While proper enforcement of this policy foreseeably may require disclosure of any or all information received, all reasonable efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality to the extent consistent with such enforcement.

F. The Building Principal/Designee shall be responsible for assisting employees and students seeking guidance or support in addressing matters relating to any form of harassment.

## II. Prohibition and Definitions

Harassment, including bullying, may take a variety of forms. It is utterly unacceptable in a school or work environment. As a result, neither any student, nor employee nor other member of the school community shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying in any public educational institute.

A. “Harassment”, including “Bullying”, the latter including but not limited to “cyber-bullying”, as used in this policy means an unwelcome written, electronic, verbal or physical communication, act or gesture which: (1) reasonably causes a student or employee to feel coerced, intimidated, harassed or threatened and (2) under the circumstances foreseeably may cause: (a) a reasonable person to suffer physical or emotional harm, or (b) damage to a student’s or employee’s property, or (c) a disruptive or hostile school environment. The behavior must interfere with an employee’s ability to perform his or her duties or with a student’s academic performance or ability to learn, or interfere with a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from services, activities, or privileges:

1. that are being offered by or through the school district; or
2. during any district-related educational program or activity; or
3. while in school, on or using school district property or equipment, in a school vehicle, on a school bus, at school-designated bus stops, at school-sponsored activities, at school-sanctioned events; or

4. through the use of data, telephone or computer software that is accessed through a computer, computer system, or computer network or any public education institute related to or provided or facilitated by the district; or

5. in circumstances otherwise having a sufficient nexus with the school district.

B. “Electronic communication” as used in this policy means any communication through an electronic device, including but not limited to a telephone, cellular phone, computer or pager.

### III. Guidelines and Procedures for Investigating and Processing Harassment Claims

Harassment may take many forms. In a school district, such could involve an instance of staff member to staff member, staff member to student, student to staff member, or student to student. It conceivably could also include parent to a student other than the parent’s child, staff member to parent, or parent to staff member. This listing is illustrative and the procedures set forth herein are not intended to limit the definition of harassment, nor the District’s authority to take appropriate action as to same except to the extent that specific subject matter is expressly addressed herein.

Guidelines and procedures for dealing with any charge of harassment are as follows:

A. By law, harassment is defined by the victim’s perception in combination with objective standards or expectations. What one person may consider acceptable behavior may be viewed as harassment by another person. Therefore, in order to protect the rights of both parties, it is important that the victim make it clear to the harasser that the behavior is objectionable.

B. In all charges of harassment, the victim should describe in writing the specifics of the complaint to ensure that the subsequent investigation is focused on the relevant facts. If possible victim should sign the complaint. Oral and anonymous complaints will be reviewed but are inherently difficult to investigate and may not be procedurally fair; as a result, no disciplinary action shall be taken on anonymous complaints unless verified by what the administration in the good faith exercise of its reasonable discretion deems to be clear and convincing evidence. All other complaints will be reviewed based on a preponderance of evidence standard, namely whether the administration in the exercise of its aforementioned discretion, taking into account all material information and circumstances, concludes that a violation of this policy more likely than not has occurred.

C. Any school employee who has reasonably reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person may be a target of harassment, bullying or intimidation shall immediately, as a condition of employment report it to the administration. Each school shall document each prohibited incident that is reported and confirmed, and report

each such incident and the resulting consequences, including discipline and referrals if any, to the Superintendent's office in timely fashion and without any avoidable delay.

D. A good faith report from a staff member is not grounds for any legal liability and, since such reports are a condition of the staff member's employment is considered to have been made in the course of employment for purposes of employment the Municipal Tort Claims Act, M.G.L. c. 258. As a result, the employee would not be subject to damages simply by reason of making such a report, and in the event of a suit based solely thereon would be covered by the school district's insurance policy which provides defense of such suits.

E. If an instance of student to student harassment, as defined in Sec. II above, is reported to a staff member other than an administrator, the staff member must inform the Building Principal/Designee in timely fashion. If the alleged harasser would otherwise be responsible for conducting an investigation, the Alternate Harassment Coordinator designated by the Superintendent or District School Committee, who is presently the Curriculum Coordinator, shall conduct the investigation and report to the alleged harasser's immediate supervisor.

F. If a situation involving a charge of staff member to student harassment, as defined in Sec. II. above, is brought to the attention of any staff member, the staff member should notify the Building Principal immediately.

G. Once a charge of harassment has been made, the following course of action should be taken.

1. The Building Principal or such Principal's designee should conduct a reasonable, factual investigation by means of discussions with the individuals involved, any other witnesses if any, review of any documents and other, written or electronic materials, etc.

If the Principal himself or herself does not conduct the investigation, he or she should review the designee's report and supporting documentation (by way of example only, any written, signed statements by the complainant setting forth the allegations, any such statement by the accused and witnesses, and any other materials such as those mentioned above), as appropriate to the then current stage of the investigation and before making any determination as to whether a violation more likely than not has occurred, and if the Principal deems such necessary or advisable should conduct direct interviews himself or herself during or following such review and before making a determination.

In situations involving allegations against an employee, the employee should be accorded all rights provided by any applicable statute and/or collective bargaining agreement, including but not limited to being informed of his/her right to have a third party present at the time of the discussion if apt, and in the case of a teacher of the right to counsel if the any discussion could

conceivably lead to a suspension (see, M.G.L. c. 71, sec. 42D).

