



Nipmuc Regional High School  
Student Handbook  
2025-2026

Principals

John K. Clements  
Mary Anne Moran

Central Administration

Maureen Cohen, Superintendent  
Cheryl Kirkpatrick, Assistant Superintendent  
Frank Alves, Director of Student Support Services  
Ryan Robidoux, Director of Learning & Innovation  
Joseph Leacu, Director of Technology Operations  
Jay Byer, Director of Finance and Operations  
Laurie Petti, Director of Human Resources

Regional School Committee

Mendon

Erick Brown  
Sean Nicholson  
Kerry Laurence

Upton

James Forkey  
Matt Hagen  
Vikki Ludwigson

## NIPMUC FACULTY & STAFF

John K. Clements, Principal  
Mary Anne Moran, Principal  
Christopher Schmidt, Athletic Director

### ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS

Amy Buzzell - Administrative Assistant to the Principals  
Jennifer O'Brien – School Counseling Center  
Nicole Savickas – Main Office  
Amy Schmidt – Main Office

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Alison Clish

### BUSINESS/TECHNOLOGY

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Frank Wood

### CAREER, COMMUNITY, & INNOVATIONS COORDINATOR

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### DISTRICT DATA ADMINISTRATOR

Elizabeth Black

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Courtney Henry  
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Daniel MacIsaac  
Christine Manzella  
Matthew Merten

### HISTORY (cont.)

Brian Moloney

### INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

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Courtney Leja  
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### MUSIC

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Whitney Simmonds

### PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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### PLANT MAINTENANCE

Kenneth Choiniere – Director of Building/Grounds  
Scott Felper  
Kevin Hackenson  
Mike Pilla  
Ryan Rhodes  
Jeffrey Wheet  
Steve Young

### RETURN SUPPORT SERVICES

Rachel Robbins – Academic Coordinator

### SCIENCE

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James Gorman  
Kate Hiler  
Leesa Michael  
Robert Radtke  
Cari White

### SCHOOL COUNSELING

Ryan Capuzziello- School Adjustment Counselor/RSS  
Kerry Fagan - School Adjustment Counselor  
Meredith Hefez  
Kendra Swenson  
Allison Towne

### STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

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Lori Beaudoin  
Kailey Bisbee  
Gina Keniry  
Meghan Kirby

### STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES (cont.)

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Samantha Randall - School Psychologist  
Allison Wahlstrom

### TECHNOLOGY

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### WORLD LANGUAGE

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## NIPMUC'S BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

# NIPMUC REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING



We believe that each **LEARNER** is unique, inquisitive, and has the potential to be inspired by a true sense of purpose.

We believe **PEOPLE** learn best when they are known, valued, celebrated, and nurtured as individuals.

We believe **EDUCATORS** are facilitators of learning who embrace individual student passions and strengths when creating learning experiences that encourage inquiry, develop skills, and have relevance in today's world.

We believe the **COMMUNITY** is our classroom, encouraging and supporting authentic, enriching, and rewarding learning opportunities for all.

We believe in creating an authentic, welcoming, and collaborative **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT** where all members of the community are supported, engaged, and provided learning opportunities that challenge and excite them.

## NIPMUC'S DEFINITION OF LEARNING

Who? Everyone is a learner. Learning is not only for students or a select group of people.

What? Learning is an automatic and instinctive process. It involves seeking, acquiring, and applying knowledge and skills in a personally meaningful way. Learning is not all that complicated. It should not be confused with being able to produce the correct answer or earn the highest grade.

Where? Learning takes place in all aspects of our lives and extends beyond school subjects, assignments, and assessments. Learning occurs in communities where people make intentional efforts to understand and amplify each learner's strengths, interests, culture and identity. Learning does not only take place in schools or educational

institutions.

When? Learning can occur throughout all the minutes and moments of our lives. The conditions for learning are improved when people see themselves reflected in the curriculum, resources, culture, environment, and staff. Learning is not limited to the school day or year. Learning doesn't naturally occur without a personally meaningful context or in experiences that are unnaturally separated into disciplines.

Why? People learn to solve problems, gain insight into complex and diverse challenges, or improve an existing condition or situation. People learn because they are naturally curious, creative, competitive, and collaborative. Learning enables people not only to become more independent but also to become valued members of their communities. People do not learn to pass a test, to make it through the school day, to get a grade, to get into college, or to be the best.

How? Learning occurs by taking risks, trying new things, and reflecting on mistakes. Learning occurs when people make connections between their ideas and their world. Learning occurs when creating a meaningful and authentic product. Learning does not occur when simply memorizing facts and figures. It does not happen naturally through receiving, recording, and repeating information. Learning is limited by rigid thinking and the pursuit of a single right or safe answer.

