

**EASTHAMPTON**

**PUBLIC**

**SCHOOLS**

**STUDENT AND FAMILY HANDBOOK**

Revised for  
2022-2023

## **MESSAGE FROM THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Our goal, as a School Committee, is to provide our students with the best possible educational opportunities. The key responsibilities of the School Committee are as follows:

1. Hire the Superintendent of Schools (The School Committee hires, establishes contracts, evaluates, and makes other employment decisions relative to the Superintendent.)
2. Establish policies for the district
3. Review and approve the school department budget
4. Develop system-wide goals and objectives with the Superintendent
5. Design and assess performance standards with the Superintendent

There are seven School Committee members, including the mayor. Each member is elected for a two-year term. Our meetings are typically held twice per month at the School Department's Central Office (50 Payson Avenue, 2nd Floor, Easthampton). All are welcome to attend our meetings. We encourage and appreciate community and family involvement in our schools.

## SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The Easthampton Public Schools are governed by a seven-member school committee, which includes the mayor, elected every two years.

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<p><b>Suzanne Colby</b>          Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and          School Committee          Email: <a href="mailto:scolby@epsd.us">scolby@epsd.us</a>          Municipal Building – 50 Payson Avenue – 2<sup>nd</sup>          Floor          Easthampton, MA 01027          413-529-1500 – Ext. 121</p>	<p>Student Representative          c/o Easthampton High School          70 Williston Avenue          Easthampton, MA 01027          413-529-1585 – Ext. 133</p>

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## ACCEPTABLE USE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Easthampton Public Schools (EPS) recognizes that access to technology in school gives students greater opportunities to learn, engage, communicate, and develop skills that will prepare them for work, life, and citizenship. We are committed to helping students develop 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and communication skills. To that end, we provide the privilege of access to technologies for student and staff use.

The acceptable use procedures outline the guidelines and behaviors that all users are expected to follow when using school technologies or when using personally-owned devices on the school campus, including:

- The EPS network is intended for educational purposes.
- All activity over the network or using district technologies/services may be monitored and retained.
- Access to online content via the network may be restricted in accordance with our policies and federal regulations, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).
- Students are expected to follow the same rules for good behavior and respectful conduct online as offline.
- Misuse of school resources may result in disciplinary action.
- EPS makes a reasonable effort to ensure students' safety and security online, but will not be held accountable for any harm or damages that result from use of school technologies.
- Users of the district network or other technologies are expected to alert IT staff immediately of any concerns for safety or security.

### Technologies Covered

EPS may provide the privilege of Internet access, desktop computers, mobile computers or devices, videoconferencing capabilities, online collaboration capabilities, message boards, email, Office 365 and more. This Acceptable Use Policy applies to both school-owned technology equipment utilizing the EPS network, the EPS Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections accessed from school-owned devices at any time. This Acceptable Use Policy also applies to privately-owned devices accessing the EPS network, the EPS Internet connection, and/or private networks/Internet connections while on school property. As new technologies emerge, EPS will seek to provide access to them. The policies outlined in this document cover *all* available technologies now and into the future, not just those specifically listed or currently available.

### Usage

All technologies provided by the district are intended for education purposes. All users are expected to use good judgment and to follow the specifics as well as the spirit of this document: be safe, appropriate, careful and kind; don't try to get around technological protection measures; use good common sense; and ask if you don't know.

### Web Access

EPS provides its users the privilege of access to the Internet, including web sites, resources, content, and online tools. Access to the Internet will be restricted as required to comply with CIPA regulations and school policies. Web browsing may be monitored and web activity records may be retained indefinitely.

Users are expected to respect the web filter as a safety precaution, and shall not attempt to circumvent the web filter when browsing the Internet. The determination of whether material is appropriate or inappropriate

is based solely on the content of the material and the intended use of the material, not on whether a website has been blocked or not. If a user believes a site is unnecessarily blocked, the user should submit a request for website review through the EPS Technology Service Ticket Help Desk.

### Email

EPS may provide users with the privilege of email accounts for the purpose of school-related communication. Availability and use may be restricted based on school policies. If users are provided with email accounts, the account(s) should be used with care. Users should not send personal information; should not attempt to open files or follow links from unknown or untrusted origins; should use appropriate language; and should only communicate with other people as allowed by the district policy or the teacher. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Email usage may be monitored and archived.

### Social / Collaborative Content

Recognizing the benefits collaboration brings to education, EPS may provide users with access to web sites or tools that allow communication, collaboration, sharing, and messaging among users. Users are expected to communicate with the same appropriate, safe, mindful, courteous conduct online as offline. Posts, chats, sharing, and messaging may be monitored. Users should be careful not to share personally- identifying information online.

### Mobile Devices

EPS may provide users with mobile computers or other devices to promote learning outside of the classroom. Users should abide by the same acceptable use practices when using school devices off the school network as on the school network. Users are expected to treat these devices with extreme care and caution; these are expensive devices that the school is entrusting to your care. Users should immediately report any loss, damage, or malfunction to IT staff. Users may be financially accountable for any damage resulting from negligence or misuse. Use of school-issued mobile devices off the school network may be monitored.

### Security

Users are expected to take reasonable safeguards against the transmission of security threats over the school network. This includes not opening or distributing infected files or programs and not opening files or programs of unknown or untrusted origin. If you believe a computer or mobile device you are using might be infected with a virus, please alert IT. Do not attempt to remove the virus yourself or download any programs to help remove the virus.

### Downloads

Users should not download or attempt to download or run *.exe* programs over the school network or onto school resources without express permission from IT staff. You may be able to download other file types, such as images or videos. For the security of our network, download such files only from reputable sites, and only for educational purposes.

### Netiquette

Users should always use the Internet, network resources, and online sites in a courteous and respectful manner.

Users should recognize that among the valuable content online there is also unverified, incorrect, or inappropriate content. Users should only use trusted sources when conducting research via the Internet. Users should remember not to post anything online that they wouldn't want students, parents, teachers, or

future colleges or employers to see. Once something is online, it's out there—and can sometimes be shared and spread in ways you never intended.

### Plagiarism

Users should not plagiarize (or use as their own, without citing the original creator) content, including words or images, from the Internet. Users should not take credit for things they didn't create themselves, or misrepresent themselves as an author or creator of something found online. Research conducted via the Internet should be appropriately cited, giving credit to the original author.

### Personal Safety

Users should never share personal information, including phone number, address, social security number, birthday, or financial information, over the Internet without adult permission. Users should recognize that communicating over the Internet brings anonymity and associated risks, and should carefully safeguard the personal information of themselves and others. Users should never agree to meet in real life someone they meet online without parental permission. If you see a message, comment, image, or anything else online that makes you concerned for your personal safety, bring it to the attention of an adult (teacher or staff if you're at school; parent if you're using the device at home) immediately.

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying will not be tolerated. Harassing, dissing, flaming, denigrating, impersonating, outing, tricking, excluding, and cyberstalking are all examples of cyberbullying. Don't be mean. Don't send emails or post comments with the intent of scaring, hurting, or intimidating someone else. Engaging in these behaviors, or any online activities intended to harm (physically or emotionally) another person, will result in severe disciplinary action and loss of privileges. In some cases, cyberbullying can be a crime. Please report any concerns to the appropriate administrator. Remember that your activities are monitored and retained.

### Social Media

The district has a separate Social Media Policy that applies to all staff, and may have implications for students. By signing the Acceptable Use agreement users are acknowledging they have been made aware of the technology etiquette and agree to abide with the requirements of the Social Media Policy. Violations of our practices are in effect violations of the Acceptable Use procedures.

### Examples of Acceptable Use

I will:

- Use school technologies for school-related activities.
- Follow the same guidelines for respectful, responsible behavior online that I am expected to follow offline.
- Treat school resources carefully, and alert staff if there is any problem with their operation.
- Encourage positive, constructive discussion if allowed to use communicative or collaborative technologies.
- Alert a teacher or other staff member if I see threatening, inappropriate, or harmful content (images, messages, posts) online.
- Use school technologies at appropriate times, in approved places, for educational pursuits.
- Cite sources when using online sites and resources for research.

- Recognize that use of school technologies is a privilege and treat it as such.
- Be cautious to protect the safety of myself and others.
- Help to protect the security of school resources.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### Examples of Unacceptable Use

I will **not**:

- Use school technologies in a way that could be personally or physically harmful.
- Attempt to find inappropriate images or content; intent to seek inappropriate images or content is a violation of this Acceptable Use agreement.
- Create a personal mobile “hot-spot” or utilize a “proxy site” for the purpose of circumventing network safety measures and filtering tools.
- Create, distribute or deploy multi-user servers or gaming software on or within the EPS network.
- Engage in cyberbullying, harassment, or disrespectful conduct toward others.
- Try to find ways to circumvent the school’s safety measures and filtering tools; intent to circumvent safety measures and filtering tools is a violation of this Acceptable Use Policy.
- Use school technologies to send spam or chain mail.
- Plagiarize content I find online.
- Post or otherwise disclose personally-identifying information, about myself or others.
- Agree to meet someone I meet online in real life.
- Use language online that would be unacceptable in the classroom.
- Use school technologies for illegal activities or to pursue information on such activities.
- Attempt to hack or access sites, servers, or content that isn’t intended for my use.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Users should use their own good judgment when using school technologies.

