

Miles River Middle School

Student Handbook

2013-2014



787 Bay Road
Hamilton, MA 01982
978-468-0362

GENERAL INFORMATION

At Miles River Middle School, we do not discriminate against any student, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness status. All students have equal access to the general education program and the full range of occupational/vocational education programs offered by the district. Furthermore, all district programs, activities, or employment practices do not discriminate regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness status.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

We respect the partnership that families and schools have in the process of serving the educational and emotional needs of all of our students. Students are encouraged to be their own best advocates, and should speak with teachers and parents about how they are performing in school. If additional questions arise from parents/guardians about the academic performance of their son/daughter, parents/guardians are requested to contact the teacher with whom the question is best answered.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

As required by state law, regular and punctual attendance is needed for all students. Students enter the building (unless assigned inside for inclement weather) at 7:35 a.m. Students arrive in homeroom at 7:40 a.m. They should not arrive before 7:20 a.m. Students who arrive at the building after 7:40 a.m. are required to go to the main office and are marked as tardy for the day.

SCHOOL HOURS:

Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays: 7:40 a.m. – 2:20 p.m.

Wednesdays: 7:40 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

ABSENCES:

Parents and guardians are to call the Absence/Tardy Line before 8:00 a.m. at (978) 468-0390 on each day the student is not in attendance. This line is available 24 hours a day. If we do not receive a call regarding your absence, a special procedure will be activated to determine if you encountered any problems on your way to school.

Please note that ANY time a student is absent from school, he/she is not allowed to attend any school events on that day.

Excused absences: Excused absences are absences that are foreseen and meet the state guidelines for excused absences (i.e. illnesses, operations, wakes and funerals, mental or physical illness, surgery, emergency medical appointments, and religious observances). Please see appendices for more information about the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee Policy on Religious Observances.

Unexcused absences: Unexcused absences include oversleeping, completing schoolwork or projects, missing the bus, attending sporting events, and other circumstances which are not listed in the excused absence category.

Family Vacations: We strongly discourage family vacations while classes are in session. They are highly disruptive to the educational process and often result in poor grades for students who are taken from classes for extended periods of time during the school year. Should parents choose to keep their student out of school for reasons that are unexcused, the principal must be notified well in advance, and the teachers will provide the normal range of assistance upon the student's return to school. *However, it is the student's responsibility to identify and make up missed work. No advance assignments will be provided to students.*

Truancy: Truancy is an absence from school for the entire day or any part of it for reasons other than illness and without prior permission from the school and from parents. If a parent does not call to excuse a student's absence, the school nurse will call parents to determine whether or not the student has parental permission to miss school.

It is very important for your academic success that you attend school daily. Please understand that field trips, field days, and other days such as these are considered school days and not days that you can choose to stay at home. If you are unable to participate in any of these events, alternative activities will be provided for you at school.

When you are absent from school, you will not be allowed to participate in after-school events such as co-curricular or intramural activities, concerts, dances, etc.

Excessive absences and/or tardies will be addressed by a school administrator. He or she will meet with the student and parents to develop a plan to improve attendance and/or tardiness. If attendance and punctuality goals are not met, the school administration is required to file a Child in Need of Services with the Department of Children and Families, and/or apply for a 'Failure to Send' complaint with Essex County courts, and/or file a complaint of neglect/51A with the Department of Children and Families. Parents and guardians will be notified of these steps.

On report cards, the aggregate number of days absent is reported.

TARDINESS:

If for some reason you are tardy to school, it is very important for you to come to the main office and check in with the secretaries before you go to class. A note explaining your tardiness is required. You will then be given a pass to go to your locker and your class. If you accrue five unexcused tardies within a semester (1/2 year), a letter will be sent to your parents indicating the concern. If the problem persists, the administration may decide to place a student on social probation. Examples of social probation might include, but are not limited to, elimination from field trips, dances, co-curricular and intramural activities, and other school events. Be sure to plan your time carefully in the morning so you can start the school day properly.

All tardies (even those authorized by parents) are considered unexcused unless the required documentation is provided (i.e. medical excuse with date specific documentation, bereavement or serious illness in family, observance of a major religious holiday, etc.). Students are required to make up all time missed (after the 5th offense per semester) in an office detention after school by the end of each month.

BOOK BAGS

Students are allowed to carry book bags to and from school only. You are not permitted to use a book bag or other large bags (i.e. Vera Bradley bags) within the school building as you travel to and from your classes. Small pencil bags or purses are the only acceptable bags you may carry to classes.

FIELD TRIPS

Quality learning takes place both within and beyond the walls of the middle school. High standards of behavior must be maintained during field trips because you represent our school, our community, and in some cases, our State. Leaving school grounds for learning experiences is a privilege that must be earned; it requires students to be able to make good decisions and to behave responsibly. Field trips are required schools days.

GUIDANCE COUNSELING SERVICES

Mission Statement

The mission of the Miles River Middle School Guidance Program is to partner with parents, community, faculty and staff to provide a comprehensive, developmental counseling program addressing the academic, career, and

personal/social development of all students thus preparing them with the knowledge and skills to be productive members of society.

How is a student referred to the guidance office?

Students may be referred to the counselor by parents, teachers, administrators, or peers, or they may self-refer.

What does the guidance counselor do?

- Helps students resolve problems which interfere with learning
- Facilitates educational and career planning
- Increases knowledge of self and others
- Supports students with specific needs
- Offers crisis intervention and prevention
- Provides individual/small group support for student or family concerns
- Attends meetings with parents and teachers as requested
- Communicates with collateral contacts (therapists, doctors, ER) as necessary
- Point person for “at-risk” behavior (suicidal ideation, self injury, 51As)
- Monitors student progress
- Attends Special Education Team Meetings as requested
- Team member of school SMT crisis team
- Provides referrals to community agencies to assist students facing personal or family concerns outside the scope of the school counseling program

What does the guidance counselor provide for parents?

- Facilitates a home/school partnership in fostering school success
- Provides support for parents regarding their child’s educational development
- Shares information with parents to help clarify and/or solve student and/or school-related problems.

What can you as a parent do to help your child succeed in school?

- Provide an appropriate study environment at home.
- Establish fair and reasonable expectations.
- Take time to listen to your child.
- Maintain communication with teachers, counselors, and other school personnel.
- Participate in school activities.
- Help your child establish realistic career and educational goals.
- Celebrate your child's successes and recognize that mistakes or failures can be turned into positive experiences.