## NIPMUC'S CALL TO ACTION

Being a learner in the modern world is exciting because students are presented with various opportunities to experience personally meaningful learning in a connected world. Modern learners have the chance to create and forge meaningful learning experiences and connect with the world around them. As educators, we have the capacity to help learners build a powerful personal narrative that can help them to be confident, capable, and happy in the world beyond school.

We recognize that the emergence of technology provides boundless access to information and opportunities to create, design, and invent. Technology also connects learners on a local and global level, to foster communication, collaboration, and creativity. Students now, more than ever, are equipped with the tools to innovate, reimagine their education, and serve as pioneers in both existing and new fields.

Preparing students for an unpredictable future requires a variety of knowledge, skills, and dispositions.

As global citizens, students must be able to demonstrate an understanding of others' needs and understand the value of a diversity of experiences, cultures, and perspectives.

As solution seekers, they need to be able to recognize obstacles, diagnose the issues that limit progress, apply strategies to address their concerns, and reflect on the effectiveness of their response.

As skillful collaborators, students will work effectively and respectfully with diverse teams in a variety of formats.

As inspired innovators, they need to be able to elaborate, refine, analyze, evaluate, and iterate their ideas in order to maximize their creative efforts.

As mindful learners, they need to be able to regulate their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors as they persist toward personal and learning goals.

As effective communicators, they must articulate and listen with attention to knowledge, values, attitudes, and intentions.

Although we recognize the changing realities of the modern world, there are current aspects of our professional work that remain important for the future of Nipmuc. We must continue to provide students with opportunities to be introduced to key content and knowledge needed to ignite their passions, broaden their understanding, and

develop cultural literacy. We also recognize that we need to continue to prepare our students to achieve in traditional forms of assessment that are valued by colleges and employers.

Because traditional achievement is only one measure of success, we must expand our definition to include moments of reflection, resilience, creativity, collaboration, experimentation, and inspiration.

As our world evolves, our professional practices must reflect and include opportunities to collaborate, reflect, innovate, and initiate. Students should be encouraged to seek novel approaches to learning. In addition, because each learner comes from unique circumstances, we recognize the importance of finding flexible solutions to meet each person’s diverse needs and strengths. As educators, we must continually reflect, review, and revise our professional work to make sure our work supports our definition of learning, beliefs about learning, and the vision of our graduates.

**MURSD PORTRAIT OF A LEARNER** Like other forward-thinking public school districts across the United States, Mendon-Upton Regional School District (MURSD) has created a Portrait of a Learner profile to answer the question: What are the skills necessary for success for all students in this rapidly changing, increasingly diverse, and interconnected world?



The Portrait of a Learner competencies ask MURSD students and staff members to look beyond the high-stakes testing environment and to develop skills and competencies needed to be successful in the world and in the workforce of the future. Alignment of this vision to resources, time, and professional practices will be necessary so all students may have opportunities to develop each aspect of the portrait to their fullest potential.

Click here to access the [MURSD's current strategic plan](#).

## MURSD 1:1 LEARNING PROGRAM

### Overview

The Mendon-Upton 1:1 Learning program ensures that all students use technology to communicate, collaborate, and innovate in their learning. We teach students to use technology responsibly and meaningfully, providing them with a competitive advantage for the challenges of the 21st century. Integrating technology into exemplary teaching and a high-quality curriculum ensures our students leave Mendon-Upton with the skills to create solutions for a rapidly changing, technologically rich, and culturally diverse world.

MURSD offers all students the opportunity to receive a district-issued iPad to meet these goals. The district assigns PreK -4 students an iPad that will stay in their classroom.

Students in Grades 5 - 12 can opt to receive a MURSD-issued iPad or bring one from home. All home-issued iPads must be a 6th generation or newer or an iPad Pro from home. We will ask students who bring devices from home to place their MURSD-issued Apple ID on the device while in school. Additionally, we ask all students using personal devices to install our Self Service app catalog to access MURSD-issued applications.

### Obtaining a MURSD iPad

We offer take-home MURSD iPads to students entering grade 5 or upon enrollment in the district. If a student wishes to switch from a personal iPad to a school-issued device, they may do so by having a caregiver complete the 1:1 Learning enrollment form at <https://tinyurl.com/MURSDiPads> or the QR code below.



Requests submitted after the 20th of August are not guaranteed to be fulfilled by the start of school.

If you have any questions, please contact Ryan Robidoux, Director of Learning and Innovation, via email at [rrobidoux@mursd.org](mailto:rrobidoux@mursd.org).