In situations involving harassment of students, the Principal should conduct an investigation with the appropriate classroom or special subject area teacher. Parents will be informed of the situation and invited to participate in resolution discussions if warranted.

Parents of students alleged to have engaged in harassment as to whom suspension is imposed shall be notified that they, or one of them must attend a meeting at which the behavior, words or images giving rise to the complaint may be reviewed. Before any final decision is made as to whether to impose discipline exceeding ten (10) school days, and the nature of such discipline, the student and her or his parent(s) will be informed in reasonable detail of the factual allegations underlying the complaint and given an opportunity to respond to and provide any information material to same.

In the school administration's discretion, depending on its preliminary assessment of the seriousness of a reported incident of alleged harassment, a student accused of harassment may be suspended from school under the procedures for suspension set forth in the student-parent handbook and not readmitted to the regular school program until the student and his or her parent(s) attend such meeting. A ten (10) school day suspension if deemed reasonably necessary by the administration may be imposed prior to such a meeting, but before any such were imposed the student shall be informed of the ground(s) for such possible suspension in sufficient detail to allow the student to respond to the charge(s). A satisfactory conference with the student and his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) must occur prior to the student's readmission.

It is important that each situation be resolved as confidentially and as quickly as circumstances reasonably permit.

2. At any stage of the proceedings the alleged harasser and the victim may discuss the matter at a resolution meeting in the presence of the Principal/Designee and/or parent when appropriate.

During this discussion, the offending behavior should be described by the victim and the administration. If warranted a request for a change in behavior should be made, and a promise should be made that the described behavior will stop and not recur. If circumstances do not permit a face to face meeting the administration will present the victim's position. Follow-up verification procedures will be explained. Failure to comply after a resolution, if any, is voluntarily reached at such a meeting will result in appropriate discipline. The Principal or his or her designee at the close of the meeting shall prepare a written summary of the discussion held at the meeting and of any resolution, if any, agreed to at same, and shall ask the parties attending the meeting to review, date and sign the agreement. The administrator shall sign the summary,

and if any party to the meeting refuses to sign shall note that fact thereon. No such memorandum must be included in a student's school record or an employee's personnel file unless otherwise required by law, but the Principal shall keep a copy of same in her or his records.

H. If after a resolution meeting with the involved parties, the Building Principal determines that further disciplinary action must be taken, the following may occur:

1. In instances involving student to student or student to staff member harassment, subject to applicable law and the disciplinary procedures set forth in the student-parent handbook, the student may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to counseling, suspension or expulsion.

2. In instances involving staff member to student and staff member to staff member harassment, findings will be reported to the Superintendent of Schools for further action. Personnel action, up to and including discharge from employment, may also be initiated at this point, consistent with applicable law and collective bargaining agreement.

1. In all cases where in the good faith judgment of the Principal or Superintendent the circumstances so warrant, a referral to law enforcement will be made. School officials will coordinate with the Police Department to identify a police liaison for harassment cases.

### III. Retaliation

In the event of retaliation in any form against any person who has made or filed, or provided any information as to, a complaint relating to harassment, any employee or student found to have engaged in same shall be subject to discipline in accordance with applicable law. In the case of an employee, up to and including dismissal from employment, and in the case of a student up to and including expulsion. If warranted a referral to law enforcement shall also be made.

### IV. Confidentiality

Reports of harassment should be kept completely confidential to the extent consistent with necessary investigation procedures, with the goal of protecting the victim and stopping the behavior.

LEGAL REF: Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, Section 703  
Title IX of the 1972 U.S. Civil Rights Act



[Adopted - May 10, 2010]

[Revision Adopted - March 13, 2017]

## ***OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL SPONSORED FIELD TRIPS***

The School Committee recognizes that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips can be a most effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the Committee to encourage certain field trips as part of and directly related to the total school program and curriculum. All field trips must have approval of the principal and comply with the following requirements:

- **Educational Relevance** – All trips shall have an Itinerary and Purpose, which shall contribute substantially to the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Standards and the District’s educational program.
- **Permission and Acknowledgement of Behavior Standards** – Each student must have an appropriate permission form executed and signed by a Parent or Guardian for each trip. All school rules as per Student Handbooks shall apply and be in place for each trip.

Parents/Guardian shall be informed of all rules and regulations and any consequences of related infractions. Signed permission forms shall contain a statement of understanding and acceptance of these by the student. Permission forms for overnight trips shall include authorization to obtain emergency medical care and any pertinent insurance data such as name of carrier, insurance number, preferred provider, etc.

It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to obtain and maintain appropriate written permission forms for each trip.

- **Appropriate Adult Supervision** – All trips shall be supervised and accompanied by school personnel. It shall be the responsibility of the Administration to qualify and orient each chaperone. All chaperones shall comply with the duties and responsibilities guidelines promulgated by the Administration i.e. as per the attached appendix.
- **Private Vehicles** – The use of private vehicles for field trips is discouraged. No student vehicles are permitted to be used for field trips. Should other private vehicles be used, evidence of valid registration, driver’s license, and liability insurance coverage in the minimum amounts of \$100,000 – \$300,000 must be provided.
- **Extended/Overnight Trips** – All extended (overnight) trips and excursions except those required for student participation in tournament competitions or contests must have advance approval of the School Committee. Prior to each trip, chaperones shall review (with all students and parents/guardians) all standards of conduct and emergency procedures that provide for their safety and circumstances under which serious offenders may be sent home immediately at parents’/guardians’ expense.

Business fundraising for any field trips shall be subject to prior approval by the School Committee.