Clarification on issues of ‘Confidentiality’

State law mandates that guidance counselors must report information to administration and parents when the following issues are presented by students:

1. Harm to self or others
2. Abuse or neglect
3. Court or legal proceedings

Vocational Education Programs

As outlined above, all students are provided information about the full range high school vocational/technical programs with equal access. All district programs, activities, or employment practices do not discriminate regardless of race, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness status.

North Shore Technical High School - www.nsths.net

Essex Agricultural and Technical High School - www.agtech.org

The guidance counselor will process applications and transcripts, organize interviews of applicants at MRMS, and help applicants prepare for interviews. The guidance counselor will maintain a record of applications and will write recommendations as requested.

The guidance counselor will publicize the open houses and the annual presentations of North Shore Technical High School and Essex Agricultural and Technical High School as well as planning and chaperoning the annual tour to NSTHS.

Parent/Student Resources

- Bullying Resources for Students and Parents
 - [Policy and Intervention Plan](#)
 - <http://www.stopbullying.gov/>
- Information for Students
 - [Dealing with Peer Pressure](#)
 - [How to Improve Study Skills in Middle School](#)
 - [Career Exploration](#)
- Information for Parents
 - [The Parents Guide to Middle School](#)
 - [The Elementary to Middle School Transition: 5 Helpful Hints for Parents](#)
 - [10 Tips for Middle School Parents](#)
 - [Middle School Children](#)
 - [Helping Your Middle Schooler with Homework](#)
 - [Tips for Divorcing Parents](#)
 - [Drug and Alcohol Information](#)
 - [Articles on Anxiety](#)

HEALTH OFFICE

The school nurse is available during the day for students who have accidents, need medical attention or medication, or want to discuss physical or mental health matters. In order to be admitted to the health office, students must have a pass from a teacher. If a student must go to the health office during a scheduled class, he/she must report to the teacher of the class first and obtain a pass to the nurse. The pass must contain the time and teacher signature.

Important Information from the Health Office:

- Medical reports or documentation (e.g. physical exams, doctors' notes, notes regarding participation in physical education, immunizations) should be delivered to the health office. Your cooperation enables us to keep health records up-to-date for referral during the year.
- Screenings are provided for all students for vision, hearing, scoliosis, height, and weight every year.

- Emergency cards authorizing treatment in case of injury, dispensing of medications, or other problems needing medical attention must be signed and on file in the health office yearly in order to provide these services.
- Medication: Students who need to take medication during the school day are required to leave their medication in the Health Office. Medication should not be kept in lockers, gym bags, or purses. In accordance with State regulations, all medications, prescriptions and over-the-counter drugs, must be accompanied by a doctor's order and parent permission to be administered during school hours. Forms are available from the Health Office. Asthma Medications and Epipens are special circumstances. Students who need to self-administer asthma inhalers or Epipens in school must inform the Health Office. Narcotic medication will not be administered in school.
- Sports physicals must be on file and current (within 1 year) for participation in any sports or practices.
- Call the Health Office any time with questions regarding illnesses, medications, or physical or mental health concerns at (978) 468-0390.

HOMEWORK

Homework is meant to reinforce what you have learned in the classroom. You can expect 1-2 hours of homework a night depending on the grade level. You might also have special projects and reports that require time during the week and on weekends. Homework is very important, and it should be done carefully, neatly, and turned in on time. If you are having difficulty doing your homework, you may need to stay after school for teacher assistance. Teachers are generally available on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays from 2:20-2:50 p.m.

To help you be more organized, the Friends of Miles River have purchased an assignment notebook/agenda book for you. Remember to record your daily assignments and long-term projects. You will find it to be a valuable tool to assist you throughout the year.

Each of your teachers will give specific instructions on how their homework is to be completed, so it is very important for you to pay attention to their instructions and to write these directions into your assignment notebook.

INTRAMURAL PROGRAMS

All MRMS students are invited to participate in extracurricular activities. The district ensures that participation requirements for intramurals, sports, or clubs is not limited on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or homelessness status

LATE BUS

The school may provide after-school transportation depending upon budgeting allocations. Generally, late bus will leave from the school by 3:30 p.m. on the days it is assigned (typically Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays).

Students must sign-up for the late bus in the main office before the end of their lunch period.

LIBRARY-TECHNOLOGY CENTER

The Middle School Library-Technology Center is open to all students before, during, and after school for the purpose of completing assignments and research. The library's growing collection is focused on materials directly related to the curriculum and on quality books for independent reading. Students who wish to use the library between 7:20 and 7:40, and after-school must inform the main office/administration.

Students are encouraged to use the library to enhance their studies. Students who lose library materials are responsible for replacing the missing book or materials. We do not accept cash. Checks should be made payable to Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District. Consequences will be issued to students who do not replace missing books within a reasonable time period as determined by the librarian and school administration.

LOCKERS

Lockers with combination locks will be assigned to you at the beginning of the school year (one locker per student). Your teachers will give you several locker breaks during the day. Make sure that your locker is locked at all times (no one other than you should know your locker combination). Personal padlocks are not allowed to be added to lockers, and if found, they will be removed. The school cannot assume responsibility for books, lunches, money, or other valuables that are kept in your locker. **DO NOT LEAVE VALUABLES IN YOUR LOCKER!** Vandalism to lockers or theft of articles from lockers should be reported immediately.

Students' lockers are public property and are therefore subject to search by school administration. Certain items may not be stored in lockers or on persons (i.e. weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, stolen property, items prohibited by school policy, etc.). Fees will be charged for damages to lockers or locks, and replacement fees will be assessed for missing locks (\$5).

MEDICATIONS:

All medications brought to school are to be left with the nurse, or in her absence, the main office secretary, before school begins. Students who have medications (even prescribed) in their possession are subject to disciplinary action.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

The daily school news will be read each morning using our intra-school TV broadcast called "Channel 2". Please be sure to listen to these announcements in order to keep up to date with activities and events.

If you wish to submit an announcement to be read, it must first be screened by your activity advisor and initialed by the advisor, the principal or assistant principal. Also, any poster or announcement that you would like to place on the walls of the Middle School must first be approved by the activity advisor and initialed by the principal or the assistant principal.

PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS/INVITATIONS

Student birthday parties are not permitted in school. The distribution of invitations for outside birthday parties is also not permitted. Please note that lockers should not be decorated.

REPORT CARDS, HONOR ROLL

Report Cards are issued four times a year. The first three report cards will be sent home with students and a ConnectEd message will alert parents to expect them. The fourth report card will be mailed home. Letter grades will be given in both Core and IA classes. Final grades for full-year courses are the averages of the four quarterly grades. For quarterly classes, the quarter grade IS the final grade.