### Limitation of Liability

EPS will not be responsible for damage or harm to persons, files, data, or hardware.

While EPS employs filtering and other safety and security mechanisms, and attempts to ensure their proper function, it makes no guarantees as to their effectiveness.

EPS will not be responsible, financially or otherwise, for unauthorized transactions conducted over the school network.

### Violations of Acceptable Use

Violations of this agreement may have disciplinary repercussions, including:

- Suspension of network, technology, or computer privileges;
- Notification to parents;
- Detention or suspension from school and school-related activities;
- Employment disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment;



- Legal action and/or prosecution.

### Consequences for Misusing School Computers

#### First Offense:

- a. Student may be placed on probation for an amount of time specified by the building administration based on the severity of the infraction. Additional disciplinary action may be taken. (Violation may result in loss of access if the violation is considered especially egregious.)
- b. Parent will be notified.

#### Second Offense:

- a. An informal hearing will be conducted to determine if a student will lose access to computers in the school. The hearing will be comprised of an administrator, the classroom teacher, the students, and parents/guardians.
- b. Loss of computer privileges does not exempt students from computer-based assignments.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Staff members must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using Facebook and similar internet sites or social networks, or via cell phone, texting, telephone, or other electronic communication.
  - a. Teachers may not friend or follow current students on social media.
  - b. All electronic contacts with students should be through the district's computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.
  - c. Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.
  - d. All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrator.
  - e. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
  - f. Inappropriate contact via phone or electronic device is prohibited.
2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content.
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol.
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior to avoid.
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology.
6. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent or designees may periodically conduct internet searches to see if staff members have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

FILE: IJNDD

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

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, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

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.

The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.

Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.

All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

This policy shall be posted on the district's website and notice shall be provided to all students and parents/guardians 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.

FILE: JICH

### **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.

FILE: ADC

### ASBESTOS

Environmental Protection Agency regulations require that the School Department annually notify parent, teacher and employee organizations that an asbestos management plan has been prepared in accordance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA, 40 CFR Part 763 of Title II of the Toxic Substances Control Act).

Asbestos management plans have been developed for the following list of educational facilities, (Grades K-12) which have asbestos containing materials present. These plans are available and accessible to the public at each individual school office and at the School Department Business Office, 50 Payson Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, Easthampton.

<b>Educational Facility</b>	<b>Address</b>
Administrative Offices	50 Payson Avenue – 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Easthampton
Mountain View School	200 Park Street, Easthampton
Easthampton High School	70 Williston Avenue, Easthampton

### ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities<sup>1</sup> including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School

Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents from physician; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be "fine" on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

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<sup>1</sup> Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or marching band leader including, but not limited to, Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheer leading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

## ATHLETIC CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

The Easthampton School Committee has adopted a concussion policy and regulations consistent with Massachusetts General Law and regulations. The full text of the policy and administrative regulations can be found in the district's policy manual, Section J – policy JJIF and JJIF-R. This policy applies especially to student athletes, but can apply to any student who sustains a blow to the head, jaw, or spine while engaged in school-sponsored events.

A concussion is defined as a transient alteration in brain function without structural damage. The damage to the brain is at a microscopic level in which cells and cell membranes are torn and stretched. The damages to these cells also disrupt the brain at a chemical level as well as causing restricted blood flow to the damaged areas of the brain, thereby disrupting brain function. A concussion, therefore, is a disruption in how the brain works; it is not a structural injury. Concussions are difficult to diagnosis because the injury cannot be seen. An MRI or CT scan cannot diagnosis a concussion, but they can help rule out a more serious brain injury to a student. Because concussions are difficult to detect, student athletes, in particular, must obtain medical approval before returning to athletics following a concussion.

The signs and symptoms are many, as can be reported by an adult observing the student or by the student him/herself:

Signs (what you see):

- Confusion
- Forgets plays
- Unsure about game, score, opponent, event
- Altered coordination
- Balance problems
- Personality change
- Slow response to questions
- Forgets events prior to injury (retrograde amnesia)
- Forgets events after injury (anterograde amnesia)
- Loss of consciousness (any duration)

Symptoms (reported by student):

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double vision/ blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Sensitivity to noise (tinnitus)
- Feels sluggish
- Feels foggy
- Problems concentrating
- Problems remembering

- Trouble with sleeping/ excess sleep
- Dizziness
- Sadness
- Seeing stars
- Vacant stare/ glassy eyed
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Inappropriate emotions

If any of the above signs and symptoms is observed after a suspected blow to the head, jaw, spine or body they are indicative of a concussion and the student must be removed from play immediately and not allowed to return until cleared by an appropriate allied health professional.

It is extremely important to educate our coaches, students, and the community about concussions. On a yearly basis, all coaches must complete the online course called Concussion in Sports: What You Need to Know. This course is offered by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). Our students also need to know the importance of reporting a concussion to their coaches, parents/guardians, athletic trainer, band director, and other school personnel. Every year students in marching band or athletics should watch an educational video on concussions. There are online training programs that provide great information about concussions so our students can learn the importance of reporting a concussion and understanding what a concussion is.

- Heads-Up Online Training (CDC) – [http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online\\_training.html/](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/online_training.html/)
- Play Smart: Understanding Sports Concussions – BIA-MA (Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts – <http://www.biama.org/playsmart.html>)

The athletic director will also offer educational trainings and concussion materials yearly. This will be an opportunity for the athletic director to speak to parents and students in their programs about concussions and to discuss the Easthampton Public Schools’ policy and protocol. When it comes to concussions, everyone should be aware of the potential dangers and remember that a concussion is a mild brain injury. Whenever anyone has a doubt about a student with a brain injury, SIT THEM OUT and have them see the appropriate healthcare professional!

## **BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION**

The School Committee is committed to providing a safe, positive and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

"Bullying" is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

1. Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
2. Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to themselves, or of damage to their property;
3. Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
4. Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
5. Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

"Cyber-bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

1. Wire
2. Radio
3. Electromagnetic
4. Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

The School Committee recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics including, but not limited to, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, sex, socio-economic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnancy or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The school district shall identify and implement specific steps to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment. The School District shall identify and implement specific steps to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying and harassment. These steps shall be set out and explained in the Easthampton Public Schools Bullying Prevention Plan as required by law.

Bullying and cyber-bullying may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents/guardians and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either bullying, or cyber-bullying.

Bullying is prohibited:

1. On school grounds;
2. On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
3. At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
4. At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
5. At school bus stops;
6. On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the school district; or,
7. Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district.

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district if the act or acts in question:

1. Create a hostile environment at school for the target;
2. Infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
3. Materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

The School Committee further recognizes the school district's responsibility to address bias-related harassment and to prevent the creation of a hostile environment at school for any student.

“Harassment” is defined as any activity or behavior that creates or contributes to the creation of a hostile environment at school for a student because of their race, color, national origin, ancestry, immigration status, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or disability. A hostile environment exists when an incident or a combination of incidents interferes with a student's ability to participate in or benefit from school services, activities, or programs. Harassment does not have to be motivated by an intent to harm, be directed at a specific target, occur at school or school-related events, or involve repeated incidents. Examples of harassment include, but are not limited to, the use of derogatory language concerning protected characteristics (e.g. racial slurs); bias-related teasing, jokes or mocking behavior; intimidation or threats; and unwanted physical contact or physical violence.

The school district will not create, permit others to create, or tolerate a hostile environment at school for any student. The school district will take proactive measures to promote a climate that is positive, welcoming, and inclusive of all students by, among other things, communicating to administrators, faculty, and staff their responsibility to create and support positive classroom and extracurricular environments, and providing sufficient training, guidance, and support to carry out this responsibility. Schools are responsible for identifying, investigating, and responding to harassment about which they have knowledge, as well as taking appropriate steps to mitigate the effects of harassment and eliminate any hostile environment. A school's response to harassment may include, but should not necessarily be limited to, imposing discipline consistent with district policies.

### **Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent and/or their designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially.

The Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Should a reported bullying incident involve the principal or assistant principal as the alleged aggressor, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the Plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

### **Reporting**



Students, who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report.

Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report.

Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary action.

Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible.

A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

### **Investigation Procedures**

The Principal or their designee, upon receipt of a viable report, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying, using a Bullying/Cyber-bullying Report Form which may include interviewing the alleged target, alleged perpetrator, staff members, students and/or witnesses.

Support staff shall assess an alleged target's needs for protection and create and implement a safety plan that shall restore a sense of safety for that student.

Confidentiality shall be used to protect a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or is witness to or has reliable information about an act of bullying.