**{Adoption date – May 22, 2000} – Revised April 8, 2002**

**{Adoption date – May 13, 2002}**

### **Guidelines for Chaperones**

1. Each chaperone should satisfactorily complete a criminal records check (CORI).
2. Chaperones should review (with all participants) all standards of conduct and emergency procedures that provide for their safety and circumstances under which serious offenders may be sent home immediately at parents'/guardians' expense.
3. Chaperones should obtain and review trip itinerary and list of participants including information relative to emergency references, health peculiarities if any, and any approved special individual activities on the trip.
4. Chaperones should review and become familiar with major school rules including but not limited to:
  - Code of Conduct
  - Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Substance Use Policies
  - Harassment Policies
5. Chaperones should ensure that students are never permitted to move about or remain alone in a location away from the school.
6. Chaperones should be available at all times and respond to all emergencies in a timely manner.
7. Chaperones should ensure that students follow established schedules and check-in at prescribed times and places. Missing students should be sought after immediately.

## ***OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY***

The purpose of this policy is to meet the requirements of state and federal law (i.e., Children's Internet Protection Act, CIPA) and to provide guidelines for safe, legal, moral, and ethical use of District Technology by our students and staff. In order to comply with CIPA, this document will serve as the Oxford Public Schools' Internet Safety Policy. Questions regarding this policy or computer use should be directed to the Director of Technology, Principal, Superintendent or his/her designee.

### **A PRIVILEGE NOT A RIGHT**

**Use of the District computer network, including hardware, software (both locally installed and web-based), Internet access, the District website, and e-mail is a privilege, not a right. All users must complete and return, the appropriate "agreement acknowledgement."**

**USERS WILL:**

- only access the District’s devices, network, Internet, applications and e-mail with the username(s) and password(s) assigned to them.
- keep private the username and password assigned to them.
- change their password(s) frequently and when requested.

**USERS WILL NOT:**

- access the district’s devices, network, Internet, applications, or e-mail with the username(s) and password(s) of others.
- store their assigned username and password in a location where others may easily find it.
- use password(s) that can be easily guessed such as names and birthdates.

**NO EXPECTATION OF PRIVACY**

**The District reserves the right to monitor all Internet use and reserves the right to access and examine all data stored on or accessed from District devices or its network. Users are advised that they should have no expectation of privacy.**

**USERS WILL:** attempt to access or delete the files of others.

**LIABILITY AND RESPONSIBILITY**

**The District will not be liable for the actions of users; each user bears full legal and financial liability for their use of District technology. The District takes no responsibility for any information or materials that are accessed or transmitted by users via the Internet.**

**USERS WILL:**

- take full moral, legal, and financial responsibility for their actions while using District technology.
- limit their use of District technology to purposes deemed appropriate by the District.
- demonstrate appropriate etiquette when using District technology.
- inform a staff member if they receive or intercept a threatening or inappropriate message or file.

**USERS WILL NOT:**

- use the District’s technology to engage in illegal activity, such as the purchase or sale of drugs, criminal gang activity or “hacking.”
- violate any local, state, or federal statute.

- create, copy, distribute material that is threatening or obscene.
- use profane, vulgar, racist, sexist, harassing or other inappropriate language or images.
- use the system for political lobbying or commercial purposes.

## **CONTENT FILTERING AND SECURITY**

**The District maintains a firewall that filters material deemed obscene or harmful to minors, including child pornography. Anti-virus software protects the network and computers. The District will monitor the activities of users for compliance with this policy.**

### **USERS WILL:**

- only access websites that are not blocked by the District's content filters.
- immediately close out of a website if the content displayed is inappropriate.
- inform a staff member if they become aware of a possible security issue.

### **USERS WILL NOT:**

- attempt to subvert network security or to impair the functionality of any District technology.
- attempt to bypass the District's content filters and restrictions.
- post chain letters, distribute spam, create and/or infect the District's network with a virus.

## **HARDWARE AND SOFTWARE**

**The District provides users with hardware and software appropriate for use in an educational setting. Users will respect District owned technology and use personal devices with caution.**

### **USERS WILL:**

- understand that devices, computers and peripherals are the property of the District.
- be permitted to use personal portable devices in conjunction with district technology as long as they are not left in the District overnight. This includes the use of laptops, memory sticks, digital cameras, etc.
- ensure their personal laptops are running an up-to-date anti-virus program.
- only use software purchased by and licensed to the District on District computers.
- promptly disclose to a teacher, administrator or the Technology staff any misuse of or damage to equipment
- abide by the same acceptable use policy for District-owned devices that are used off-site

### **USERS WILL NOT:**

- take any action that impairs the operation of any piece of the District's technology.
- bring large technology devices into the District. This includes desktop computers, monitors, printers, scanners, televisions, etc.
- place food or beverages in close proximity to District technology.
- attempt to install software on District computers.
- copy District owned software or use District computers to copy software owned by others.

### **INTERNET ACCESS AND SAFETY**

**The District provides Internet access to staff and students for the purpose of research, dissemination of information, collaboration, and access to curriculum/professional materials.**

### **USERS WILL:**

- participate in Internet safety instruction provided by the District. Instruction will occur annually by assembly, guided lessons or distributed materials.
- only use District computers and Internet for educationally relevant purposes and school related business.
- access only oxps.org e-mail accounts from District computers. Personal accounts, including but not limited to AOL, Hotmail, Charter, Yahoo, et al., are not allowed.
- inform a staff member if they become aware of a safety issue.