Honor Roll

High Honors consists of all courses having a grade of A- or above
Honors requires a student to have a minimum grade of B- in ALL subjects

Letter Grade Equivalents

A+ = 98-100	A = 93-97	A- = 90-92
B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62

PROGRESS REPORTS

To help you do the best you can in your classes, progress reports will be posted periodically. Presently, we use Aspen to post electronic progress reports. It is important that when parents/guardians and students receive their activation code information, they activate the account, and check it frequently. Students are encouraged to see their teachers regarding all academic information. Parents and guardians are also welcomed to speak with teachers about academic matters.

STAYING AFTER SCHOOL

For Teacher Help: Staying after school to receive help and/or guidance is encouraged! It is an important strategy that should be used as an interventional step by students, parents/guardians, and offered by teachers. If you are asked to stay after school with a teacher, or ask to stay with a teacher, please coordinate as early as possible. After-school help will take place on most Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays with a 24-hour notice given when possible. Students are responsible for arranging transportation home, or they can use the Late Bus when it is available.

Typically, The Library-Media Center is open for students after school on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays for use of the resources. Students who elect to stay in the Library must be work on appropriate material that is connected to school assignments.

SCHOOL PROPERTY

It is important that we all respect the property of others and also that of our school.

Textbooks will be issued to each student in respective courses that they are needed in. These materials are to be cared for while they are in your possession. Textbooks should be covered. You will also have access to other educational materials and equipment throughout the year. These are to be handled with care and used only as directed by your teachers. We have all worked very hard to be sure that the school is clean, safe, and provided with the items needed to make your year a good one. It is important that you take pride in caring for these items and the school building. If you lose, break, or damage school property, you will be expected to pay for the item or repair the damaged item.

Students are not allowed to touch or remove anything from a teacher's desk without direct permission.

STUDENT RECORDS

There are two parts to a student's record. The Official Transcript is the permanent record of the student, listing name, address, phone number, birth date; name, address, phone number of parent or guardian; course titles, grades, course credit, grade level completed, year completed. All other information in the folder (test scores, extracurricular activities, etc.) is part of the Temporary Record. The Temporary Record is given to seniors when they graduate.

Any parent may request to see the contents of the student folder. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Massachusetts Department of Education Student Records Regulations, 603 CMR 23.07) provides that you must be allowed to see your child's folder as soon as practicable and within ten days of your initial request.

Further information on access to records, access procedures for non-custodial parents and the laws governing recordkeeping in Massachusetts is available in main office.

STUDENT VISITS

Students who intend to enroll at Miles River Middle School may contact the administration to arrange for a partial day visit to experience the educational climate of the school. No school visits will be approved for days adjacent to vacations or for any other days that are not deemed to be representative of the normal school day.

STUDY BUDDY

Because you may be absent from time to time, you should choose a “study buddy”. This person should be on the same team as you. He/she will collect and copy any work or assignments you might have missed by being absent. Your study buddy should be a responsible student who lives near you so that your parents can go over to his/her home and collect the work. Please do not expect your work to be delivered to you.

It is your responsibility to check with every teacher to schedule make-up work the day you return from being absent. Under normal circumstances, you will be given one day to make up work for each day absent.

TELEPHONE USE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY

Students may request to use the Main Office phone during the school day for emergencies only. Permission is required and provided on a case-by-case basis. Continued requests for missing homework assignments, etc. will not be considered emergent after the first or second instance. Coordination of after-school plans is NOT considered an emergency!

Messages left by parents/guardians for their sons and daughters will be made available during lunch or end of the day announcements. We do not interrupt/call down a student to receive a message unless it is an emergency.

TRANSPORTATION

Students arrive and leave school to go home from the Middle School in four general ways. They walk to school, ride their bicycles, take the school bus, or get a ride from their parents.

If you walk to school, you are reminded to respect the property of residents that you pass by and not to trespass or cut across their lawns without owners’ permission, pick flowers, throw snow balls or rocks, or do things that are not proper or respectful. If you ride your bike (or skateboard) to school, it is very important for you to always follow all of the bike safety rules. All students 12 years of age and under are required by Massachusetts law to wear helmets. We also strongly encourage *all* students to wear bike helmets. Once you arrive at the top of the school driveway, you are required to get off of your bike and walk it down the sidewalk to the bike racks located on the side of the building. We recommend that you lock your bike, as the school assumes no responsibility for loss or damage. Skateboards must be kept on the rack by the main office. For safety reasons, when parents drive or pick you up from Miles River Middle School, the driveway directly in front of the middle school entrance is closed to automobile traffic between the hours of 7:15 a.m. and 8:15 a.m., and between 2:00 p.m. and 3:15 p.m. If your parents are going to drop you off or pick you up, they need to do so in the upper driveway of the school or the parking lot.

DECISION-MAKING, BEHAVIOR, AND CONSEQUENCES

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a polite and courteous manner, respecting the rights and privileges of all members of the school community. The following reflects the expectations to which our students will be held:

Academic Dishonesty:

1. **Cheating:** Dishonesty while completing school work and/or homework, plagiarism, and/or falsifying or altering records. Teachers will be involved in developing academic consequences.
2. **Forgery:** The act of falsely using, in writing, the name of another person or falsifying time, dates, grades, addresses, or other data on school forms.
3. **Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a serious form of cheating. Using another person's words, ideas or thoughts without giving credit to the author is considered plagiarism whether you express those ideas in your words or directly quote the source. Examples of plagiarism include the following: direct copying of text from a book, article, Internet resource, or another student's work; claiming ideas from a book, article, or electronic resource as your own or including these ideas in your work without proper citation; use of a unique term or concept from a book, article, electronic resource, or another student's work without proper citation; use of false data or citations; submission of a paper or project for more than one class without approval of both teachers.