#### MURSD-issued iPad Terms of Use

MURSD issued devices are considered school equipment and subject to the same loaning guidelines as other school resources (eg. textbooks). Thus, students and their families are responsible for any repairs needed to the iPad due to any physical damage to the unit. Students and their families are also responsible for the total replacement costs of the iPad in the event of theft or other disappearance.

Additionally, students are responsible for returning all iPad charging cords, charging bricks, and cases during annual collections. A member of the technology team will review student submissions and invoice the family if there are any missing, incorrect, or damaged items during collection.

#### Repair & Replacement Process

If a device is damaged or lost, the student should visit the school's help desk or email [helpdesk@mursd.org](mailto:helpdesk@mursd.org) to report the issue.

- If the device is uninsured, a technology team member will issue your child a replacement device and send the broken iPad to Apple for repair and recirculation. We will send home an invoice of \$249, which is our repair costs from Apple. We understand that this unexpected expense can strain family budgets. The district will work with families to develop payment plans when needed.
- If the device is insured, we will provide the student with a temporary loaner device and send the broken iPad home. A family member should contact Securranty via the web or by phone to start the claim process and then ship out the device for repair as directed by the insurance company.

#### Insurance Information

To protect these devices from damage or theft, we recommend that families consider third-party options for an extended warranty or insurance coverage.

Families can find more information here <https://www.securranty.com/MURSD-Warranty>.

Please note MURSD does NOT have an insurance policy on school-issued devices.

#### Acknowledgments

In summation, by signing the 1:1 Learning enrollment form or a MURSD student handbook form, you acknowledge:

- You have reviewed the MURSD Acceptable Use Policy and agree to the terms of the document.



- As part of the program, your student will have the following accounts set up: a Managed Apple ID and Google Apps for Education ([mursd.org](http://mursd.org)).
- You are responsible for any repairs needed to the iPad in the event of any physical damage to the unit.
- You will complete the repairs through the MURSD help desk system or the pre-approved insurance program and not an alternative vendor.
- Uninsured repairs through Apple typically cost \$250
- You are responsible for total replacement costs to the iPad in the event of theft or other disappearance.
- If your student leaves the school district, the iPad and any accessories (case, charger, etc.) must be returned to the district in reasonable condition, or you must provide the full replacement cost of the device and/or accessories.

The use of technology in the classroom provides increased opportunities for students to communicate, collaborate, and innovate in their learning. Students are expected to have a charged iPad with them for each class. Students may also bring their own laptops or tablets for education purposes. Personal cell phones should not be used to support teaching and learning. Educators can determine if students are permitted to use their cell phones during instructional time.

## ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

The Mendon-Upton Regional School District (MURSD) offers Internet access at each school. The sole purpose of this Internet access is to support education and research by providing students and teachers with access to unique resources and an opportunity for collaborative work. All uses of MURSD's Internet access (like all other uses of MURSD's computer facilities) must be in support of and consistent with our educational objectives. All students who use MURSD's Internet access are expected to read these Guidelines and/or to take part in a discussion of the Guidelines with a teacher. Adherence to the Guidelines is a condition for a student's privilege of Internet access.

### The Internet

The Internet is a vast, global network, linking computers at universities, schools, laboratories, and other sites. Through the Internet, one can communicate with people all over the world through discussion forums and electronic mail. In addition, many educationally valuable files may be downloaded from the Internet. Because of its enormous size and resources, the Internet's educational potential is boundless. Because of its broad reach, however, the Internet also contains the potential for abuse. These Guidelines are intended to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner.

### Students' Individual Responsibility

All student use of the Internet is to be conducted under faculty supervision. Nevertheless, faculty members are not expected to monitor student use at every moment. Every student is expected to take individual responsibility for his or her appropriate use of the Internet.

### Levels of Student Access

Two levels of Internet access are provided through the MURSD:

1. Internet and World Wide Web. All students will have access to the Internet and World Wide Web, with teacher supervision, in classrooms, libraries, or laboratories. No individual account agreement is required. Before a student may access Internet and Web, however, he or she must be familiar with these Guidelines. Before students in Grades 9-12 will be authorized to access the Internet and World Wide Web, they will be asked to sign a statement stating that they have read the Guidelines and agree to adhere to them.

2. Individual email accounts: Individual email accounts may be provided by the School District to students to support classroom work. All emails will be monitored by the district and classroom teachers for compliance with this policy (See Section 5).

### Internet Access Is a Privilege

For both levels of access, Internet access through the MURSD is a privilege, not a right. School officials may cancel a student's access if this privilege is abused. Inappropriate conduct on the MURSD Internet access will also be subject to disciplinary action, in conformity with the MURSD Policy on Student Conduct and Discipline (which is published in school handbooks) and the disciplinary policies of individual schools.