### **USERS WILL NOT:**

- use other Internet services to display information/material to students on school property. Internet access through an outside provider is not allowed.
- post or share personal information about themselves or anyone else on the Internet.
- access social websites including, but not limited to, Myspace, Twitter and Facebook, as well as, chat rooms and instant messaging services unless directly related to the educational curriculum and with teacher or administrator permission.

### **COPYRIGHT AND PLAGIARISM**

### **USERS WILL:**

- agree to use copyrighted material only when permission has been granted.
- correctly cite all materials referenced in their work.

### **USERS WILL NOT:**

- take the ideas or writings of others and present them as their own.
- "copy/cut and paste" from the Internet or other digital sources to a document which they

will submit as their work.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**USERS WILL:** respect others' right to freedom from bullying, harassment and intimidation.

### **USERS WILL NOT:**

- engage in cyber bullying
- use school owned devices or networks to engage in the bullying and harassment of others
- send any material that is likely to be offensive, objectionable or could be deemed as harassment or threatening to recipients.
- create or send abusive, threatening, repetitive, or clearly unwanted messages or use inappropriate language.
- create or copy files containing any profanity, obscenity, or other inappropriate materials.
- intentionally or otherwise interfere with others' work.

## **TAKING DEVICES HOME**

**District-owned devices that are allowed home are expected to follow the same guidelines of this acceptable user agreement for the Oxford Public Schools.**

## **WEBSITE**

**The District maintains and posts an up-to-date website for the benefit of faculty, staff, students, parents, guardians and the community at large. Users granted permission to post information will do so using good judgment. All guidelines listed in this document apply to the use and design of the District's website.**

**USERS WILL:** only post information that is educationally relevant and/or related to school business.

**USERS WILL NOT:** attempt to disable or impair the functionality of the District website.

## **EXCEPTIONS**

In order to allow individual users and groups to function and operate as necessary, the following exceptions are allowed:

- The NJROTC unit is required, and therefore authorized, to utilize computers to purchase supplies required for unit operation.
- Faculty and staff may access e-mail accounts other than oxps.org using the computers designated as teacher workstations, as long as such use does not violate other sections of this policy.
- The Superintendent and/or Director of Technology may approve additional exceptions to this policy.

Requests for exceptions must be submitted and approved in writing. Exceptions will not violate local, state or federal statute nor compromise student safety and the security of the network.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF MISUSE**

**Prohibited conduct may result in loss of computer/network privileges, disciplinary action and/or criminal or civil prosecution under State and Federal law.**

- **For students, violations of any of the above guidelines may result in the loss of access and/or additional disciplinary action as deemed appropriate at the building level.**
- **For staff, a violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action ranging from a verbal warning or suspension of system privileges up to discharge from employment.**
- **For students and staff, when applicable, the District will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of suspected illegal activities conducted through the District's network.**

Parents who do not want their child to use the Internet at school must notify their principal in writing.

**The District reserves the right to seek reimbursement and/or indemnification from the user, for any losses incurred or penalties paid as a result of a user's disallowed activities. District administration will make the final determination as to what constitutes unacceptable use and their decision is final.**

### **SOCIAL NETWORKING POLICY OF THE OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

#### **Internet Acceptance Use Policy Still in Force**

This policy is adopted in addition to, and not as a substitute for, the School District's Internet Acceptable Use Policy, which governs use of the school district's technological resources.

## **General Concerns**

The Oxford Public Schools recognizes the proliferation and, in some instances, usefulness, of online conversation between employees and students and/or their parents or guardians. However, due to the nature of social networking sites, there exists a risk, without care and planning, that the lines between one's professional life and personal life will be blurred. Our staff should always be mindful of how they present themselves to the world, online and otherwise. Should an employee "friend" a student on Facebook, subscribe to a student's "twitter" account, regularly engage in email "chat" with a student, exchange text messages with students or engage in other electronic communication, the school district is concerned, and the employee should be concerned, that such activities may undermine the employee's authority to maintain discipline, encourage inappropriate behaviors and compromise the employee's ability to remain truly objective with his or her students.

In addition, any online communication using one's own personal resources, as opposed to school district resources, compromises the employee's, as well as the school districts', ability to retain public records in accordance with the requirements of the Commonwealth's public records laws. The law requires public employees who send, receive or maintain records in their capacity as public employees, to retain, disclose and dispose of such records in compliance with strict provisions of the public records law. This law applies whether or not the record is in the form of a paper document or an electronic communication. When staff members communicate through school-based resources, such as staff email or school sponsored web pages, such records are retained and archived through the school's information technology department. If, however, an employee communicates outside of these resources, such information is not retained. The burden falls on the employee to comply with public records laws when using personal email or social network accounts to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians.

## **Expectations of Staff**

With these concerns in mind, the Oxford Public Schools has instituted this "Social Networking Policy," and announces its expectations for staff members' use of social networks such as but not limited to Facebook, Linked-In, Twitter, personal email accounts, text message features of cell phones, use of blogs, and other electronic or technologically based communication systems.

Before endeavoring to establish any social networking account, employees should familiarize themselves with the features of any account they choose to use. For example, Facebook requires account holders to take specific steps to "privatize" the information they place online. You must educate yourself to these features of Facebook or any other social networking site



you select. You will be responsible should any information you intended to be “private” becomes “public” due to your own ignorance of the features of the social network you have decided to use or your failure to properly use such features.