Guidelines and expectations for student behavior and decision-making:

4. **Prompt and regular attendance.** Students must be in homerooms by 7:40 a.m.
5. **Electronics violation:** The use of smartphones and cellular phones to text and make personal calls is prohibited during the school day. If students need to contact parents/guardians or vice versa, this should be coordinated through the main office. The school is not responsible for maintaining the whereabouts of personal belongings, nor can we ensure that student lockers are safe to store any/all materials.
6. **Interference with the Educational Process:** Conduct, behavior and attire which materially and substantially disrupt the educational process, including the use or display of obscene, suggestive, profane language or gestures advocating disruptive or illegal activity.
7. **Off-program:** An instance in which a student is in an area where he/she is not authorized or scheduled to be and/or leaves school grounds without permission.
8. **Insubordination:** The willful failure to respond or carry out a reasonable directive by authorized school personnel.
9. **Discriminatory Acts:** Any act, verbal or written, directed toward a person that promotes negative stereotyping, degrades, or flagrantly demeans any individual. School officials will immediately consider and use regular administrative actions to diffuse a civil rights situation wherever possible, and legal remedies may be pursued to protect civil rights.
10. **Vandalism/Criminal Damage:** The act of intentional destruction of property belonging to others. This shall also include tampering with or causing the discharge of any sprinkler system or other apparatus installed in a school building for the prevention of fire or for the safety of the school population or school property.
11. **Assault:** Any willful attempt or threat to inflict injury that would give the victim reason to fear or expect immediate bodily harm.
12. **Fighting:** Any instance where two or more members of the student population engage in a combative physical situation (pushing/slapping/holding/punching/kicking, etc.) in anger, aggression, or frustration is prohibited. Students who engage in such an act are equally responsible for the fight.
13. **Weapons:** Knives, blades, guns, tazers, clubs, etc are prohibited at all times. Please note that a physical object (pen/pencil) will be considered a weapon if used as such.
14. **Bullying:** The act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through verbal, physical, mental, or written interactions over a period of time. Typically there are differences in the social capital between those involved. Please refer to the district's bullying policy for additional clarification.
15. **Tobacco and alcohol possession:** Possession by minors of cigarettes, smoking materials, smokeless tobacco, alcohol, drugs, or other items is illegal by Massachusetts State Law.

- a. **Students under the influence or in possession of these items** or who arrange to exchange, share, sell, or purchase these items shall be subject to suspension, police involvement, and possible expulsion, according Massachusetts State Law.

16. **Trick pens/buzzers/electronic buzzing items:** These ‘gag’ items are not allowed on school grounds at any time.
17. **Inciting Others to Violence or Disobedience:** By words, acts, or deeds, giving encouragement to demonstrations or protests which disrupt the normal educational process of the school.
18. **Hazing:** Any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether own public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Please refer to the district’s Anti-hazing policy in the rear of this book.
19. **Stealing:** Taking another member of the community’s personal possessions into one’s on care without their approval is considered stealing and is prohibited. Students should not touch or remove anything from a teacher’s desk without direct permission.
20. **Gum chewing or consumption of coffee and/or caffeinated energy drinks, tea,** etc. are not permitted by students at any time. Drinking water is acceptable.
21. **Selling any items** (baked goods, etc) during school without approval of the administration.
22. **Gambling** of any type is prohibited.
23. **Matches, lighters, smoke and stink bombs, firecrackers, paint balls, water pistols, and other inappropriate** items are not allowed in the school building or on the school grounds.
24. **Snowball throwing** is not allowed on school property.
25. **Abusive or offensive language** (including but not limited to swearing) is not allowed on school property (including the school bus).
26. **Truancy:** Truancy is an absence from school for the entire day or any part of it for reasons other than illness and without prior permission from the school and from parents. If a parent does not call to excuse a student’s absence, the school nurse will call parents to determine whether or not the student has parental permission to miss school
27. **Vandalism:** Defacing/destruction of school property or personal property is prohibited at all times.

***This list is not exhaustive.

Note: All rules and regulations stipulated in this handbook also apply to all extracurricular activities and school-based transportation.

BULLYING

We do not tolerate bullying at Miles River Middle School. If you feel that you or a friend have been targeted, please speak to a trusted adult such as the Principal, Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, or a teacher immediately so that the proper actions can be taken to help you during this difficult time. Be assured that prompt attention will be given to matters of this nature.

Bullying can be distinguished from other kinds of aggression between students in a number of ways, but most obviously by the following: (1) the negative behaviors are intentionally targeted at a specific individual (it isn’t an accident that this incident happened); (2) the repetitive nature of bullying, and (3) the power imbalance between the students.

Our school and district has adopted the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program. For more information, please visit <http://www.violencepreventionworks.org/public/index.page>.

See Appendix B of this handbook for the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Bullying Policy.

DRESS CODE

Attire can influence behavior in a positive way and set the tone for order and a positive school experience. Proper attire helps students focus on learning because their attention is not drawn away from the work at hand. The following guidelines may be

useful in helping students and parents to determine school attire, which may be improper, distracting, or disruptive to the educational process. Students who wear any of the following may be found in violation of this dress code.

- Clothing which displays alcohol, drugs, tobacco, violence, nudity, or has a sexual connotation. Also, clothing on which improper language or pictures is printed will not be permitted.
- Outdoor clothing, including hats and hoods, during the usual course of the school day, except when coming or going out of the building.
- Any clothing which might be too revealing or clothing which is worn improperly so that it might be too revealing. Examples: tank tops, tops which expose one's midriff, backless shirts or tops, thin straps on shirts, very brief shorts or skirts, or pants worn so low that they are too revealing. As a general rule of thumb, shorts and skirts should fall at the mid-thigh point or below.
- Any accessories, devices, or objects which may cause or inflict bodily harm. Examples: jewelry which could be used as a weapon such as chains, spike jewelry, neck chains, wallet chains, safety pins, and gloves.
- Excessively torn or ripped garments.
- Spandex, sheer material, bathing trunks, halter tops, or pajamas.
- Shoes or sneakers will be worn at all times in school. Sneakers with wheels are not allowed on school grounds.

Before coming to school, we hope that each student will consider his or her attire and dress appropriately and neatly. This dress code is also in effect for all school sponsored events. If you are in doubt about whether the outfit you have chosen is appropriate, please be sure to bring a change of clothes or something with which to cover-up.

You should also know that it would be impossible to list all situations that may arise regarding a dress code. It will remain for the Principal or the Assistant Principal to be the final judge on what is or is not appropriate attire for students at the Middle School.

Students in violation of the dress code will receive the following progressive consequences: Please note that if a student grossly violates the dress code, immediate and appropriate action can be taken.

1st Offense: Verbal Warning. Student must call home for a change of clothes if he or she does not have something appropriate to change into at school.

2nd Offense: Parent Notification. Parents will be informed with a letter that their child is in violation of the dress code for a second time. The student will bring this letter home to their parents and must return it with their signature the following day.

3rd and Every Subsequent Offense: Disciplinary Action. Students who continue to violate the dress code will result in detentions, behavior contracts, and/or social events restrictions as determined by administration.

BUS RULES

In order to insure that safety rules are strictly enforced, the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District Committee approved the following policy. We ask that you review these safety rules and cooperate with the bus drivers.