If the school Principal or a designee determines that bullying has occurred they shall take appropriate disciplinary action and if it is believed that criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator, the principal shall consult with the school's resource officer and the Superintendent to determine if criminal charges are warranted. If it is determined that criminal charges are warranted, the local law enforcement agency shall be notified.

The investigation shall be completed within fourteen school days from the date of the report. The parents or guardians shall be contacted upon completion of the investigation and informed of the results, including whether the allegations were found to be factual, whether a violation of this policy was found, and whether disciplinary action has or shall be taken. At a minimum the Principal or their designee shall contact the parents or guardians as to the status of the investigation on a weekly basis.

Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

Each school shall document any incident of bullying that is reported per this policy and a file shall be maintained by the Principal or designee. A monthly report shall be provided to the Superintendent.

Confidentiality shall be maintained to the extent consistent with the school's obligations under law.

### **Retaliation**

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

### **Assistance for Targets and Perpetrators**

The school district shall provide counseling or referral to appropriate services, including guidance, academic intervention, and protection to students, both targets and perpetrators, affected by bullying, as necessary.

### **Training and Assessment**

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all Pre-K to 12 students.

### **Publication and Notice**

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook.

The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the school district website.

FILE: JICFB

## **CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL**

The following radio stations will make school cancellation announcements: WHMP – Northampton, WHYN – Springfield, and WHMQ. It will also be announced on TV on Western Mass News (CBS3, ABC40, FOX6).

The following guidelines will be followed when closing, delaying, or dismissing students early:

1. Initial school delay/closing decisions will be made no later than 6:15 A.M. Identified radio and TV stations will be notified immediately.

2. Parents will be notified by a phone call home by the School Messenger System and the cancellation will be posted on the district website.
3. In the event that a two (2) hour delay has been announced and subsequent information is obtained which jeopardizes student safety, any decision to change from a “delay” to “close” will occur by 7:15 A.M. No delay will extend beyond two (2) hours.
4. In the event of a (2) hour delay, there will be no AM preschool.
5. Parents are advised to continue to monitor information until times indicated by the delay policy.
6. When a decision is made to close schools for the day, no changes will be made.

### **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS**

The Superintendent may close the schools or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principle ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.

The Superintendent will weigh these factors and take action to close the schools only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, parents/guardians and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with School Committee policy in reporting for work.

FILE: EBCD

### **PROHIBITION OF HAZING**

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school sponsored event regardless of the location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the Principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the District are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the police department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Principal, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the Principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

FILE: JICFA

## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

In recognition of the diversified characteristics and needs of our students and with the keen desire to be responsive to them, the School Committee will make every effort to protect the dignity of the students as individuals. It also will offer careful consideration and sympathetic understanding of their personal feelings, particularly with reference to their race\*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law.

To accomplish this, the Committee and its staff will make every effort to comply with the letter and the spirit of the Massachusetts equal educational opportunities law which prohibits discrimination in public school admissions and programs.

This will mean that every student will be given equal opportunity in school admission, admissions to courses, course content, support services, and extracurricular and athletic activities.

All implementing provisions issued by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in compliance with this law will be followed.

\*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

FILE: JB

## EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

The School Committee's goal is to strive to address the needs of every student in each of our schools, subject to budgetary, space and other limitations.

Educational equity for the purpose of this policy is defined as providing all students, as reasonably practical, the high quality instruction and support they need to reach and exceed a common standard.

To achieve educational equity the district will commit to:

1. Systematically, when appropriate, use districtwide and individual school level data, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, gender/gender identity, national origin, language, special education, socioeconomic status and mobility to inform district decision making.
2. Raise the achievement of all students.
3. Graduate all students ready to succeed in a diverse local, national and global community.

In order to reach the goal of educational equity, as reasonably practical, for each and every student, the District shall:

1. Provide every student with access to high quality curriculum, support, and other educational resources.
2. Seek to promote educational equity as a priority in professional development.
3. Endeavor to create schools with a welcoming and inclusive culture and environment.
4. Provide multiple pathways to success in order to meet the needs of the diverse student body and actively encourage, support and expect high academic achievement for each student.

The Superintendent shall include equity practices in the district's strategic plan and goal strategies to implement this policy. The Superintendent, upon request, will periodically report to the Committee the progress of the implementation of this policy.

FILE: JBB

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Easthampton School Committee and Easthampton Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Easthampton Public Schools.

Easthampton Public Schools does not exclude from participation, deny the benefits of EPS from or otherwise discriminate against, individuals on the basis of race\*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law in the administration of its educational and employment policies, or in its programs and activities.

This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements. The School Committee commits to:

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

The Easthampton Public Schools requires all members of the school community to conduct themselves in accordance with this policy.

It shall be a violation of this policy for any member of the school community to engage in any form of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or to violate any other civil right of any member of the school community. We recognize that discrimination can take a range of forms and can be targeted or unintentional; however, discrimination in any form, including harassment and retaliation, will not be tolerated.

It shall also be a violation of this policy for any school community member to subject any other member of the school community to any form of retaliation, including, but not limited to, coercion, intimidation, interference, punishment, discrimination, or harassment, for reporting or filing a complaint of discrimination, cooperating in an investigation, aiding or encouraging another member of the school community to report such conduct or file a complaint, or opposing any act or practice reasonably believed to be prohibited by this policy.

\*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

FILE: AC

## **ENGLISH LEARNER EDUCATION**

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through

- home language surveys that identify a primary home language is other than English

- observations
- intake assessments
- recommendations of parents/guardians, teachers and other persons.

Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to DESE each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by DESE to comply with federal law.

FILE: IHBEA

## **NONDISCRIMINATION ON THE BASIS OF DISABILITIES**

Title II of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1992 requires that no qualified individual with a disability shall, because the District's facilities are inaccessible to or unusable by individuals with disabilities, be excluded from participation in, or be denied the benefits of the services, programs, and activities of the District or be subject to discrimination. Nor shall the District exclude or otherwise deny services, programs, or activities to an individual because of the known disability of a person with whom the individual is known to have a relationship or association.

### **Definition**

A "qualified individual with a disability" is an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modification to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the District.

### **Reasonable Modification**

The District shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices, or procedures when the modifications are necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of disability, unless the District can demonstrate that making the modifications would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity.

### **Communications**

The District shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that communications with applicants, participants, and members of the public with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. To this end, the District shall furnish appropriate auxiliary aids and services where necessary to afford an individual with a disability an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy benefits of, a service, program, or activity conducted by the District. In determining what type of auxiliary aid or service is necessary, the District shall give primary consideration to the requests of the individuals with disabilities.

## **Auxiliary Aids and Services**

"Auxiliary aids and services" includes (1) qualified interpreters, note takers, transcription services, written materials, assisted listening systems, and other effective methods for making aurally delivered materials available to individuals with hearing impairments; (2) qualified readers, taped texts, audio recordings, Braille materials, large print materials, or other effective methods for making visually delivered materials available to individuals with visual impairments; (3) acquisition or modification of equipment or devices and (4) other similar services and actions.

## **Limits of Required Modification**

The District is not required to take any action that it can demonstrate would result in a fundamental alteration in the nature of a service, program, or activity or in undue financial and/or administrative burdens. Any decision that, in compliance with its responsibility to provide effective communication for individuals with disabilities, would fundamentally alter the service, program, or activity or unduly burden the District shall be made by the School Committee after considering all resources available for use in funding and operating the program, service, or activity. A written statement of the reasons for reaching that conclusion shall accompany the decision.

## **Notice**

The District shall make available to applicants, participants, beneficiaries, and other interested persons information regarding the provisions of Title II of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and its applicability to the services, programs, or activities of the District. The information shall be made available in such a manner as the School Committee and Superintendent find necessary to apprise such persons of the protections against discrimination assured them by the ADA.

## **Compliance Coordinator**

The District shall designate at least one employee to coordinate its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under Title II of the ADA, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance or alleging any actions that would be prohibited under the ADA. The District shall make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee(s) so designated and shall adopt and publish procedures for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action that would be prohibited under the ADA. The school system receives federal financial assistance and must comply with the above requirements. Additionally, the School Committee is of the general view that:

1. Discrimination against a qualified disabled person on the basis of disability is unfair; and
2. To the extent possible, qualified disabled persons should be in the mainstream of life in the school community. Accordingly, employees of the school system will comply with the above requirements of the law and policy statements of this Committee to ensure nondiscrimination on the basis of disability.

FILE: ACE



## **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARRASSMENT AND RETALIATION**

The Easthampton Public Schools will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights, pursuant to our detailed response protocol. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, Easthampton Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally- appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against another member of the school community, will be subject to consequences determined appropriate by the administration. Such consequences may include restorative measures and corrective action, and/or student discipline or staff disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

### **Definitions**

"Discrimination" and "Harassment" are defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on any individual's actual or perceived race\*, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law, Discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of, an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group described above to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of the Easthampton Public Schools; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or working environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, and that has the intent or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district's programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual's education or work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile educational or work environment.