### Administrators' Access to Student Files

Electronic mail transmission and other use of electronic resources by users shall not be considered confidential. Without limitation, all email files and other Internet files and records may be monitored, accessed, and examined at any time by designated staff to ensure appropriate use for instructional, educational, and administrative purposes, including the need to ensure that these Internet Guidelines are being adhered to. Administrators will also cooperate in providing access to student e-mail and Internet files and records to law enforcement authorities. Users should not assume that the use of the School District Internet access or email will be private.

### Personal Safety

The Internet is accessible to the public. Unfortunately, this includes people who want to make contact with students for inappropriate purposes or under false pretenses. The School District cannot screen the Internet for such inappropriate uses. Therefore, students must be cautious and prudent about supplying personal information and arranging personal meetings. In particular, students should never arrange a personal meeting with a person who was met online without their parents' or guardians' knowledge and approval. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any online communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing, or otherwise inappropriate.

### System Security and Resource Limits

Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are issued in order to ensure the security of the MURSD Public School computer system and to respect its resource limits. These include any downloading guidelines and virus protection procedures that may be issued.

### Network Etiquette

Students are expected to learn and to abide by generally accepted rules of Internet network etiquette, as well as rules of school decorum. These include common courtesy, politeness, and the avoidance of vulgar language.

### Unacceptable Uses

The following uses of the MURSD Internet access are unacceptable:

1. Posting private or personal information about another person.
2. Attempting to log in through another person's email account or to access another person's files.
3. Accessing or transmitting obscene or pornographic material.
4. Posting chain letters or engaging in "spamming." ("Spamming" means sending annoying or unnecessary messages to large numbers of people).
5. Engaging in sexual harassment. The MURSD Sexual Harassment Policy, which is included in the individual schools' handbooks, is applicable to Internet conduct.
6. Participating in any communications that facilitate the illegal sale or use of drugs or alcohol; that facilitate criminal gang activity; that threaten, incite hatred, intimidate, or harass any other person; or that violate any other laws.

7. Plagiarism. "Plagiarism" means the taking of material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own. The Nipmuc Regional High School policy on Plagiarism/cheating, which is included in the Nipmuc High School Student Handbook, is applicable to Nipmuc Regional High School students' use of the Internet.
8. Infringing copyrights. Copyright infringement occurs when a person inappropriately reproduces or transmits material that is protected by copyright. For example, most software is protected by copyright and may not be copied without the permission of the copyright owner.
9. Participating in commercial activities that are not directly related to the educational purposes of the MURSD.

#### Disclaimer of Liability

The MURSD disclaims all liability for the content of material that a student may access on the Internet, for any damages suffered in the course of or as a result of the student's Internet use, and for any other consequences of a student's Internet use.

#### Changes in the Guidelines

The MURSD reserves the right to change these guidelines at any time.

#### Inclusion Statement

May it be stated that the above guidelines apply to all individuals accessing the computer network. In addition to students, these users include all members of the faculty, staff, and volunteers. Because the privileges provided by the network encompass a wide circle of users, it is important that each individual realizes and respects the regulations.

#### Cell Phones

Any cellular telephone, tablet computer, personal computer, or internet enabled device that has access to the school network through a wired or wireless internet connection is subject to this acceptable use policy. Devices owned by the School District are subject to additional rules and regulations at the discretion of the School District administration.

All Internet access, whether on a school owned device or a personal device is monitored and recorded for compliance with this document and all applicable laws.

#### Electronic Media

Users may participate in online activities such as web page design, email, blogging, podcasting, video production, and social media. These activities are to be used only for educational purposes and in accordance with School District and individual school policies on online and print publishing.

## ACADEMIC INFORMATION AND POLICIES

### BELL SCHEDULE

## NIPMUC 2025-2026 BELL SCHEDULE

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4	DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7
7:30 - 8:34	A	F	D	B	G	E	C
8:34 - 8:51	GREEN WING BREAK						
8:54 - 9:58 (GREEN) 8:37 - 9:41 (BLUE)	B & BREAK	G & BREAK	E & BREAK	C & BREAK	A & BREAK	F & BREAK	D & BREAK
9:41 - 9:58	BLUE WING BREAK						
10:01 - 11:05	C	A	F	D	B	G	E
11:08 - 12:53 Lunch 1 11:08-11:33 Lunch 2 11:48-12:13 Lunch 3 12:28-12:53	D & LUNCH	B & LUNCH	G & LUNCH	E & LUNCH	C & LUNCH	A & LUNCH	F & LUNCH
12:56 - 2:00	E	C	A	F	D	B	G

### CREDITS

All students have the opportunity to earn 28 credits during their four years of high school. Students must earn 26 credits in order to meet the credit requirement for graduation.