1. Each pupil shall be seated immediately upon entering the bus in the place assigned by the driver, if such assignments have been made.
2. Pupils must remain seated during the trip.
3. Students will be respectful and courteous at all times.
4. No windows or doors will be opened or closed except by permission of the driver.
5. No students shall enter or leave the bus until it has come to a full stop and the driver has opened the door.
6. Students are to obey the directions of the bus driver at all times.
7. No tobacco products/materials are allowed on the bus or at the bus stop.
8. There is to be no lighting of matches or smoking on the bus.
9. Students shall not put their hands or their heads out of the windows.
10. Students are responsible to arrive at the bus stop on time – (5 minutes prior to scheduled pickup).
11. Students are to keep the bus neat and clean.
12. Students who are responsible for damage done to a bus will pay for repairs.
13. Students are required to give their correct name and address when requested by the driver.

14. If a student must cross the street in order to enter a bus stop, that student must make eye contact with the driver before crossing the road so that the driver can acknowledge that the conditions are safe to cross. Crossing the street must be done in front of the bus.
15. There is to be no eating or drinking on the bus.
16. No animals are allowed on the bus.
17. The bus-stop and bus travel is considered an extension of the school grounds.

The school bus drivers will deal with minor first offenses with a verbal warning and perhaps a change in seat assignment. Subsequent offenses will be referred in writing to the appropriate building administrator. The building administrator will meet with the student and apply appropriate consequences based on the seriousness of the infraction and in consideration of previous infractions and circumstances.

Please note that transportation is a service, not a requirement, of the HWRSD. If students violate expected behaviors suspension or exclusion from transportation services could result. Please note that any incident that occurs on the bus could also result in additional sanctions.

DANCE RULES

1. All students must purchase a ticket in school during the school day. No tickets will be sold at the door. Late arrivals to the dance must bring a note from home to the Principal, Assistant Principal, the Student Council Advisor, or another adult in charge.
2. Any student absent from school on the day of the dance will not be permitted to attend the dance.
3. Students not enrolled at our Middle School are not allowed at the dance. You and your guest will be asked to leave. Please see the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Student Council Advisor with any questions regarding this rule.
4. Any student who is on social probation for behavior will not be allowed to attend.
5. Students will not be permitted to leave the building until the end of the dance, except if parents arrive to pick them up or with the express permission from the Principal, Assistant Principal, Student Council Advisor, or another adult in charge. Students should arrange for transportation home promptly at the end of the dance.
6. Dances are school events, and rules for proper behavior apply.
7. Appropriate dress is required. Proper foot apparel must be worn within the building. If in doubt about this rule, seek advice from the Principal, Assistant Principal, or Student Council Advisor.
8. All refreshments will be confined to designated areas.
9. Possession, transportation, sale, attempted sale, or consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and/or controlled substances is prohibited.

CAFETERIA GUIDELINES

- You should sit at your assigned table. Students have the opportunity to self-select a table to which they will be “assigned” a few times during the school year.
- Assume responsibility for the table at which you are seated.
- You should leave seat only ...
 1. To request permission of lunch duty teachers to use the restroom
 2. To clear off table
- Form a single line to buy food. DO NOT CUT IN LINE.
- The only restrooms that may be used during the lunch period are located in the Gym hallway.
- You may not return to the classroom hallways for any reason.
- ALWAYS BRING YOUR COAT. When in doubt...assume we’re going out!
- Clear table and surrounding floor area of trays and waste materials and dispose of them in the barrels provided. A broom, dust pan and brush, and damp cloth are available at the kitchen end of the cafeteria to clean a table and/or floor area when necessary.
- You will be dismissed for recess after you have cleaned your table and the surrounding area. Students should raise their hands to indicate that they are prepared to be dismissed.

- Recess equipment (i.e. balls, etc.) is available for students during recess. Please be responsible and return the equipment that you borrow. Recess equipment is not to be used after school hours.
- You may not leave the cafeteria to visit a teacher's classroom without a pass. Please do not forget to obtain and bring your pass prior to the start of the lunch period.

CORRIDOR RULES AND PASSES

With the exception of when they are passing between classes, students should have a hall pass from their teacher. When changing classes, you are expected to be on time for the next class. If you are late to any class for a valid reason, you should have a pass from the person who prevented you from being on time. Please observe the following while in hallways and stairwells:

1. No running at any time.
2. No shoving, pushing, playing or roughhousing.
3. No shouting, yelling or abusive language.
4. No banging, slamming, or kicking of locker doors.
5. Students must have a pass to go to the bathroom, nurse's office, library, or main office.

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District is pleased to offer our students limited access to the World Wide Web on the Internet in order to enhance our delivery of educational content. Our goal in providing this service to students is to promote educational excellence in the District by facilitating resource sharing and improving access to educational information. Use of the District's networking facilities is limited to educational and career activities for students but has not been established as a public access service or a public forum.

With access to computers all over the world also comes the availability of material that may not be considered to be of educational value in the context of the school setting. The District will make every reasonable effort to restrict access to controversial materials; however, on a global network it is impossible to prevent an industrious user from discovering questionable content. We firmly believe that the valuable information available on this worldwide network far outweighs the possibility that users may procure material that is not consistent with our educational goals. We encourage parents and guardians to assist us in reinforcing appropriate usage and standards for your children.

It is our expectation that students' use of the Internet will conform to the District's general standards and rules for behavior as outlined in the Student Handbook. Individual students must be responsible for their own actions in navigating the Internet, and must realize that their access to this resource may be revoked, with due process, for violation of the Acceptable Use Policy.

Complete copies of our Acceptable Use Policies are available in the main office and in Appendix C of this handbook. Students will also receive individual copies of these policies during the first week of each school year.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District, we strive to foster the growth of learning within a safe and caring climate. We believe it is important to nurture a sense of cooperation, mutual respect, and individual responsibility. We expect all members of the school community to treat each other with courtesy and respect. It is the purpose of the following policy to prohibit comments or conduct of a sexual nature where such behavior creates an intimidating, humiliating, or hostile learning environment.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Under the Massachusetts law on fair educational practices (Chapter 151 C of the Mass. General Laws), the term sexual harassment is defined as:

Any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges, or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement or
2. such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment is defined for student-to-student interactions as unwelcome sexual advances; requests for favors; and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is defined for adult/student interactions as any sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

1. **Verbal behaviors** such as unwanted: sexual or lewd comments, suggestions, jokes, innuendoes, offensive name calling, offensive sounds such as whistling or making kissing sounds or talking about or calling attention to another's gender or sexuality in a negative or embarrassing way spreading sexual rumors, writing sexual graffiti.
2. **Nonverbal behaviors** such as unwanted: suggestive look or leering, staring, facial expressions and gestures, blocking a person's path, following a person, laughing at a person who is being harassed or displaying nude or sexual pictures, cartoons or calendars.
3. **Physical behavior** such as unwanted: pats, squeezes, touching a person's clothing, hair or body, pinching, brushing against another's body, and forced physical contact of any kind.