"Title IX Sexual Harassment" (effective August 14, 2020) means verbal, physical or other conduct that targets a person based on their sex, and that satisfies one or more of the following:

- A school employee conditioning educational benefits or services on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo);
- Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's educational program or activity;

- Any instance of "sexual assault", "dating violence", "domestic violence", or "stalking", as those terms are defined by the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)) and the Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), (10) & (30)).

Allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment shall be reported and investigated pursuant to the Easthampton Public Schools Protocol for Investigating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Pursuant to Title IX.

## Resources

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Easthampton Public Schools, and can be reached at:

**Director of Special Education, 50 Payson Avenue, 2nd Floor, Easthampton, MA 01027; 413.529.1500 x 129**

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Easthampton Public Schools. In addition, the Director of Special Education is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

**Director of Special Education, 50 Payson Avenue, 2nd Floor, Easthampton, MA 01027; 413.529.1500 x 129**

Inquiries concerning the Easthampton Public Schools' policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may also be directed to the Director of Human Resources. Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109; (617) 289-0111; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov; Website: www.ed.gov/ocr

\*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and protective hairstyles.

FILE: AC-R

## PROGRAMS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

In keeping with the intention of the state of Massachusetts to offer educational opportunities to all students that 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.

FILE: IHBA

## **SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS AND ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **(PROGRAMS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS)**

The goals of this school district's special education program are to allow each child to grow and achieve at their own level, to gain independence and self-reliance, and to return to the mainstream of school society as soon as possible.

The requirements of law and regulation will be followed in the identification of children with special needs, in referrals for their evaluation, in prescribing for them suitable programs and in assessing their educational progress. In keeping with state requirements, all children with special needs between the ages of three to twenty-two who have not attained a high school diploma or its equivalent will be eligible for special education.

The School Committee believes that most children with special needs can be educated in the regular school program if they are given special instruction, accommodations and the support they need. These children should also be given the opportunity to participate in the school district's non-academic and extracurricular activities.

The Committee recognizes that the needs of certain children are so great that special programs, special classes or special schools may be necessary. When appropriate programs, services, or facilities are not available within the public schools, the Committee will provide these children with access to schools where such instruction and accommodations are available.

It is the desire of the Committee that the schools work closely with parents/guardians in designing and providing programs and services to children with special needs. Parents/guardians will be informed, and conferred with, whenever a child is referred for evaluation. In event of any disagreement concerning diagnosis, program plan, special placement, or evaluation, the parents/guardians will be accorded the right of due process.

The Committee will secure properly trained personnel to work with the children with special needs. Since the financial commitment necessary to meet the needs of all of these children is extensive, the Committee will make every effort to obtain financial assistance.

FILE: IHB

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations. The temporary record of each student will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and their parent/guardian of the

approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following their graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school district.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school district are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

FILE: JRA

## **STUDENT COMPLAINTS AND GRIEVANCES**

The School Committee recognizes that there may be conditions in the school district that are in need of improvement and that students should have some means by which their concerns may be effectively expressed, considered, and dealt with fairly. Such means, if well-conceived and understood in advance, can do much to maintain harmonious relationships among the schools and the students and community. Every attempt will be made to seek a satisfactory solution to any concerns in a friendly and informal manner.

Students and their parent's and/or guardians who believe that a student has received unfair treatment may bring forward their grievance through the appropriate channels. Appeals of disciplinary cases will be required to follow the district's policy on student discipline. Any applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws or federal law will be followed by school officials in conducting hearings.

## **PARENT APPEAL PROCESS FOR COMPLAINTS**

Complaints and grievances shall be handled and resolved, whenever possible, as close to their origin as possible.

Although no member of the community shall be denied the right to petition the School Committee for redress of a grievance, the complaints shall be referred back through proper administrative channels for solution before investigation or action by the School Committee. Exceptions are complaints that concern school committee or school committee operations only.

The School Committee advises the public that the proper channeling of complaints involving instruction, discipline, or learning materials is as follows:

- Teacher
- School principal
- Program Director (Special Education, Curriculum, EL, Technology)
- Superintendent
- School Committee

Any complaint about school personnel will be investigated by the administration before consideration and action by the School Committee.

## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT**

The Easthampton School Committee recognizes the crucial role of parents in providing children with the values and skills essential to school and in later life. Effective parent engagement is related to better student learning. Sustained engagement with schools does influence children's chances of success.

As the child's first teacher, parents have a responsibility to participate actively in the education of their children and to advocate for the best possible schools for their children. To this end, parents must be engaged in helping their children learn, and participating in the schools and the decision-making process of the schools. Schools have a responsibility to provide the opportunity for parents to exercise their role and to create an environment where parents feel welcome and needed.

The School Committee therefore adopts a three-tier parent program to involve parents at every level of school activity to enhance parent involvement:

## **STUDENT WELFARE**

### **Supervision of Students**

School personnel assigned supervision are expected to act as reasonably prudent adults in providing for the safety of the students in their charge.

In keeping with this expected prudence, no teacher or other staff member will leave their assigned group unsupervised except when an arrangement has been made to take care of an emergency.

During school hours or while engaging in school-sponsored activities, students will be released only into the custody of parents/guardians or other persons authorized in writing by a parent or guardian.

### **Reporting to Authorities - Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

Any school official or employee shall report any suspected child abuse or neglect as required by M.G.L. Ch. 119, S 51A.

In accordance with the law, the District shall establish the necessary regulations and procedures to comply with the intent of the Act consistent with the District's responsibility to the students, parents/guardians, District personnel, and the community.

### **Student Safety**

Instruction in courses in industrial arts, science, homemaking, art, physical education, health, and safety will include and emphasize accident prevention.

Safety instruction will precede the use of materials and equipment by students in applicable units of work, and instructors will teach and enforce all safety rules set up for the particular courses. These include the wearing of protective eye devices in appropriate activities.

### **Safety on the Playground and Playing Field**

The District shall provide safe play areas. Precautionary measures, which the District requires, shall include:

- A periodic inspection of the school's playground and playing fields by the Principal of the school and others as may be deemed appropriate; - Instruction of students in the proper use of equipment; - Supervision of both organized and unorganized activity.

### Fire Drills and Reporting

The District shall cooperate with appropriate fire departments in the conduct of fire drills. The Principal of any public or private school, containing any of grades 1 to 12, shall immediately report any incident of unauthorized ignition of any fire within the school building or on school grounds, to the local fire department. Within 24 hours, the Principal shall submit a written report of the incident to the head of the fire department on a form furnished by the Department of Fire Services. The Principal must file this report whether or not the fire department responded.

FILE: JL

## SAFETY DRILLS

### Fire Drills

There will be periodic fire drills in during the school year. Teachers will prepare students for such drills in each of their classes. The teacher will assign students to close the windows before the classroom door is opened. Student may not leave until the teacher indicates accordingly. All students will precede the teachers into the hall and then proceed orderly, quickly and quietly. During fire drills, students pass in single file, at a walking pace. Students should be prepared to exit the building by alternate routes. Your teacher will inform you of all routes or directions will be posted in your classroom.

### Other Drills

Other drills, including **shelter in place**, **lockdowns**, and **full school evacuations** will also be practiced as required by law.

## SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

All resident children of school age will be entitled to attend the public schools, as will certain non-resident children who are admitted under school committee policies relating to non-resident students, or by specific action of the school committee.

Advance registration for prospective Kindergarten students will take place in the Spring. Every student seeking admission to school for the first time must present a birth certificate or equivalent proof of age acceptable to the principal and proof of vaccination and immunizations as required by the state and the school committee. Proof of residency is required by the school administration.

## SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Easthampton School Committee and the Easthampton Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Easthampton Public Schools.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity it also, includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes conduct by an employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, often called quid pro quo harassment and, sexual assault as the Federal Clery Act defines that crime. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51 A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstance).

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 on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- 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.

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, to male, female, or gender non-conforming students or employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

Because the District takes allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of harassment including sexual harassment, and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose 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 harassment including 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 harassment or sexual harassment.

Retaliation against a complainant, because they have filed a harassment or sexual harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment or sexual harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. A student or employee who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including student suspension and expulsion or employee termination.

The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

## **NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

The regulations require a school district to respond when the district has actual notice of sexual harassment. School districts have actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted whether or not the complainant files a formal complaint. Holding a school liable under Title IX can occur only when the school knows of sexual harassment allegations and responds in a way that is deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of known circumstances). Schools are required to investigate every formal complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment.

The regulation highlights the importance of supportive measures designed to preserve or restore access to the school's education program or activity, with or without a formal complaint. Where there has been a finding of responsibility, the regulation would require remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity.

## **DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS**

Due process protections include the following:

1. A presumption of innocence throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
2. A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
3. The clear and convincing evidence or preponderance of the evidence, subject to limitations;
4. The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through cross examination, subject to "rape shield" protections;
5. Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence;
6. Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
7. Equal opportunity for parties to appeal, where schools offer appeals;
8. Upon filing a formal complaint the school must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For K-12 schools a hearing is optional but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other's credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying either the preponderance of the evidence or the clear and convincing standard; however, a school can use the lower preponderance standards only if it uses that standard for conduct code violations that do not involve sexual harassment but carry the same maximum disciplinary sanction. As long as the



process is voluntary for all parties, after being fully informed and written consent is provided by both parties, a school may facilitate informal resolution of a sexual complaint.