Satisfactory completion of the work required in any course will entitle a student to the credits listed for that course. The minimum passing grade for all courses is 65. When the minimum passing grade (65) is met, full-year courses will be awarded 1.0 credit, and semester courses will be awarded 0.5 credits. Additionally, credits toward a Nipmuc Regional High School diploma can be earned by successful completion of courses taken in dual enrollment programs or pre-approved online courses.

Promotion is based upon the accumulation of credits during the year. The following minimum requirements must be satisfied to progress to subsequent grades.

*For entrance to Grade 10 ..... 6 credits*  
*For entrance to Grade 11 ..... 12 credits*  
*For entrance to Grade 12 ..... 19 credits*

**Credit Recovery:** If a student fails a required course, they may be eligible for summer school credit recovery. Eligibility is based on earning a final grade of 58–64 or receiving a teacher recommendation. If the student earns a 70 or higher in the credit recovery or summer school course, the original course grade on the transcript will be adjusted to a 65. Students who do not meet the criteria for summer school credit recovery will be required to repeat the course during the following school year. Summer school and credit recovery courses must be completed and grades submitted two weeks prior to the start of the school year to receive credit.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All students are required to take a common core of subjects, as follows:

English: 4 non-elective credits  
Mathematics: 3 credits  
Science: 3 credits  
History: 3 credits  
Physical Education/Health: 1 credit\*

The above-required courses must be completed satisfactorily in order to graduate regardless of the number of credits accumulated.

\*A waiver of the physical education requirement will be granted only for a medically documented reason.

Students planning to further their formal education beyond high school should research the admission requirements of the potential schools of interest as the college requirements may differ from the Nipmuc graduation requirements. It is advisable for parents or guardians to consult the school counseling department concerning choice of course of study as it relates to the future plans of the student.

## CURRICULUM

"Consistent with Massachusetts regulations (603 CMR 26.05(1)), the Mendon-Upton Regional School District, through its curricula and materials, encourages respect for the human and civil rights of all individuals, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation. In accordance with district guidelines, families may request information from the building principal on available accommodations related to curriculum content."

## COMPLETION OF WORK

Students must have completed all outstanding requirements by the conclusion of the last day of school for seniors in order to be eligible to participate in commencement exercises. If a student's work is incomplete at the end of the school day on the last day of school for seniors, that student will not be eligible to participate in the interfaith celebration, awards day, or the graduation ceremony. Students with incomplete grades will be allowed to participate in other senior events including the prom and the senior class trip.

Additionally, all grades for courses completed with another school, through an online or virtual academic provider, or through participation with any external educational institution whose credits are accepted in meeting a student's graduation requirement must be received by Nipmuc Regional High School no later than the seniors' last day of school. Any student whose grade remains incomplete after the seniors' last day of school – whether for personal, medical, or any other reasons – will not be eligible to participate in the interfaith celebration, awards day, or commencement exercises.

## HONOR ROLL

At the end of each marking period, an honor roll will be completed and published of those students who have successfully met the following academic requirements (no incompletes) and have a numerical grade of 80 or better in all subjects.

When the above requirements have been met, a student will achieve:

HIGH HONORS: If the overall average in all subjects is 90 or better.

HONORS: If the overall average in all subjects is between 85 and 90.

HONORABLE MENTION: If the overall average in all subjects is between 80 and 84.

## CLASS RANK

Students in the Class of 2026 are ranked, within their grade level, based on the major academic classes they select throughout their high school career. Grades recorded in each class are given quality points based on the points and credits assigned to each course level. The total quality points earned is the basis for the rank within the student's graduating class. Students in the Classes of 2027, 2028, and 2029 will not be individually ranked.

## INCOMPLETES

A student whose work is not complete at the end of a quarter will be required to make up all work. The student will be allowed five school days from the end of the term to make up incompletes. All work must be completed before the close of school at the end of the year. (See attendance policy) Extenuating circumstances may alter this policy.

Failure to complete work by the designated time may result in course failure and for seniors, exclusion from any senior activities including graduation.

## MAKE-UP WORK

If a student is tardy to school/class, they must meet with the teacher of the classes missed that day. If a student is absent from school for one day, they will be given 2 school days to make up the work. For any additional absences, the work will be made up at the discretion of the teacher. A student aware of a prolonged absence due to illness, hospitalization, etc., should contact the school counseling office to have work sent home so that they will not get too far behind in their studies. If a long-term assignment (paper, project, etc) is due on the day of the absence, it should be submitted prior to the trip or absence.