Sexual harassment is also defined as: conduct of a sexual nature which affects an individual's employment, academic status, or progress; conduct of a sexual nature which has a negative impact on an individual's work or academic performance; conduct of a sexual nature which creates a work or educational environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive or which affects benefits, services, honors, programs, or activities available to an individual in the educational setting.

To address these issues, the Middle School has a set of Guidelines for Sexual Harassment Procedures which includes "Examples of Conduct That Can Constitute Unlawful Sexual Harassment and Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures".

The Guidelines guarantee confidential support for the harassed individual, and detailed descriptions are available from the Principal, Assistant Principal, or any staff member.

BEHAVIORAL CONSEQUENCES

DETENTIONS

A teacher detention or an office detention may be assigned for unacceptable student behavior. Students should fully understand that any teacher in the building has the authority to correct misconduct at any time. Students will be required to serve the detention within 24 hours of the behavior infraction, or on the date assigned by either the teacher or the administration.

- If a teacher detention is skipped, the student will be required to make it up with the assigning teacher and will receive an additional day of detention in the office as well.
- A student who is absent from school on the day of the assigned detention is required to attend detention on the next scheduled detention day.

There are three types of detentions that may be given when a student is referred to the office for violating a rule: Lunch Detentions, Teacher Detentions, and After-School Office Detentions.

TEACHER DETENTIONS

This type of detention is given when a student breaks a class rule, disrupts class, or does not complete classwork or homework. Teacher detentions are served in the assigning teacher's classroom during a student's scheduled lunch/recess period or after-school.

LUNCH DETENTIONS

This type of detention is given when a student breaks a school or class rule, and has been referred to the office. Lunch detentions are served in the main office during a student's scheduled lunch/recess period. If a student needs to buy a lunch from the cafeteria, he or she has permission to move to the front of the line and make a purchase before reporting to the office. A teacher may also assign a lunch detention in his or her own classroom.

AFTER-SCHOOL OFFICE DETENTIONS

This type of detention is also given when a student breaks a school or class rule and has been referred to the office. Detentions are held on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays and begin promptly at 2:25 p.m. and last until 3:00 p.m. Students will be required to serve the detention within 24 hours of the behavior infraction, or on the date assigned by or the administration. **After-school office detentions take priority over any other extra-curricular activity.**

BEHAVIORAL CONTRACTS

Students who are referred for behavioral misconduct may be required to sign a Behavioral Contract. Contracts are formulated by the administration and student after a pattern of behavior becomes evident. The consequences for inappropriate behavior are clearly outlined in the contract.

FIELD TRIP EXCLUSION

These criteria were developed by teachers, parents, and administrators, and provide clear expectations for students, teachers and families. We ask that parents explain these expectations to their children and support our decisions.

Students and families will be informed if field trip exclusion is to be recommended. The teachers will decide if a probationary period will be provided. This probationary period will be an opportunity for the students to significantly amend unacceptable behaviors. Collectively, the teachers will assess possible field trip exclusion, and recommendations will be made to the administration. Field trip exclusion will be determined separately for each trip.

As you read the following criteria, please note the use of the word "pattern". Continuation of one or more of these serious infractions will determine field trip exclusion.

CRITERIA FOR FIELD TRIP EXCLUSION

- A pattern of unsafe behavior such as fighting, victimization, or truancy
- Substance use
- A pattern of behavior that demonstrates poor judgment/decision-making
- A pattern of inability to learn from mistakes
- Misbehavior on previous field trips
- Missing excessive school work for unexcused reasons
- Destructive behavior towards personal or school property

Students who are excluded from a field trip will be provided with an assignment that covers the content of the field trip.

SOCIAL PROBATION

This consequence may be used as an alternative or additional consequence as determined by the administration. Examples may include non-admittance to social or after-school events such as sports, dances, school clubs, and field trips. The length of the social probation is determined by the severity of the offense and may run any period of time from one week to the remainder of the school year. Any student who has been placed on suspension is subject to being placed on social probation by the administration.

INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL SUSPENSION

Based on the severity of the infraction, students may be internally suspended from school or externally suspended from school.

Students will be allowed to complete the work they missed (or an alternate assignment with an equal point value) during an out-of-school suspension. It is the responsibility of the student, and not the teacher, to initiate this process. Students should take the following steps to ensure that he/she receives credit for missed work:

- The student must approach the teacher to obtain missing assignments on the day he/she returns to school
- The student should also consult his/her study buddy to determine what he/she missed.
- The student has only the number of days that he/she was suspended to complete the missing assignments and turn them in to his/her teachers. For example, if a student was suspended for 1 day, he/she has 1 day to complete the missed work. If a student was suspended for 2 days, he/she has 2 days to complete the missed work. If a student was suspended for 5 days, he/she has 5 days to complete the missed work, etc.
- Any long-term assignments due during a suspension must be submitted to the teacher on the deadline originally assigned. Assignments due during a suspension period may be turned in at the main office by the student's parent or guardian.

The following is a representative list of offenses that may lead to suspension from school. Suspension offenses are not limited only to the behaviors listed below. The length of the suspension, from 1-10 days, will depend on the severity of the offense and previous discipline record. In addition, the student may be responsible for monetary restitution, depending on the infraction.

- Assault (on student or staff)
- Cheating/Plagiarism
- Cutting Class
- Disruption of the Educational Process
- Disrespectful Behavior
- Profanity
- Fighting
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Insubordination
- Out of Bounds/Off-program
- Possession of Drugs, Alcohol, and Weapons
- Serious or Repeated Classroom Discipline Problems
- Theft
- Threatening a Student or Staff Member
- Weapons violation
- Vandalism
- Violation of Acceptable Use Policy

Massachusetts General Law Chapter 71, Section 37H ½

The Principal may suspend a student upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony, or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, if the Principal believes that the student's continued presence in school would have a detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student will be provided written notification of the charges and the reasons for the suspension prior to the implementation of the suspension. The student may appeal the suspension to the Superintendent within five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the request for appeal. At the hearing the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behavior and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall issue a decision within five calendar days of the hearing. The Superintendent's decision shall be final and binding

EXPULSION

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H:

(A) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a

controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

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

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

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b); provided, however, that any principal who decides that said student should be suspended shall state in writing to the school committee his reasons for choosing the suspension instead of the expulsion as the most appropriate remedy. In this statement, the principal shall represent that, in his opinion, the continued presence of this student in the school will not pose a threat to the safety, security and welfare of the other students and staff in the school.