A district may establish an informal investigation process that may, upon the request of the complainant be followed by a formal process.

The Superintendent in consultation with the Title IX Coordinator shall designate the principal of each school in the district, or their designee (or some other appropriate employee(s)) as the initial entity to receive the sexual harassment complaint. Also, in a matter of sexual harassment, the district shall require that the Title IX Coordinator be informed, as soon as possible, of the filing of the complaint. Nothing in this policy shall prevent any person from reporting the prohibited conduct to someone other than those above designated complaint recipients. The investigating officer may receive the complaint orally or in writing, and the investigation shall be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and in compliance with applicable law. The investigation will be prompt, thorough, and impartial, and will include, at least, a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. Also, the alleged harasser will be interviewed. When the investigation is completed, the complaint recipient 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.

## **RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS**

Schools must create and maintain records documenting every Title IX sexual harassment complaint. This could include mediation, restorative justice, or other models of alternative dispute resolution. Schools must keep records regarding the school's response to every report of sexual harassment of which it becomes aware even if no formal complaint was filed, including documentation of supportive matters offered and implemented for the complainant.

This policy, or a summary thereof that contain the essential policy elements shall be distributed by the Easthampton School District to its students and employees and each parent or guardian shall sign that they have received and understand the policy.

The Compliance Officer: Director of Special Education, 50 Payson Avenue, 2nd Floor, Easthampton, MA 01027, 413-529-1500x129

Please note that the following entities have specified time limits for filing a claim.

The Complainant may also file a complaint with:

- The Mass. Commission Against Discrimination, 1 Ashburton Place, Room 601 Boston, MA 02108. Phone: 617-994-6000.
- Office for Civil Rights (U.S. Department of Education) 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor Boston, MA 02109. Phone: 617-289-0111.
- The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, John F. Kennedy Bldg. 475 Government Center Boston, MA 02203.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION AND 504

### Discipline for Students with Disabilities

Building Administrators and Special Education Teams will follow the guidelines outlined in the Discipline of Special Education Students under IDEA 2004 flowchart, issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in December 2007. This flowchart shall be read in conjunction with discipline procedures in state law, MGL c. 71 §§ 7H and 37H ½, and district-wide and school-wide student codes of conduct.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior set forth in this Handbook. IDEA 2004 requires that additional provisions be made for students who have been found eligible for special education and students for whom the district is deemed to have knowledge that the student might have a disability (students who have not yet been found eligible, but the school had a basis of knowledge of a disability, including students who have been referred for initial evaluations).

*At any point, the parent and district can agree to change a student's placement for disciplinary reasons. Agreements shall be in writing and signed by the Director of Special Education and parent.*

### Disciplinary Removal Procedures

1. When a student with a disability has a disciplinary removal for less than ten consecutive school days and there have been less than ten cumulative school days of disciplinary removal in the school year, the district may exclude the student from the current placement without obligation to provide FAPE (Free Appropriate Public Education) unless the district provides services to students without disabilities who are similarly removed.
2. When a student with a disability has had disciplinary removal for less than ten consecutive days, but more than ten cumulative days, the IEP Team will meet to determine if the removal is a pattern constituting a change in placement by the tenth cumulative removal.
  - a. If it is determined that the removal is not a pattern of behavior that constitutes a change in placement, the district may apply relevant disciplinary procedures in the same manner and duration as to students without disabilities.
  - b. If it is determined that the removal is a pattern of behavior that constitutes a change in placement, the district will:
    - Notify parents immediately of the decision to change placement for disciplinary reasons and of procedural safeguards
    - Conduct a Manifestation Determination by the tenth day of removal
3. When a student with a disability has disciplinary removal for eleven or more consecutive days, the removal constitutes a change in placement. The district will:
  - Notify parents immediately of the decision to change placement for disciplinary reasons and of procedural safeguards
  - Conduct a Manifestation Determination by the tenth day of removal

### Manifestation Determination

When determining if the conduct is a manifestation of the student's behavior is a result of his or her disability, the Team must consider:

- Is the conduct a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP?
  - Does the conduct have a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability?
1. If it is determined that the conduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability, the district may apply relevant disciplinary procedures in the same manner and duration as to students without disabilities.
    - The IEP Team will determine the extent to which FAPE services are needed to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and progress toward meeting IEP goals.
    - The IEP Team may provide, as appropriate, a Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA) and behavioral intervention services and modifications.
    - The student will return to the placement when the disciplinary period expires unless parent and school agree otherwise or student is lawfully expelled.
  2. If it is determined that the conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability, the district:
    - Must take immediate steps to remedy the deficiencies and review the IEP IF the conduct was a direct result of failure to implement the IEP
    - Conduct a Functional Behavioral Assessment and develop a Behavioral Intervention Plan (BIP) OR review and modify an existing plan as needed
    - Must return the student to placement unless (1) parent and district agree to a different placement, (2) a hearing officer orders a new placement, or (3) removal is for 'special circumstances' under 34 CFR § 300.530(g)

### **Disciplinary Removal for 'Special Circumstances' Under 24 CFR § 300.530(g)**

When a student with a disciplinary removal for 'special circumstances' (weapons, illegal drugs, controlled substances, or serious bodily injury) the district may place the student in an Interim Alternative Education Setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days, (a) on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; OR (b) on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure him/herself or others, regardless of the manifestation determination.

The IAES shall be determined by the student's IEP Team. In the IAES, the student shall:

- Receive educational services to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the IEP, and
- Receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services and modifications that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

### **Prior Knowledge of a Disability**

A student who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates a code of student conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for special education students if the school had knowledge (as determined by the IDEA) that the student was a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

The school district may be considered to have prior knowledge if, before the behavior that resulted in the disciplinary action occurred:

- The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the student's school or to a teacher of the student that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
- The parent requested an evaluation of the student; or
- District staff expressed, directly to the special education director or other supervisory personnel, specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student.

The district may not be deemed to have had knowledge if the parent has not consented to an evaluation of the student or has refused special education services, or if an evaluation of the student was completed and resulted in a determination of ineligibility.

If the district had no knowledge that the student is a student with a disability prior to taking disciplinary action, the student may be subjected to disciplinary measures applied to students without disabilities. However, if an evaluation is requested during the time period in which the student is subjected to these disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by the district, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services. If, after the evaluation, the student is determined to be eligible the district must provide special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

### **Students with Section 504 Accommodation Plan**

Students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior identified in this Handbook. The district shall follow the disciplinary removal procedures outlined in this section.

### **Appeals Process for Disciplinary Placement Decisions for Students with Disabilities**

A parent of a student with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding the child's disciplinary placement, or the manifestation determination, may appeal the decision by requesting a hearing at the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA). Reasons for appeal may include but are not limited to disagreement with the student's removal to an interim alternative educational setting (IAES), disagreement regarding the manifestation determination, disagreement regarding the determination of whether the removal is a change of placement, disagreement regarding the educational services the student receives during the period of removal, and disagreement regarding the functional behavioral assessment and/or implementation of a behavioral intervention plan.

If the district believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or others may file a request for hearing at the BSEA.

## **STUDENT ABSENCES AND EXCUSES**

Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. The Committee recognizes that parents of children attending our schools have special rights as well as responsibilities, one of which is to ensure that their children attend school regularly, in accordance with state law.

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of major religious holidays.

A child may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or designee.

A student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of their character. Parents can help their children by not allowing them to miss school needlessly.

Accordingly, parents will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

### **Student Absence Notification Program**

Each Principal will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

Each Principal or designee shall meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

### **Dropout Prevention**

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided that Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

## **STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES AND REQUIREMENTS**

Activities may include identification of student health needs, health screening tests (including eye and hearing screening tests), communicable disease prevention and control, promotion of the correction of remediable health defects, emergency care of the ill and injured, health counseling, health and safety education, and the maintenance of a healthful school environment.

The District recognizes that parent/guardian(s) have the primary responsibility for the health of their students. The school will cooperate with appropriate professional organizations associated with maintaining individual and community health and safety.

The District shall provide the services of a medical consultant who shall render medical and administrative consultative services for personnel responsible for school health and athletics.

### **Procedures for Emergency at School**

School personnel shall give only emergency care to students who become ill or injured on school property, buses, or while under school supervision.

Each year parent/guardian(s) shall supply information indicating where the student is to be taken in case of an emergency; the name, address, and phone number of a neighbor to be contacted in case the parent/guardian is not available; and any allergies or diseases the student might have.

The District shall maintain a Medical Emergency Response Plan, as required by law, and an Emergency Procedures Handbook, which shall be utilized by District personnel for handling emergencies.