## EXTRA HELP SESSIONS

To ensure success, students are advised to carefully evaluate obligations at the beginning of each course. The use of help sessions is strongly advised. Extra help sessions are part of our school's desire to assist each student. Students are encouraged to contact their teachers in advance to set up extra help appointments. School Counseling services should be utilized if needed.

## TESTS

Students will not be required to take more than two major tests on the same day. However, it is the student's responsibility to notify the teacher(s) at the time a test is announced that there is a conflict. A two-day notice on all major tests will be given to students.

## ACADEMIC DISHONESTY - CHEATING & PLAGIARISM

Academic dishonesty (cheating & plagiarism) will not be tolerated. It casts a shadow of doubt on the credibility of

one's academic performance preceding the cheating incident and may have a direct effect on how people perceive you for consideration of future awards, honors, or letters of recommendation.

*Cheating* includes, but is not limited to, use of unauthorized papers during a quiz or exam (no matter what the content), copying from another student's paper during a quiz or exam, unauthorized access to old exams, or to an exam given to another section of the class, or the exam given to the class if you are taking it late for some reason, copying another student's homework assignments, using or turning in a photocopy of another student's assigned work, paying someone to write a paper or do an assignment for you, buying a term paper, using technology inappropriately (e.g. translators) or leaving a test or exam without permission or before turning in your paper.

*Plagiarism* includes copying any sentence or sentences verbatim from the reference source without using quotation marks and without providing a complete reference (author, date, source of material, volume, pages, etc.), or printing out an article directly from a computer database (such as Encarta or off the Internet) and turning it in as your own work. Students must read, synthesize, and write their own original sentences; learn to paraphrase. Even when paraphrasing, a complete reference must be provided to the paraphrased sentences. NEVER steal words directly from any source and present them as your own.

Students are responsible for doing their own work, even if they work together. If two assignments are turned in that show great similarity such that the instructor interprets it as evidence of cheating or plagiarism, both may be penalized. In cases of academic dishonesty, teachers will work with students to determine the appropriate response including such options as student-teacher conference, resubmitting the work, contacting parents/guardians, collaborating with administrators and/or school counselors, completing an alternative assignment, and/or losing partial or full credit for the assignment.

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

As enacted by the state legislature in the Education Reform Act of 1993, a school council shall be established in each school to advise the Principal in specific areas of school operation. The Principal, except as specifically defined in the law, shall have the responsibility for defining the composition of and forming the group pursuant to a representative process approved by the Superintendent and School Committee.

The following guidelines define the role of the school council:

The School Council shall meet regularly with the Principal of the school and shall assist in:

1. Assist the Principals in adopting appropriate goals consistent with the goals and standards, including student performance standards as established by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
2. Identification of the educational needs of the students attending the school.
3. Review of the school building budget.
4. Formulation of a school improvement plan that may be implemented only after review and approval by the Superintendent.

School Council Membership: Members of the school council shall include the principal(s), parents of students attending the school, teachers employed by the school, students (for high school councils only), and members of the community. Parent members will be chosen in elections held by the local parent-teacher organizations in each school, teachers will be selected by the teachers in each school, and community members who may include persons from municipal government, business, and labor organizations will be selected by the Principal. The council shall be broadly representative of the racial and ethnic diversity of the school and community.



## HEALTH & WELLNESS

### PHYSICALS

As required by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, documentation of a physical examination by the student's primary care provider is required of all tenth-grade students and upon transfer from another school district.

Student-athletes must pass a physical examination each year before participating in any sport. This must be done prior to the first practice session. No student-athlete will be issued equipment or participate in organized practice or scheduled games until they have given the school nurse or athletic director a current physical examination from their primary care provider. In order for an exam to be considered current and valid, it must be dated within 13 months of the date of any athletic involvement.

### MEDICATIONS

A written order from a licensed prescriber and parent/guardian consent is required for all prescription medication, supplements (herbal or other), and for any over-the-counter medication not covered by Standing Orders from our School Physician. These orders must be renewed annually. Students may not carry medications on their person with the exception of prescription inhalers, Epi-Pens, prescription medications and supplies to test and treat diabetes, and prescription enzyme supplements used to treat cystic fibrosis. Students carrying any medications, prescriptions, or over-the-counter, exclusive of the aforementioned exceptions, may be subject to disciplinary action.