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

(E) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such student or to provide educational services to said student. If said student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of the school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion.

DISCIPLINE and CONSEQUENCES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS

The Individual Education Plan of each special education student indicates whether that student is expected to follow the regular discipline code for his/her school and, if not, how the code will be modified. In addition, there are state and federal guidelines which govern how disciplinary consequences must be handled for a student with identified special needs or a student who is suspected of having a disability. These guidelines apply particularly to situations which involve suspension, consideration of exclusion, or other consequences which result in the removal of the student from the program as described in his/her IEP. Within the guidelines of the school's discipline code (as modified, if needed), a special education student may be suspended from school for up to a maximum of ten (10) school days in a given year. An accumulated total exceeding 10 school days is considered to be a *change in placement*, and only an approved IEP can effect a change in the special education student's educational program. It is the policy of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District to respond to repeated disciplinary episodes involving special needs students on a proactive basis and, whenever possible, to reconvene the Team well before the limit of ten (10) days out of school has been reached.

APPENDICES

A: Anti-Hazing Policy

B: Religious Observance Policy

C: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

D: Acceptable Use Policy

E: Sexual Harassment Policy

APPENDICE A: District Anti-Hazing Policy

HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing, as defined herein, shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment.

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

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

Each such group team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams or organizations and to notify each full time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such report. Added by St.1985, c.536; amended by St.1987, c.665.

Appendix B : Religious Observance Policy

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES:

I Policy

The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School Committee recognizes that certain religious observances occur during the school year. Students and staff will be encouraged to appreciate, accept, and honor ethnic, religious and cultural diversity and be respectful of the beliefs and practices of others. It is within this framework, that the following is adopted:

A. Students and staff will be marked as “present” on the days they observe their religious holidays. Students must have a letter from their parent/guardian informing the principal of the student’s absence due to religious observances; staff members must complete and submit the District “Request for Leave” noting “religious observance” to his/her principal by the 10th working day of the new school year.

B. With respect to make-up work or homework, quizzes, exams, major projects or papers, it is the student’s responsibility to see his/her teachers the day he/she returns to school to find out what assignments are due. Elementary and middle school students are allowed a number of days to make up assignments equivalent to the number of days absent (e.g., if absent on Monday, then assignments are due on Wednesday; if absent on Monday and Tuesday, assignments are due on Friday). High school students will follow the “attendance/make-up policy” in the approved High School Handbook.

C. The District will make reasonable efforts not to schedule special events the night before, during or after school that would interfere with a person's ability to participate because of that person's religious observance. The Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District will encourage consideration of this policy in inter-league sports scheduling.

D. By June 1, the Superintendent shall provide teachers and staff with a list of religious holidays most commonly observed by members of the Hamilton-Wenham community for the following school year.

II. Policy Review and Revision

Review and revision of these policies and procedures shall occur as needed, but at least every two years.

Originally Adopted: June 17, 2010

Policy Review: May 9, 2012

Approved: May 21, 2012

Vote: 7-2-0

Chairman, HWRSD School Committee: Alexa McCloughan Original signature on file in Supt.'s Office

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Appendix C: Anti- Bullying Policy

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION

On May 3, 2010 Governor Patrick signed an *Act Relative to Bullying in Schools*. This new law prohibits bullying and retaliation in all public and private schools, and requires schools and school districts to take certain steps to address bullying incidents. Parts of the law (M.G.L c. 71, § 370) that are important for students and parents or guardians to know are described below.

These requirements are included in the district's Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan ("the Plan"). The Plan includes the requirements of the new law, and also information about the policies and procedures that the school or school district will follow to prevent bullying and retaliation, or to respond to it when it occurs

Definitions

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

Bullying is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Bullying includes cyberbullying.

Cyberbullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to,

email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation is directed.

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

Prohibition Against Bullying

Bullying is prohibited:

- on school grounds,
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds,
- at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program, whether it takes place on or off school grounds,
- at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device that is owned, leased or used by a school district or school (for example, on a school computer or over the Internet using a school computer),
- at any program or location that is not school-related, or through the use of personal technology or electronic devices, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the target, infringes on the rights of the target at school, or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

Reporting Bullying

Anyone, including a parent or guardian, student, or school staff member, can report bullying or retaliation. Reports can be made in writing or orally to the principal or another staff member, or reports may be made anonymously. Please refer to the entire Bullying Plan contained in this handbook for reporting procedures and contact information.

School staff members must report immediately to the principal or his/her designee if they witness or become aware of bullying or retaliation. Staff members include, but are not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessionals.

When the school principal or his/her designee receives a report, he or she shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, he or she shall (i) notify the parents or guardians of the target, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; (ii) notify the parents or guardians of the aggressor; (iii) take appropriate disciplinary action; and (iv) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Professional Development for School and District Staff

Schools and districts must provide ongoing professional development to increase the skills of all staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

The content of such professional development is to include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Appendix D: District Student Acceptable Use Policy

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY - TECHNOLOGY

I. Policy

A. Purpose

The purpose of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District (HWRSD) network and technology resources is to prepare students for success in life and work by providing access to a wide range of information and the ability to communicate with others. The network and technology resources will be used to increase communication (staff, parent, and student), enhance productivity, and assist staff and students in constructing learning environments, upgrading existing skills and acquiring new skills through a broader exchange of information. In order to accomplish this mission the HWRSD establishes this Acceptable Use Policy for current and future technologies.

B. Availability

Access to the network is a privilege, not a right. Prior to accessing the network all users shall be required to acknowledge receipt and understanding of all administrative regulations and procedures governing use of the system and shall agree in writing to comply with such regulations and procedures. Noncompliance with applicable regulations and procedures may result in suspension or termination of user privileges and/or other disciplinary actions consistent with the policies of HWRSD. Violations of law may result in criminal prosecution as well as disciplinary action by the HWRSD.

C. Acceptable Use

The Superintendent or designees shall develop and implement administrative regulations, procedures, and user agreements consistent with the purposes and mission of the HWRSD as well as with law and policy governing copyright.

D. Monitored Use

The Superintendent or designees shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's network and technology resources for instructional and administrative purposes. Access to the system/network, including external networks, shall be made available to employees and students for instructional and administrative purposes only in accordance with administrative regulations and procedures. As a condition of use, staff and students waive any right to privacy in anything they create, store, send, disseminate or receive via the district's technology.

The HWRSD has the authority and the right but not the duty to monitor all aspects of its technology, including, but not limited to, monitoring computer and Internet activity of any system user.