Emergency procedures shall include the following:

- -Provision for care beyond First Aid, which would enable care by the family or its physician or the local Emergency Medical Services agencies. In instances when the EMS is required, every effort shall be made to provide the unit with the student's Emergency Card which lists any allergies or diseases the student might have;
- Information relative to not permitting the administration of any form of medicine or drugs to students without written approval of parent/guardian(s). Requests made by parent/guardian(s) for such administration of medication shall be reviewed and approved by the Principal or designee;
- Provisions for reporting all accidents, cases of injury, or illness to the Principal. Provisions shall be made (in all cases of injury or illness involving possible legal or public relations implications) for reporting such to the appropriate executive director of education immediately the appropriate administrator of education immediately;
- Prompt reporting by teachers to the Principal or designee any accident or serious illness and such reports will be filed with the Business Office.

### **Student Illness or Injury**

In case of illness or injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted and asked to call for the student or provide the transportation pick up the student.

Transportation of an ill or injured student is not normally to be provided by the school. If the parent/guardian cannot provide transportation and the student is ill or injured, an ambulance may be called. Expense incurred as a result of emergency ambulance use will not be borne by the District.

Transportation of a student by school personnel will be done only in an emergency and by the individual so designated by the school administrator.

FILE: JLC

## STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The administration and faculty of Easthampton Public Schools consider this one of the most important sections of your handbook. Good health is a prerequisite to learning. As a matter of fact, good health is essential to most successful activities. Following are a few simple regulations that are requested of students in order that we may help to maintain safety and health for all students.

### Nurse's Office

The school nurse is available for any student who requires medication, feels ill, has a health-related problem, or is injured during the school day.

Information on the following subjects may be obtained by contacting the school nurse:

- Communicable diseases
- Scoliosis screening
- Physical examinations
- Physical education medical excuse policy
- Vision and hearing screening
- Immunizations Policy
- Medication Policy

### Physicals

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health mandates that all schools have on file a current physical exam for all students dated within one year of entrance to school and then at intervals of every 3 years (or 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup> grade). A student transferred from another school system shall be examined as an entering student. Health records transferred from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement.

### Immunizations

Massachusetts Law M.G.L. Ch. 76 Sec. 15 states that children must be administered immunizations in accordance with the law in order to attend school.

The following immunizations are required for your child to attend school:

- DPT – Five (5) doses
- Polio – Four (4) doses
- HEP B – Three (3) doses
- MMR – Two (2) doses
- Varicella – Two (2) doses
- Tetanus Booster (Tdap) is required for those students entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade or at least 12 years of age
- Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine one dose prior to entering grade 7 and booster dose in grade 11

Medical or Religious exemptions are required in writing. Exemptions must be updated, in writing, each school year.



Please have your child's physician forward or FAX a copy of the appropriate health records to the school nurse

### **Mandatory Screenings**

- Heights and Weights are done in grades 1<sup>st</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 10<sup>th</sup>
- Hearing Screenings are done in grades K-3<sup>rd</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>
- Vision Screenings are done in grades K-5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup>
- Postural Screenings are done in grades 5<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup>
- SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) Screenings are done once in grade 7 or 8 AND once in grade 9 or 10

Letters will be sent home prior to screenings. You may choose to opt out of these screenings for your child.

### **Medications**

Massachusetts has a very strict law concerning the administration of medications in school.

Completed parental consent forms and a physician's order form must be in school prior to administration of any medication, prescription or "over-the-counter" medications. Ibuprofen (Advil<sup>®</sup>), Acetaminophen (Tylenol<sup>®</sup>), cough drops, Benadryl<sup>®</sup>, Tums<sup>®</sup>, hydrocortisone cream, and triple antibiotic cream are covered by our school doctor's order, but still require a completed parental consent form. These medication consent forms must be updated each school year.

- In the case of short-term (up to 10 school days) prescription medications (such as antibiotics), in their original labeled pharmacy container will be accepted as the doctor's order.
- Students who self-administer (Inhalers and Epi pen) must also have written parental consent and a doctor's order. Doctor's order must read "Student may self administer".
- Orders dated after July 1, will be accepted for the following school year.
- Only a thirty (30) day supply of medication may be kept in school. It must be brought to school and picked up by an adult. Medications must be hand delivered to the school nurse. Please do not send any medications in a student's backpack. All medications must always be brought in a pharmacy labeled container. NO medication will be accepted in a plastic bag. We cannot accept expired medications.
- Inhalers, Epi-pens, and other emergency medications may be carried back and forth by students with nurse approval.
- If your child will be taking medication on the first day of school, the doctor's order and parental consent must be brought to the school office prior to the first day of school.
- No Medications (over the counter or prescription) will be administered without written parent/guardian consent.
- All Medication forms and parent consents must be updated at the beginning of each school year AND with any medication order changes during the school year.

### **Accidents and Insurance**

The school is responsible only for immediate first aid. The School Committee does not pay any medical or hospital bills incurred as a result of accident to the pupil at school. The parent/guardian is responsible for payment of such bills.



In the case of accident, no matter how minor, the student will report the accident to a teacher immediately. In the case of severe accidents or acute illness, emergency care will be given and the parent/guardian will be notified.

### **Communicable Diseases**

Students returning to school after recovering from a communicable disease must be readmitted through the school nurse's office.

Information on the following subjects may be obtained by contacting the school nurse's office.

## **STUDENT RECORDS**

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations. The temporary record of each student will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and their parent/guardian of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following their graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school district.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school district are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

FILE: JRA

## **SUSPENSIONS**

### **External Suspensions**

#### *General Information*

Suspension involves the exclusion of a student from school and/or school-sponsored activities. As administered by the Easthampton Public Schools, suspension shall include: (1) removal of the student from class; (2) removal of the student from the school building if the student's parent or guardian can be contacted; and (3) continued exclusion of the student from school, school grounds, or attendance or participation in school-sponsored activities until the period of suspension has run and the student has been readmitted to school. At the principal's discretion or his or her designee, a student may be assigned to an in-school suspension, if such a program is available.

If a student who holds an appointed or elected position (such as Team Captain, Class Officer, National Honor Society, Student Council Officer) said student may lose the position for a designated period of time,

the privileges of that position, and will enter a probationary period to be determined by the administration in consultation with appropriate school personnel. The student may return to the position if he/she has no further incidents that warrant disciplinary action.

#### *Due Process for Suspensions: Notice of Proposed Suspension*

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

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

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

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

#### **In-School Suspension Under 603 CMR 53:02(6) & 603 CMR 53.10**

In-school suspension is defined as the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not the school premises, for not more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions over the course of the school year.

A Principal, or his or her designee, may impose an in-school suspension as defined above according to the following procedures:

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

On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal, or his or her designee, shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the

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

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

### **Short-term External Suspensions**

#### *Due Process for Short-Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal Determination*

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

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

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

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

The parent or guardian may be required to attend a student re-admittance conference with the principal or his or her designee as soon as possible after the date of the suspension. At the principal's discretion, or his or her designee, the re-admittance conference may be held by telephone. Conditions for the student's reentry to school shall be outlined at this re-admittance conference.

### *Grounds for Short-term External Suspension*

1. Consistently leaving school during school hours without permission
2. Consistent unauthorized absences from school (truancy) or from class).
3. Bullying and harassment

These terms are defined as overt acts by one or more students on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities that are intended to ridicule, humiliate, or intimidate another student. Any acts of bullying, including, but not limited to:

- Physical violence
- Verbal taunts
- Name-calling and put-downs including ethnically-based verbal abuse and gender-based put-downs
- Threats and intimidation
- Extortion or stealing of money and possessions
- Deliberate exclusion from a peer group

All members of the Easthampton Public School community will not tolerate the following acts. Any such acts must be reported to the administration for immediate investigation and appropriate disciplinary action.

1. Smoking in a school building, on school grounds, in a school bus or at school functions. (See Alcohol, tobacco, and Drug Use by Students Prohibited Policy, contained herein.)
2. Failure to serve a Saturday Detention.
3. Exhibitionism, lewd, wanton and lascivious behavior, disorderly conduct and distracting and inappropriate sexual contact between students. Depending on its severity, such an offense may result in a long-term suspension and referral to law enforcement agencies. (See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 272, Sections 16 and 53.)
4. The possession, dissemination, or use of obscenity in any form, especially, speech, writing or explicit sexual pictures or drawings. The use of this language or material in an intentional, disrespectful and disruptive manner will not be tolerated in a school setting and may result in a long-term suspension and referral to law enforcement agencies. (See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 272, Sections 29 and 31.)
5. Threats and/or intentional acts threatening the health and safety of self and/or others (i.e., fights, false fire alarms, extortion, engaging in seriously unhealthy acts, gang-related activity, etc.). A determination regarding the severity of such acts will be made by the appropriate administrator and staff member, and a long-term suspension and referral to law enforcement agencies may be recommended.
6. Lack of respect for school staff and visitors, including, but not limited to, insubordination, disobedience to a teacher, administrator or staff member, the willful disregard of express or implied directions by a teacher, administrator or staff member and the use of insulting and/or profane language and gestures.
7. Theft or vandalism of school property or the property of others in a school setting. Reasonable proof of the offender is necessary. Restitution by the offender is required. If the appropriate administrator judges the offense particularly severe, a long-term suspension and referral to law enforcement agencies may be recommended. (See Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 266, Sections 30, 98, 100, 127A, etc.)
8. Organizing or participating in “hazing”. (See Hazing–Penalties, contained herein.)