## ATTENDANCE

### IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR ATTENDANCE

While Massachusetts requires all students between the ages of 6 and 16 to attend school ([G.L. c. 76, § 1](#)), Mendon-Upton Regional School District also recognizes that students who attend school regularly are more likely to have success in school and careers. [Research](#) supports the connection between regular attendance and a student's personal, social, and emotional wellness and academic success. When students are not present in school, they miss out on opportunities for social development and often struggle to make adequate academic progress; they may disengage from learning as they get further off-track and may even drop out of school. The impact of missing school is significant. We are committed to working with students and their parents/guardians to promote consistent student attendance and engagement in learning.

### SUPPORTING STUDENTS AND FAMILIES WITH ATTENDANCE

We are committed to supporting students and families with attendance. As such, we will...

- Raise awareness. Help students, staff, and the community understand the importance of attendance and the long-term effects of chronic absenteeism.
- Understand the reason for the absences. Take time to work with students and families to understand and address the reason that the student may not be attending school consistently.
- Report and study absenteeism data. Identify students at high risk and the most prevalent causes of absenteeism to help create evidence-based solutions to attendance problems.
- Develop trauma-informed practices. Work with staff to provide professional development on trauma-informed practices. For students who have suffered trauma, this can be a contributing factor to absenteeism.
- Set clear expectations. Provide clear guidelines and expectations about attendance to students and their families.

- Schedule a meeting or visit with family. Reach out to families personally to develop individualized attendance plans for students and families.
- Recognize good attendance. Celebrate students with good attendance to create a positive environment that encourages regular student attendance.
- Implement intervention programs. Provide counseling, mentorship, and/or behavioral interventions when necessary to support positive attendance at school.
- Engage with specialists for case management. Build connections with specialists who might be able to offer assistance including child welfare agency staff, mental health professionals, or other social support system employees.

## ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

All students in MURSD are expected to attend school regularly. We understand that circumstances arise that may prevent a student from attending school. The MURSD school committee recognizes these reasons as illness or quarantine, bereavement or serious illness in the family, weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child, or observance of major religious holidays.

Additionally, Nipmuc recognizes some other reasons including appropriately documented college visits (up to 3 per year), driver's license exams (with documentation), as well as documented career shadow/exploration days (up to 3 per year).

Per MGL, schools may excuse cases of necessary absence not exceeding seven school days in any period of six months. If any of the reasons above apply for excusal from school, parents or guardians should notify the main office and/or health office and submit the appropriate documentation.

Students who have reached the excusal limit (noted above) may still provide notes from healthcare providers or report the reason for the absence. While these days will not be excused, a note can be made in PowerSchool for the reason for the absence, if requested.

Students who exceed 18 total days of absence (excused + unexcused) will be required to make up academic time with their teachers. These hours should be completed within 2 weeks of the absence.

We recognize that some students may have extended absences due to hospitalizations. If these absences cause the student to exceed the 18-day absence limit for the year, temporary home or hospital education will count towards the necessary academic hours. For more information on temporary home or hospital education, please [click here](#). Families should also reach out to the nurse and/or school counselor to make arrangements to support the student's return to school.

## INTERVENTIONS & SERVICES

The following are steps that the school will take when a situation arises in which a student is struggling to attend school on a regular basis.

**Level One:** When a student reaches 5 unexcused absences in a year, a letter will be sent out to the student's parents/guardian(s). The intention of this letter is to notify the family of the absences, review the attendance policy, and advise the family that the student is at risk for requiring an intervention that would necessitate a school meeting.

**Level Two:** If the student continues to struggle to attend school regularly (absent, tardy, or dismissed) and the number of unexcused absences reaches 10 in the school year, a school meeting will be mandatory. The meeting could include

the parent/guardian(s), student, principal or designee, and other support staff. An attendance plan will be developed and implemented to monitor the student's attendance.

Additionally, during the meeting, a determination will be made whether a 51A (DCF) or CRA (Juvenile Court) is necessary at that time.

*Under Chapter 119, section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis. This report of suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, commonly referred to as a 51A, is filed with the Department of Children and Family Services. By law, school personnel are mandated reporters.*

*Under M.G.L. c. 119, § 21, a child may be eligible for "Child Requiring Assistance" services through the juvenile court system if the child: repeatedly runs away from the home of a parent or legal guardian; repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of a parent or legal guardian, thereby interfering with the parent's or legal guardian's ability to adequately care for and protect the child; repeatedly fails to obey lawful and reasonable school regulations, or is "habitually truant." A school-aged child is "habitually truant" when not otherwise excused from attendance in accordance with lawful and reasonable school regulations, and willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter. The school can assist parents with pursuing "CRA" services and support.*

Level Three: The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education defines chronically absent as missing at least 10% of days enrolled (18 days) regardless of whether the absences are considered excused, unexcused and/or for disciplinary reasons. Being chronically absent can have a significant impact on a student's ability to read at grade level, perform academically, and graduate on time. Therefore, if a student has accumulated a total of eighteen (18) unexcused absences, a 51A (DCF) or CRA (juvenile court) may be filed. The student and family would be expected to work with the principal or designee to assure compliance with school attendance laws. It would be up to DCF or the Court to determine if further interventions or consequences beyond the school would be necessary.