Electronic mail transmissions and other uses of electronic resources by students and employees shall not be considered confidential and may be monitored at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional and administrative purposes. Under the Public Records Law electronic mail transmissions and other uses of electronic resources by district employees may be considered public records.

Internet activities will be monitored by school personnel to ensure users are not accessing inappropriate

(obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful) sites.

HWRSD Acceptable Use Policy Page 2 of 4

E. Liability

The HWRSD shall not be liable for users' inappropriate use of electronic resources or violations of copyright restrictions, users' mistakes or negligence, or costs incurred by users. The Hamilton-Wenham

Regional School District is not responsible for losses or illegal tampering sustained by users of the computer networks, including loss of data or interruption of service. It is highly recommended that the user make a backup copy of all information. The HWRSD shall not be responsible for ensuring the accuracy or usability of any information found on external networks.

F. Administrative Regulations and Procedures

1. The district will provide each user a copy of the Acceptable Use Policy and Administrative Regulations and Procedures.
2. Access will be granted to employees with a signed access agreement and permission of their supervisor.
3. Access will be granted to students with a signed access agreement and permission of the building administrator or designees.
4. Passwords shall be changed a minimum of once a year.
5. Passwords are confidential. All passwords shall be protected by the user and not shared or displayed.
6. Principals or their designees will be responsible for disseminating and enforcing policies and procedures in the building(s) under their control.
7. Principals or their designees will ensure that all users complete and sign an agreement to abide by policies and procedures regarding use of the system/network. All such agreements are to be maintained at the building level.
8. Principals or their designees shall be authorized to monitor or examine all system activities, including electronic mail transmissions, as deemed appropriate to ensure proper use of electronic resources.
9. Individual users shall, at all times, be responsible for the proper use of accounts issued in their name.
10. System users shall not use another user's account.
11. The system/network may not be used for illegal purposes, in support of illegal activities, or for any activity prohibited by district policy.
12. Commercial use of the system/network is prohibited.
13. The school's plagiarism policy applies to electronic materials found on the Internet.
14. System users may redistribute copyrighted/fair use material only in accordance with applicable copyright/fair use laws, district policy, and administrative procedures.

15. System users may request that the technology staff upload/download public domain programs to the system/network. Technology staff is responsible for determining if a program is in the public domain.
16. Copyrighted software or data shall not be installed on the district system/network without permission from the holder of the copyright and the technology staff. Users are not permitted to install software not licensed to the district.
17. System users are not permitted to download executable software files such as Mp3 or music files, video files, Quicktime movie trailers, Instant Messenger Software, games, etc. unless justified and approved by the technology staff.
18. Adding unauthorized computers, servers or other devices to the network is prohibited. This does not include devices used temporarily to offload personal files.
19. Instant messaging and other similar devices may only be used for approved personal use or educational purposes.
20. Student use of personal technologies, such as cell phones, iPods, or MP3 players, may only be used for approved personal use or educational purposes.
21. Any attempt to alter, harm or destroy equipment, materials, data, or programs is prohibited.
22. Deliberate attempts to degrade or disrupt system performance may be viewed as violations of district policy and/or as criminal activity under applicable state and federal laws. This includes, but is not limited to, the uploading or creation of malware.
23. Vandalism such as knowingly transferring any type of malware or destroying other people's computer files on school technology may result in the cancellation of system privileges and will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software, and system restoration.
24. Attempts to read, delete, copy, or modify the electronic mail of other users or to interfere with the ability of other users to send/receive electronic mail is prohibited.
25. Posting, transmitting or viewing inappropriate (obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening or disrespectful) language or material is prohibited.
26. System users will not use the network/system to harass another person. If users are asked by a person to stop sending those messages, they must stop.
27. System users will not knowingly or recklessly post personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks, false or defamatory information about a person or organization on the network/system.
28. Pretending to be someone else when sending/receiving message is prohibited.
29. Revealing another person's personal information (addresses, phone numbers, etc.) or accessing personal information sites is prohibited.
30. System users must immediately notify the technology staff or designees, if they have identified a possible security problem.
31. If a system user mistakenly accesses inappropriate information, he/she should immediately notify the technology staff or designees.

The District reserves the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion from school, for violations of this policy.

Additionally, all handbook regulations apply to the use of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District network and technologies. In the event that there is a claim that a student/staff person has violated any of the guidelines in this policy, the student/staff person will be provided with notice of the suspected violation and an opportunity to be heard. The District will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District network and technologies. The district will cooperate fully

with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation concerning or relating to misuse of the district's network and technology resources.

Appendix E: Sexual Harassment Policy

Consistent with the philosophy and objectives of the Hamilton-Wenham Regional School District, we strive to foster the growth of learning within a safe and caring climate. We believe it is important to nurture a sense of cooperation, mutual respect, and individual responsibility. We expect all members of the school community to treat each other with courtesy and respect. It is the purpose of the following policy to prohibit comments or conduct of a sexual nature where such behavior creates an intimidating, humiliating, or hostile learning environment.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination. Under the Massachusetts law on fair educational practices (Chapter 151 C of the Mass. General Laws), the term sexual harassment is defined as:

Any sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

3. submission to or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges, or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement or
4. such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive educational environment.

Sexual harassment is defined for student-to-student interactions as unwelcome sexual advances; requests for favors; and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment is defined for adult/student interactions as any sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

4. **Verbal behaviors** such as unwanted: sexual or lewd comments, suggestions, jokes, innuendoes, offensive name calling, offensive sounds such as whistling or making kissing sounds or talking about or calling attention to another's gender or sexuality in a negative or embarrassing way spreading sexual rumors, writing sexual graffiti.
5. **Nonverbal behaviors** such as unwanted: suggestive look or leering, staring, facial expressions and gestures, blocking a person's path, following a person, laughing at a person who is being harassed or displaying nude or sexual pictures, cartoons or calendars.
6. **Physical behavior** such as unwanted: pats, squeezes, touching a person's clothing, hair or body, pinching, brushing against another's body, and forced physical contact of any kind.

Sexual harassment is also defined as: conduct of a sexual nature which affects an individual's employment, academic status, or progress; conduct of a sexual nature which has a negative impact on an individual's work or academic performance; conduct of a sexual nature which creates a work or educational environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive or which affects benefits, services, honors, programs, or activities available to an individual in the educational setting.

To address these issues, the Middle School has a set of Guidelines for Sexual Harassment Procedures which includes “Examples of Conduct That Can Constitute Unlawful Sexual Harassment and Sexual Harassment Complaint Procedures”.

The Guidelines guarantee confidential support for the harassed individual, and detailed descriptions are available from the Principal, Assistant Principal, or any staff member.