9. Violation of Civil Rights—Students have the right to be free from discrimination based upon race, color, religious creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability.
10. Violation of federal or Massachusetts’s law.
11. Any school related act, on or off school property, which interferes with or restricts another student’s ability to enjoy the educational benefits afforded or offered within, and outside of the school setting. Such acts include, but are not limited to, incidents that interfere with or threaten the well-being or order of the school, its staff, students or the general public.
12. Refusal to take, or cooperate with administration of, the MCAS exam.

If available, **In-School Suspension** may be used in some cases as an alternative to external suspension. This will be at the discretion of the administration based upon the infraction, student cooperation, staffing and availability of space.

First offenses may range from 1-10 day’s loss of school time based on the magnitude of the offense. Suspensions and time out of school should be progressive in nature. Subsequent offenses may result in a greater loss of school time. In determining the length of a suspension, administrators should also consider the student’s prior school behavior. Internal and External suspensions do not count toward the 10-day credit policy.

### Long-term Suspensions and Expulsions

#### Definitions:

**Long-term Suspension** is the removal of a student from his/her educational program for more than ten (10) school days but less than thirty (30) school days.

**Expulsion** is the exclusion of a student from school either permanently or for the remainder of the school year, or for a designated period (for example, 45-day alternative placement or one calendar year).

Long-term suspensions and expulsions shall be utilized in circumstances involving serious misconduct, and the decision to suspend or expel a student shall be made by the school administrator, in his/her discretion.

#### *Due Process for Long-Term Suspensions: Hearing and Principal or Designee Determination*

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

Additionally, the student shall have the following additional rights:

1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student’s record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
2. The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student’s choice, at the student’s and or parent’s/guardian’s expense;

3. The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
4. The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
5. The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal. All participants shall be informed that the hearing is being recorded by audio. A copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request.

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

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive a specific list of education services to make academic progress during removal, and the contact information of a school member who can provide more detailed information.
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or his/her designee (only if a long-term suspension has been imposed) within five (5) calendar days, which may be extended by parent/guardian request in writing an additional seven (7) calendar days.

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

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

\*As in the case of a suspension of less than 10 days, a re-admittance conference must be held.

#### *Grounds for Long-term Suspension or Expulsion*

1. Possession of a firearm (see United States Code, Section 921 of Title 18) on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
2. Possession of a dangerous weapon, other than a firearm (including, but not limited to, a knife, mace, pepper spray, BB gun, throwing star, club, sling shot, blackjack, brass knuckles, nunchakus, and chains (see Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Section 10), on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
3. Assault/assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon (see Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 265, Sections 15A and 15B), on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.



4. Assault/assault and battery upon a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other school staff member (see Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 265, Sections 13A and 13D), on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
5. Possession, use and/or distribution of a controlled substance as defined in Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, crack and heroin, on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games (see Substance Abuse Policy and Outline of Disciplinary Procedures below).
6. Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H ½, a student charged with a felony or the subject of a felony delinquency complaint may be suspended, or a student convicted, adjudicated, or admitting guilt with respect to a felony or felony delinquency may be expelled, provided that the Principal determines, after a hearing that the student's continued presence poses a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
7. Possession, under the influence of, use and/or distribution of alcohol on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games.
8. Serious offenses as defined in Grounds for short-term Suspension, Items 3, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

*Due Process for suspensions: Appeal of Long-Term Suspensions*

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

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

*Suspension or Expulsion for disciplinary Offences Under M.G.L. 71 Sec 37H and 37H½*

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

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

A student may be subject to expulsion if found in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or the student assaults a member of educational staff, and the principal, or his or her designee, determines the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

The Principal, or his or her designee, shall notify the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) in writing of the opportunity for a hearing, and the right to have representation at the hearing, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses. After said hearing, a principal, or his or her designee, may, in his/her discretion, decide to levy a suspension rather than expulsion. A student expelled for such an infraction shall have the right to appeal the decision to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his/her appeal. The

student has the right to counsel at the hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student was guilty of the alleged offense.

### **Felony complaint or issuance of felony delinquency complaint**

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

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

### **Felony conviction or adjudication/admission I court of guilt for a felony or felony delinquency**

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

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

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

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

### *Emergency Removal*

A student may be temporarily removed prior to notice and hearing when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's, or his or her designee, judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal.

During the emergency, removal the principal, or his or her designee, shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal and the reason for the emergency removal. The principal, or his or her designee, shall also provide the due process requirements of written notice for suspensions and provide for a hearing which meets the due process requirements of a long-term suspension or short-term suspension, as applicable, within the two (2) school



day time period, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.

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

## **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

The Easthampton School Committee is responsible, in accordance with Massachusetts General Law, for providing transportation to certain students who reside in Easthampton and attend public and private schools within the city. The School Committee is also responsible for providing transportation to vocational and special education students who reside in Easthampton and attend approved programs outside of Easthampton.

To fulfill this responsibility, the Easthampton School Committee establishes this policy in order to provide transportation in an equitable, efficient, and safe manner.

### **Section IA – Eligibility**

The Easthampton School Department will have bus transportation available to the school of attendance for students who meet the following criteria:

- A. Students attending a public or private school within Easthampton:
  - Students in grades Kindergarten through five (K-5) who reside more than one and a half (1.5) miles from their school of attendance
  - Students in grades six through twelve (6-12) who reside more than two (2.0) miles from their school of attendance
  - Mileage for eligibility purposes will be measured by the Easthampton School Department from the front of the home to the school of attendance along the shortest route.
- B. Students approved for attendance at vocational programs outside of Easthampton:
  - All students approved for attendance in grades nine through twelve (9-12) vocational programs outside Easthampton
- C. Students approved for attendance at special education programs will be transported in accordance with A and B above unless their Individual Education Plan specifies otherwise.
- D. Students of choice attending Easthampton Public Schools are not eligible for transportation from and to any location in or out of Easthampton.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for students having physical or mental disabilities in accordance with the American Disabilities Act.

Students not meeting the above criteria who have extenuating circumstances may appeal to the Superintendent.

## Section IB – Fill the Bus Program

As early in the fall as possible, the Superintendent of Schools will present to the School Committee the degree to which the bus company can accommodate additional students under the mileage limit for that school year. This will be done in increments of 1/10 mile by each grade level group until the capacity limit is reached on any one bus. The capacity limit is determined by providing busing for the maximum number of students without undue change to the bus routes and reasonable timing of bus schedules. This new requirement will remain in effect only until the end of the school year. Each fall, the School Committee will adhere to the eligibility requirements in Section I.

## Section II – Temporary Bus Passes

The building Principal may issue one-day bus passes to students, including walkers, on an emergency basis, on a space available basis. The bus pass will allow a student to be transported on a bus route other than the student's regular bus route for that one day or allow a walker to be transported for that one day.

To receive a temporary bus pass, the parent must request such in writing of the building Principal, explaining the emergency situation. If approved, a pass will be issued by the Principal to the student. The student will turn the pass in to the driver as the bus is boarded. The Principal will also inform the bus company of the situation prior to the use of the pass. Temporary bus passes will not be used to circumvent School Committee policies.

## Section III – Bus Fees

State law requires we provide free bus transportation to all students in grades K-6 living beyond two (2) miles from their assigned school. The law does not require busing for students in grades 7-12. In addition, by law, students on free or reduced lunch cannot be assessed a bus fee. Easthampton does provide additional busing than is required by law, however, some of it may be at a fee.

This will be the bus fee and bus pass policy for parents (guardians) who choose to have their students ride the bus in a year where bus fees are assessed:

- Students in grades K-5 living more than two (2) miles from their school – free
- Students in grades K-5 living between 1.5 and 1.99 miles from their school – fee
- Students in grades K-5 living under 1.5 miles from their school - fee as “fill the bus” seats are made available
- Students in grade 6 living more than two (2) miles from their school – free
- Students in grade 6 living under two (2) miles from their school - fee as “fill the bus” seats are made available
- Students in grades 7-12 living more than two (2) miles from their school – fee
- Students in grades 7-12 living under two (2) miles from their school - fee as “fill the bus” seats are made available

Students will be sent letters in August regarding their eligibility status. Letters will include information about assessment for bus fees.

Students assessed bus fees will be billed and given the opportunity to purchase bus passes before the start of the school year, paying all at once or with a payment plan.

Passes will be provided for all students who pay the fee or who are eligible through the free bus state requirements. Families with more than one student riding a bus requiring a fee will be assessed an adjusted fee with a family cap. Fees will be determined during the budget process and parents (guardians) will be informed of the assessment determination in the June prior to the assessment.