You must also know that any information you share privately with a recipient could be re-distributed by such recipient, without your knowledge or consent. The same principles you apply to in-person communication should be applied to online conversation: use discretion, and do not place your trust in individuals who have not proven themselves trustworthy. In essence, nothing you post online is ever truly “private.”

The school district expects you to keep the line between your professional life and your personal life clearly drawn at all times. There is no reason why this cannot be done, even in light of the proliferation of social networking sites. All that is required is some forethought before using social networking for both your professional and personal life, to be sure that these lines never become blurred. For example, if the district does not maintain a web portal for staff to communicate outside of school hours as necessary with students and families, and an employee wishes to establish a Facebook or personal email account through which he or she will communicate with students, he or she should establish a Facebook identity and email identity that is separate from his/her “personal” Facebook identity or personal email account. He/she should only use his/her educational Facebook account or educational email account to communicate with students and/or parents and guardians on matters directly related to education. The “friends” associated with such educational Facebook account should only be members of the educational community, such as administrators, employees, students, and parents of such students. It is strongly recommended that employees will reject friend requests from individuals who do not fit into any of these categories.

At all times, and in the use of any form of communications, staff members will always adhere to student privacy rights and the rights of employees to have their personnel and medical information kept confidential. Information that is protected by law from disclosure to third parties will not be communicated online in a way that unreasonably exposes such information to retrieval by those third parties. For example, through an education Facebook account, an employee may not post confidential student information on the “wall”, the “information” section, or through any part of that Facebook account that would be accessible to other of the Employee’s Facebook “friends” associated with that account. If an employee wishes to communicate privately with a student through the educational Facebook account, such communication shall be conveyed only through the private email/message feature of Facebook, so that only the student may view the message and respond to it.

Employees are encouraged to communicate with students and parents on educational matters only, and only through school-based resources, such as school-provided email or teacher web

pages. Use of one's personal email account or social networking account to discuss school business with students and parents is discouraged. It should be noted that, just because an employee uses his/her personal email as opposed to school email account, this does not shield such email from the provisions of the public records law or from discovery in litigation. It only prevents the archiving of such messages through the school district's automatic email archiving system. We again remind employees that information sent or received by them, even through personal email or social network accounts that are related to their capacity as a school employee, are still subject to public records retention, exemption and disclosure requirements."

If an employee conveys school related messages to students and parents on his/her private account, he/she should save such email or any communication conveyed through a social networking site, or print and save a paper copy of such email or other online communication, and file it, and regard its privacy, as he/she would any other document concerning that student. The employee should forward copies of any such emails or online communications to his or her school based email account so that it can be properly retained and archived in compliance with the requirements of the public records law. Any document created or received by a public employee in his or her capacity as such is subject to retention, and perhaps disclosure under the public records law.

No matter what medium of communication an employee selects, he/she should adhere to appropriate employee/student boundaries. You are a role model, not a student's friend, and you should always conduct yourself in accordance with this understanding.

This policy is not intended to infringe upon an employee's right to speak publicly on matters of public concern, or to communicate with fellow members of their union on workplace issues, so long as such communication adheres to appropriate time, place and manner restrictions and does not interfere with the performance of your job duties. However, when you speak via social networking sites or tools on matters concerning your work, you are speaking as an employee and not as a citizen, restrictions may be placed upon your freedom to express yourself. Those restrictions are intended to preserve student confidentiality, maintain your status as an employee who should command and receive the respect of students, be able to maintain order and discipline in your classroom, and remain objective with respect to your students.

Employees are discouraged from using home telephones, personal cell phones, personal email accounts and personal Facebook accounts to communicate with students. Your communications with students, even if you do not use school resources for such communications, are within the jurisdiction of the school district to monitor as they arise out of your position as an employee. Any conduct, whether online or not, that reflects poorly upon the school district or consists of inappropriate behavior on the part of a staff member, may expose

an employee to discipline up to and including discharge. Even if you are not using a school telephone, computer, classroom or the like to engage in contact with a student that such contact is not outside of the school district's authority to take appropriate disciplinary action. If your behavior is inappropriate, undermines your authority to instruct or maintain control and discipline with students, compromises your objectivity, or harms students, the school district reserves the right to impose discipline for such behavior. An employee may also face individual liability for inappropriate online communications with students and/or parents and guardians, as well as exposing the district to vicarious liability in certain instances.

At the same time, the district recognizes that, in limited cases, use of cell phone text messages or cell phone calls or emails outside of regular school hours may be reasonably necessary. For example, in connection with school sponsored events for which employees serve as duly appointed advisors, they may need to convey messages in a timely manner to students and may not have access to school based email accounts, school provided telephones or school based web pages. In such limited circumstances, the district anticipates that employees will make reasonable use of their cell phones or smart phones to convey time sensitive information on scheduling issues and the like.

Employees may not access their personal email accounts or private Facebook accounts using school district computer resources.

If you are communicating as an employee of the district in your online communications, you must be aware that readers will assume you "speak for the school district." Therefore, all of your online communications, when you are actually acting on behalf of the district, or creating the appearance that you are doing so, must be professional at all times and reflect positively on the school district.

In the use of your Facebook account or other social networking site, you may not, without express permission from the Superintendent of Schools, use the school's logo, likeness or any school photographs or other property that belongs to the school.

References to "Facebook" are not included to limit application of their policy to use of that program. All online, electronic or computerized means of communication are subject to this policy.

Given the rapid pace of technological change it is not possible to identify all proprietary or commonly named or identified means of such communications.

[Adopted - March 8, 1999]

[Revision Adopted - September 5, 2003]  
[Revision Adopted - June 22, 2009]  
[Revision Adopted - September 26, 2016]  
his/her designee.

## ***OXFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS PHYSICAL RESTRAINT POLICY AND PROCEDURES***

The purpose of physical restraint policies and procedures is to ensure that every student in the Oxford Public Schools is “. . . free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate. . .” A copy of the Oxford Public Schools Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures is posted in the school office.

### ***VANDALISM POLICY***

Oxford Public Schools should be respected as teaching and learning environments where students, staff, parents, and community members can feel safe and secure. The District is committed to maintaining orderly educational and administrative processes in keeping schools and administrative offices free from disruptions. The District, in attempting to ensure that reparations are made and proper disciplinary action is taken, is instituting this policy on vandalism to send a clear and concise message to students and parents that vandalism will not be tolerated and any monetary burden will have to be borne by the parents of the perpetrator.

Vandalism not only affects the aesthetics of the building or property, but also sends the wrong message to our younger students, presents a negative appearance of our District and campuses to the community, promotes further acts of vandalism and could even encourage violence. These acts are counterproductive in that they disrupt the normal flow of activities in and around the school or District and costly staff time and energy is invested in cleaning and repairing. In cases of severe damage, valuable instruction time may be lost if students are displaced from their classrooms.

Every person who commits any of the following acts with respect to any real or personal property not his or her own, in cases other than those specified by state law, is guilty of vandalism: 1. Defaces with graffiti or other inscribed material; 2. Damages; 3. Destroys.

“Vandalism” has a number of definitions, all of which have the common elements of destruction, damage, injury, or defacement of another’s property. In recognition of the debilitating impact of vandalism, current law (see below) provides for criminal penalties, the use of student discipline, as well as civil liability for students and their parents.

In order to curtail vandalism and ensure that proper respect is shown for the property of others, acts of vandalism involving District property or the property of District employees and/or students will be considered serious offenses. Any student(s) who commits an act of vandalism against District property or the property of a fellow student or District employee related to school attendance or a school related activity, will be held strictly accountable. Such accountability will include appropriate

disciplinary action by the District including, but not limited to suspension or expulsion; personal and parental liability and responsibility for damages; and, where appropriate, referral to the criminal justice system. In addition to payment of the cost of damages, vandalism to a school bus will result in suspension of the student's riding privilege. The degree of severity of punishment will be determined by the principal, following Mass General Laws, Case Law, 603 Code Mass Regulations and District Policy.

As a part of the disciplinary process, full restitution for damages, including monetary restitution will be considered part of any rehabilitation and/or readmission plan. In recognition of parental responsibility and involvement, parents/guardians of any student who commits vandalism of District property or the property of a District employee shall be responsible for restitution of damages to the maximum extent permitted by law, and if necessary, the School Committee will authorize pursuit of court action for collection of such damages.

1. Mass General Laws 2004: Ch. 15 sec. 1, Ch. 34A, Ch. 34D, Ch. 44, sec. 53(b), Ch. 59C, Ch. 69, sec. 1d, Ch. 71, sec. 37, Ch. 71, sec. 37h, Ch. 71B, sec. 1&3.
2. Case Law: Board of Education vs. School Committee of Quincy, Nicholas B. vs. School Committee of Worcester, Stock vs. Massachusetts Hospital School.
3. 603 Code Massachusetts Regulations: 603 CMR 3.10, 603 CMR 23.02, 603 CMR 23.07, 603 CMR 30.02, 603 CMR 40.00.
4. School Committee Policy ECAC

**COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY  
AGREEMENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR STUDENTS**

I hereby acknowledge that I have received and read the Oxford Public Schools' Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. I hereby agree to comply with the terms and conditions of this Policy.

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Grade (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY  
AGREEMENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

As the Parent/Legal Guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, I have read the Oxford Public Schools' Computer and Internet Acceptable Use Policy. As parent/legal guardian of the above-named student, I grant permission for my child to use District technology and access networked computer services, including Internet access and electronic mail ("e-mail"), if provided. I agree to accept responsibility for guiding my child and conveying to him/her appropriate standards for selecting, sharing, and/or exploring information and media contained on the Internet. I agree to take whatever steps I can to ensure that my child complies with this Policy.

I agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Town of Oxford and the Oxford Public Schools for any liability, legal or otherwise, incurred as a result of violations of the Policy.

Parent/Legal Guardian Name (please print):  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please sign and return this acknowledgement to the principal's office as soon as possible.**

**Failure to sign, date and return this acknowledgement will prohibit your child's access to computers and the Internet.**

*"The Oxford School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or homelessness."*

**OXFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL  
OXFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01540**

**SIGNATURES OF ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF POLICIES**

I have reviewed the on-line copy of the **PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK** for the Middle School. I understand that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with its contents.

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that I have read and reviewed the following: **District Wellness Policy, Nondiscrimination Policy, Drugs and Weapons Policy, Sexual Harassment Policy, Harassment Policy, Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, Field Trip/Chaperone Policy, Computer Usage/Internet Policy, Physical Restraint Policy and Procedures and Vandalism Policy** as approved by the Oxford School Committee.

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL UPON REVIEW OF THE  
ON-LINE PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK.**

**NOTE: FAILURE TO RETURN THIS SIGNATURE SHEET DOES  
NOT ABSOLVE STUDENTS OR PARENTS FROM KNOWING AND  
FOLLOWING THE RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES WITHIN THIS  
ON-LINE HANDBOOK.**

“The Oxford School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or homelessness.”