#### **Section IV – Field Trips, Athletic, and Collaborative Vocational Transportation**

Transportation policies, such as bus capacity and discipline code, shall apply to transportation provided for field trips, extra-curricular activities, transportation to and from collaborative vocational programs, and athletic events. Bus fees, other than those charges collected from students for certain events, do not apply for this transportation.

#### **Section V – Bus Evacuation Training**

In accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, all students will receive bus evaluation training every school year. All students will receive such training regardless of whether they are transported to school by bus or are walkers. This will ensure that all students know how to evaluate a bus should the need arise during a field trip or athletic event. Students will receive classroom instruction three times (3) a year and will do bus drills twice (2) per year.

#### **Section VI – Complaints**

All complaints concerning school transportation should be reported to the building Principal. The Principal will work with the student(s), parent(s), and/or bus driver to resolve the matter. If a matter cannot be adequately resolved by the building Principal, it will be referred to the Superintendent of Schools. These matters will then be dealt with by the Superintendent of Schools in collaboration with the Bus Contract provider.

#### **Section VII – Appeals Process**

All transportation policies are subject to approval by the Easthampton School Committee

Anyone who is aggrieved by this policy and/or its interpretation by the School Department should use the following procedure:

- Level 1: The matter should be addressed in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.
- Level 2: If not resolved at Level 1, the parent(s) may request a hearing with the School Committee.

FILE: EE

### **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES**

The major purpose of the school district's transportation services is to aid students in getting to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

The school district will contract for transportation services. The School Committee will award contracts on a competitive bid basis. Bus contractors and taxi contractors, who will be held responsible for the safe operation of school buses, will comply with all applicable state laws and regulations, including but not limited to:

1. Specifications for school bus design and equipment
2. Inspection of buses
3. Qualifications and examinations of bus drivers
4. Driving regulations
5. Small vehicle requirements, if applicable
6. Insurance coverage
7. Adherence to local regulations and directives as specified in bid contracts

The Superintendent, working with the bus contractor and other appropriate administrators, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops, and all other matters relative to the transportation program.

FILE: EEA

### **WALKERS AND RIDERS**

Students will be entitled to transportation to and from school at the expense of the public schools when such transportation conforms to applicable provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws. Reimbursement to the school district for transportation costs is given by the Commonwealth, subject to appropriation, only for (a) students living at least one and one half miles from school, (b) students who live more than one mile from the nearest bus stop, and (c) students with special needs for whom transportation must be provided.

Additionally, the Committee will provide transportation for students as follows:

- Kindergarten: All students, except those living in immediate proximity to the school, as determined by the Superintendent.
- Grades 1 - 3: Students living more than one mile from school.
- Grades 4 - 6: Students living more than one and one-half miles from school.
- Grades 7 -12: Students living more than two miles from school.

Exceptions to these guidelines may be made at the discretion of the Superintendent. This will apply particularly to any student who must travel in a hazardous area to and from school. These students will be transported regardless of the mileage limits listed.

FILE: EEAA

### **BUS DISCIPLINE CODE**

Behavior on a school bus is a safety issue. The job of the driver is one that requires constant attention and concentration. Students, therefore, are expected to adhere to the bus rules, which will include the following:

1. Students are to follow the driver's instructions immediately, whatever the situation or circumstance.
2. Students are to seat themselves in accordance with directions from the driver regarding seat assignments.
3. Students are to remain in their seats at all times, except when the bus has come to a complete stop at their bus stop approved by a parent and a school administrator.
4. Students are to speak in normal tones, and use of foul or abusive language will not be tolerated.
5. Students are to keep their hands, heads, and all objects inside the bus.
6. Students will not fight on the bus.
7. Students will not damage the bus or the belongings of another student.
8. Students will sit facing the front of the bus.
9. Students will not eat or drink on the bus.
10. Students are not to smoke on the bus.
11. Students will not throw items out of the bus windows, around the inside of the bus, or on the floor.

If a student fails to follow the bus rules, the driver will submit a written report describing the student's infraction to a school administrator. Building administrators will maintain a file of misbehavior reports and a summary of consequences. Any consequences assigned will be handled by a building administrator, as will movement from one level to another in the discipline code.

If a student fails to follow the bus rules, the student may be denied the privilege of riding the school bus. This would occur only after the student and the parent are notified of a reason for the suspension of bus privilege, and the action to be taken. Students and parents have the right to request a meeting with the building administrator to discuss the violation and/or the consequences.

Consequences for bus misconduct are as follows:

- Level 1: Administrative warning to the student and contact with the parent(s) and possible administrative detention or suspension, based on the severity of the first offense.
- Level 2: Suspension of bus riding privileges between one (1) and five (5) days with advance notice to parent(s) and possible suspension from school.
- Level 3: Suspension of bus riding privileges between six (6) and twenty (20) days with advance notice to parent(s). During the suspension period a conference will be held with the student, parent(s), and school administrator, with possible suspension from school.
- Level 4: Loss of all bus riding privileges for the balance of the school year and possible suspension from school.

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT WELLNESS PROGRAM**

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will

provide developmentally appropriate and sequential nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

### **Wellness Committee**

The school district will establish a wellness committee that consists of at least one (1): parent/guardian, student, nurse, school food service representative, School Committee member, school administrator, member of the public, and other community members as appropriate. If available, a qualified, credentialed nutrition professional will be a member of the wellness committee. Only employees of the district who are members of the wellness committee may serve as wellness program coordinators. Wellness coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will be in charge of implementation and evaluation of this policy.

### **Nutrition Guidelines**

It is the policy of the school district that all foods and beverages made available on campus during the school day are consistent with School Lunch Program nutrition guidelines. Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will create procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- Guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment;
- Separate guidelines for foods and beverages in the following categories:
  1. Foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses;
  2. Foods and beverages sold in vending machines, snack bars, school stores, and concession stands;
  3. Foods and beverages sold as part of school-sponsored fundraising activities; and
  4. Refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day; and
  5. Specify that its guidelines will be based on nutrition goals, not profit motives.

### **Nutrition and Physical Education**

The school district will provide nutrition education aligned with standards established by the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program in all grades. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, will develop procedures that address nutrition and physical education.

### **Nutrition Education**

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- Students receive nutrition education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy eating behaviors.

- Nutrition education is offered in the school cafeteria as well as in the classroom, with coordination between the food service staff and other school personnel, including teachers.
- Students receive consistent nutrition messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Division health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education or core curricula (e.g., math, science, language arts).
- Schools link nutrition education activities with the coordinated school health program.
- Staff who provide nutrition education have appropriate training.
- The level of student participation in the school breakfast and school lunch programs is appropriate.

### **Physical Education Activities**

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- Students are given opportunities for physical activity during the school day through physical education (PE) classes, daily recess periods for elementary school students, and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate.
- Students are given opportunities for physical activity through a range of before- and/or after-school programs including, but not limited to, intramurals, interscholastic athletics, and physical activity clubs.
- Schools work with the community to create ways for students to walk, bike, rollerblade, or skateboard safely to and from school.
- Schools encourage parents and guardians to support their children's participation in physical activity, to be physically active role models, and to include physical activity in family events.
- Schools provide training to enable staff to promote enjoyable, lifelong physical activity among students.

### **Other School-Based Activities**

The wellness program coordinators, in consultation with the wellness committee, are charged with developing procedures addressing other school-based activities to promote wellness.

The following list contains examples of goals your school district may want to consider for inclusion in its policy. Each school district must determine its own goals and include them in its policy.

- An adequate amount of time is allowed for students to eat meals in adequate lunchroom facilities.
- All children who participate in subsidized food programs are able to obtain food in a non-stigmatizing manner.
- Environmentally friendly practices such as the use of locally grown and seasonal foods, school gardens, and non-disposable tableware have been considered and implemented where appropriate.

- Physical activities and/or nutrition services or programs designed to benefit staff health have been considered and, to the extent practical, implemented.

### Evaluation

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance, and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. Wellness program coordinators shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. Wellness program coordinators will report to the School Committee annually.

FILE: ADF

## WELLNESS GUIDELINES

The goal of the Easthampton Public Schools is to partner with our families in promoting a positive and healthy learning environment that includes education, physical activity, and healthy food choices. The district wellness policy provides the following guidelines:

1. The serving of soda and candy during the school day is not permitted.
2. Non-school sponsored organizations, such as booster clubs, will be given copies of the policy and encouraged to have fundraisers that promote health and wellness.
3. All schools are encouraged to use fundraising projects that follow the Wellness Policy nutrition standards, or use non-food items, or activities that promote physical activity such as:
  - Walk-a-thons, jump-rope-a-thons and fun runs
  - Talent shows
  - Raffles for spa treatments or sporting events, concerts, or movie tickets donated by local businesses
  - Items with school logos
  - Car washes
  - Read-a-thons
  - Book fairs
  - Community service projects



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