# Additional Laws and Policies

## *Additional School Committee Policies:*

<b>IHAMA</b>	<b>PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION</b>
<b>IMG</b>	<b>ANIMALS IN SCHOOL</b>
<b>JKAA</b>	<b>PHYSICAL RESTRAINT AND BEHAVIOR SUPPORT</b>
<b>IHBAA</b>	<b>OBSERVATIONS OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS</b>
<b>JRA</b>	<b>STUDENT RECORDS POLICY</b>
<b>IKE</b>	<b>PROMOTION AND RETENTION OF STUDENTS</b>

## *Massachusetts General Laws referenced:*

**Section 37H.** The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from idling such vehicles on school grounds, consistent with section 16B of chapter 90 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto and by the department. The policies shall also prohibit bullying as defined in section 37O and shall include the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by said section 37O. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures assuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The student handbook shall include an age-appropriate summary of the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by section 37O. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student



conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

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

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

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

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

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

**Section 37H1/2. Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:**

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by

said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

***Section 37H3/4. (a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.***

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

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in

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

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

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

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

Section 21. As used in sections 21 to 51H, inclusive, the following words shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly otherwise requires:?

"51A report", a report filed with the department under section 51A that details suspected child abuse or neglect.

"Advocate", an employee of a governmental or non-governmental organization or entity providing appropriate services, or a similar employee of the department of children and families who has been trained to work and advocate for the needs of sexually exploited children.

"Appropriate services", the assessment, planning and care provided by a state agency or non-governmental organization or entity, through congregate care facilities, whether publicly or privately funded, emergency residential assessment services, family-based foster care or the community, including food, clothing, medical care, counseling and appropriate crisis intervention services, provided: (i) that such agency, organization or entity has expertise in providing services to sexually exploited children or children who are otherwise human trafficking victims; and (ii) that such services are provided in accordance with such regulations that the department of children and families may adopt or the policies of such department.

"Child", a person under the age of 18.

"Child advocate", the child advocate appointed under chapter 18C.

"Child requiring assistance", a child between the ages of 6 and 18 who: (i) repeatedly runs away from the home of the child's parent, legal guardian or custodian; (ii) repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of the child's parent, legal guardian or custodian, thereby interfering with their ability to adequately care for and protect the child; (iii) repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable regulations of the child's school; (iv) is habitually truant; or (v) is a sexually exploited child.

"Commissioner", the commissioner of children and families.

"Custody", the power to: (1) determine a child's place of abode, medical care and education; (2) control visits to a child; and (3) consent to enlistments, marriages and other contracts otherwise requiring parental consent. If a parent or guardian objects to the carrying out of any power conferred by this paragraph, that parent or guardian may take application to the committing court and the court shall review and make an order on the matter.

"Department", the department of children and families.

"Family requiring assistance", a parent, guardian, custodian, sibling and any relative or caretaker responsible for a child requiring assistance.

"Habitually truant", a school-aged child, not excused from attendance under the lawful and reasonable regulations of such child's school, who willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter.

"Mandated reporter", a person who is: (i) a physician, medical intern, hospital personnel engaged in the examination, care or treatment of persons, medical examiner, psychologist, emergency medical technician, dentist, nurse, chiropractor, podiatrist, optometrist, osteopath, allied mental health and human services professional licensed under section 165 of chapter 112, drug and alcoholism counselor, psychiatrist or clinical social worker; (ii) a public or private school teacher, educational administrator, guidance or family counselor, child care worker, person paid to care for or work with a child in any public or private facility, or home or program funded by the commonwealth or licensed under chapter 15D that provides child care or residential services to children or that provides the

services of child care resource and referral agencies, voucher management agencies or family child care systems or child care food programs, licenser of the department of early education and care or school attendance officer; (iii) a probation officer, clerk-magistrate of a district court, parole officer, social worker, foster parent, firefighter, police officer; (iv) a priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of any church or religious body, accredited Christian Science practitioner, person performing official duties on behalf of a church or religious body that are recognized as the duties of a priest, rabbi, clergy, ordained or licensed minister, leader of any church or religious body, accredited Christian Science practitioner, or person employed by a church or religious body to supervise, educate, coach, train or counsel a child on a regular basis; (v) in charge of a medical or other public or private institution, school or facility or that person's designated agent; or (vi) the child advocate.

"Parent", a mother or father, unless another relative has been designated as a parent as defined in section 1 of chapter 118 for the purposes of receiving benefits from the department of transitional assistance.

"Relative", the father or mother of a child; a stepfather, stepmother, stepbrother, stepsister, or any blood relative of a child, including those of the half blood, except cousins who are more distantly related than first cousins; any adoptive relative of equal propinquity to the foregoing; or a spouse of any such persons.

"Serious bodily injury", bodily injury which involves a substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

"Sexually exploited child", any person under the age of 18 who has been subjected to sexual exploitation because such person:

(1) is the victim of the crime of sexual servitude pursuant to section 50 of chapter 265 or is the victim of the crime of sex trafficking as defined in 22 United States Code 7105;

(2) engages, agrees to engage or offers to engage in sexual conduct with another person in return for a fee, in violation of subsection (a) of section 53A of chapter 272, or in exchange for food, shelter, clothing, education or care;

(3) is a victim of the crime, whether or not prosecuted, of inducing a minor into prostitution under by section 4A of chapter 272; or

(4) engages in common night walking or common streetwalking under section 53 of chapter 272.

"Young adult", a person between the ages of 18 and 22.

**Section 51A.** (a) A mandated reporter who, in his professional capacity, has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering physical or emotional injury resulting from: (i) abuse inflicted upon him which causes harm or substantial risk of harm to the child's health or welfare, including sexual abuse; (ii) neglect, including malnutrition; (iii) physical dependence upon an addictive drug at birth, shall immediately communicate with the department orally and, within 48 hours, shall file a written report with the department detailing the suspected abuse or neglect; or (iv) being a sexually exploited child; or (v) being a human trafficking victim as defined by section 20M of chapter 233.

If a mandated reporter is a member of the staff of a medical or other public or private institution, school or facility, the mandated reporter may instead notify the person or designated agent in charge of such institution, school or facility who shall become responsible for notifying the department in the manner required by this section.

A mandated reporter may, in addition to filing a report under this section, contact local law

enforcement authorities or the child advocate about the suspected abuse or neglect.

(b) For the purpose of reporting under this section, hospital personnel may have photographs taken of the areas of trauma visible on the child without the consent of the child's parents or guardians. These photographs or copies thereof shall be sent to the department with the report.

If hospital personnel collect physical evidence of abuse or neglect of the child, the local district attorney, local law enforcement authorities, and the department shall be immediately notified. The physical evidence shall be processed immediately so that the department may make an informed determination within the time limits in section 51B. If there is a delay in processing, the department shall seek a waiver under subsection (d) of section 51B.

(c) Notwithstanding subsection (g), whoever violates this section shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000. Whoever knowingly and willfully files a frivolous report of child abuse or neglect under this section shall be punished by: (i) a fine of not more than \$2,000 for the first offense; (ii) imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than 6 months and a fine of not more than \$2,000 for the second offense; and (iii) imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than 21/2 years and a fine of not more than \$2,000 for the third and subsequent offenses.

Any mandated reporter who has knowledge of child abuse or neglect that resulted in serious bodily injury to or death of a child and willfully fails to report such abuse or neglect shall be punished by a fine of up to \$5,000 or imprisonment in the house of correction for not more than 21/2 years or by both such fine and imprisonment; and, upon a guilty finding or a continuance without a finding, the court shall notify any appropriate professional licensing authority of the mandated reporter's violation of this paragraph.

(d) A report filed under this section shall contain: (i) the names and addresses of the child and the child's parents or other person responsible for the child's care, if known; (ii) the child's age; (iii) the child's sex; (iv) the nature and extent of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect, including any evidence of prior injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect; (v) the circumstances under which the person required to report first became aware of the child's injuries, abuse, maltreatment or neglect; (vi) whatever action, if any, was taken to treat, shelter or otherwise assist the child; (vii) the name of the person or persons making the report; (viii) any other information that the person reporting believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injuries; (ix) the identity of the person or persons responsible for the neglect or injuries; and (x) other information required by the department.

(e) A mandated reporter who has reasonable cause to believe that a child has died as a result of any of the conditions listed in subsection (a) shall report the death to the district attorney for the county in which the death occurred and the office of the chief medical examiner as required by clause (16) of section 3 of chapter 38. Any person who fails to file a report under this subsection shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000.

(f) Any person may file a report under this section if that person has reasonable cause to believe that a child is suffering from or has died as a result of abuse or neglect.

(g) No mandated reporter shall be liable in any civil or criminal action for filing a report under this section or for contacting local law enforcement authorities or the child advocate, if the report or contact was made in good faith, was not frivolous, and the reporter did not cause the abuse or neglect. No other person filing a report under this section shall be liable in any civil or criminal action by reason of the report if it was made in good faith and if that person did not perpetrate or inflict the reported abuse or cause the reported neglect. Any person filing a report under this section may be liable in a civil or criminal action if the department or a district attorney determines that the person filing the report may have perpetrated or inflicted the abuse or caused the neglect.

(h) No employer shall discharge, discriminate or retaliate against a mandated reporter who, in good

faith, files a report under this section, testifies or is about to testify in any proceeding involving child abuse or neglect. Any employer who discharges, discriminates or retaliates against that mandated reporter shall be liable to the mandated reporter for treble damages, costs and attorney's fees.

(i) Within 30 days of receiving a report from a mandated reporter, the department shall notify the mandated reporter, in writing, of its determination of the nature, extent and cause or causes of the injuries to the child and the services that the department intends to provide to the child or the child's family.

(j) Any privilege relating to confidential communications, established by sections 135 to 135B, inclusive, of chapter 112 or by sections 20A and 20B of chapter 233, shall not prohibit the filing of a report under this section or a care and protection petition under section 24, except that a priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of a church or religious body or accredited Christian Science practitioner need not report information solely gained in a confession or similarly confidential communication in other religious faiths. Nothing in the general laws shall modify or limit the duty of a priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of a church or religious body or accredited Christian Science practitioner to report suspected child abuse or neglect under this section when the priest, rabbi, clergy member, ordained or licensed minister, leader of a church or religious body or accredited Christian Science practitioner is acting in some other capacity that would otherwise make him a mandated reporter.

(k) A mandated reporter who is professionally licensed by the commonwealth shall complete training to recognize and report suspected child abuse or neglect.

#### FERPA Regulations

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - 
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  -

- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
- 
- Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
- 
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
- 
- Accrediting organizations;
- 
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
- 
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
- 
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.
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Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information please see The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99