## REPORTING ABSENCES

- Parents/guardians are responsible for calling the school (508-529-2130) or emailing ([nipmucmainoffice@mursd.org](mailto:nipmucmainoffice@mursd.org)) to report a child's absence and the reason for it.
- If the school has not received notification of the absence by 9am, the school will notify a parent/guardian of the child's absence via an automated attendance message.
- Parents/guardians will also receive an automated notification if their child is tardy (arrives before 9am) to school.
- Up-to-date student attendance records can be accessed via PowerSchool.

## TARDINESS TO SCHOOL

A student is allowed three unexcused tardies per term without consequence. Parents/guardians will be notified via an automated call/text should their student arrive late to school. When possible, the main office staff will remind students when they have reached their third tardy of the term. Ultimately, it is up to the students to track their attendance. Students, parents, and guardians are encouraged to check PowerSchool for the most up-to-date attendance information.

Any arrival to school after 11:05 a.m. will be recorded as an absence.

Students who are tardy to school for the fourth, fifth, or sixth time may be subject to:

- Referral to the Attendance Matters Program (AMP).
  - The Attendance Matters Program (AMP) is a Tier 2 intervention designed to support students who have been tardy to school four to six times per term. AMP takes place during breaks on Wednesdays and Fridays and focuses on building positive habits, fostering accountability, and helping students

- start their school day successfully.
  - Through AMP, students will:
    - Reflect on the challenges that contribute to being late.
    - Set goals to improve punctuality and establish consistent morning routines.
    - Connect with the school counseling team for ongoing support and check-ins.
  - AMP provides a structured opportunity for students to take ownership of their attendance, improve time-management skills, and create a plan that promotes success in school and beyond.
- Loss of eligibility for extracurricular activities/athletics for the day of the tardy

If a student reaches seven tardies in a term, school staff will coordinate a meeting with the student and their parents to develop an individualized attendance plan. This plan will outline personalized strategies and, if needed, more intensive interventions to support the student in improving punctuality and maintaining consistent attendance.

## DISMISSALS FROM SCHOOL

Parents/guardians must notify the main office via written note, email, or phone to dismiss their student. When possible, please give the office advanced notice of your student's dismissal to allow time to locate the classroom and inform the teacher. In the moment dismissals may result in delays getting your student signed out. Students who are sick need to report to the nurse to be evaluated. The nurse will make contact with parents/guardians to dismiss a student from school if deemed necessary. Dismissals from the nurse will be excused for medical reasons (when the student is under the absence excusal limit).

\*Scheduled driving time with a driving academy does not qualify as an excused dismissal. Students should schedule driving time for outside of school hours.

Students who are dismissed from school (unexcused) are ineligible to participate in after-school and evening activities and events on the day of the dismissal.

Students dismissed from school via the health office (excused/unexcused) are ineligible to participate in after-school and evening activities and events on the day of the dismissal.

Additionally, after 2 unexcused dismissals in a given term, students will be referred to the Attendance Matters Program (AMP). If a student reaches six dismissals in a term, school staff will coordinate a meeting with the student and their parents to develop an individualized attendance plan. This plan will outline personalized strategies and, if needed, more intensive interventions to support the student in improving punctuality and maintaining consistent attendance.

## ACADEMIC HOURS

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education defines chronically absent as missing at least 10% of days enrolled (18 days) regardless of whether the absences are considered excused, unexcused and/or for disciplinary reasons. Being chronically absent can have a significant impact on a student's ability to read at grade level, perform academically, and graduate on time.

Any student who misses more than 18 days of school, regardless of the reason, will be required to make up academic time. Students will be required to make up 2 hours for each absence above the 18-day limit. Students can make up hours before school between the hours of 7:00-7:30am or after school beginning at 2pm. We encourage students to schedule time with their teachers to receive support for the curriculum that was missed during the time(s) of absence. Students that are unable to complete the academic hours within 2 weeks of their absence will be assigned administrative detentions to serve the academic time. Time spent at extracurricular activities and athletics does not

count toward academic hours. Students should take the initiative to schedule academic hours with their teachers immediately upon their return to school and track their hours using [this form](#). Paper copies of the form are also available in the main office. Completed hours must be signed off by a teacher, school counselors, or administrators and should be submitted to the main office upon completion.

## ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

Students coming to school by bus or car are to enter the building immediately upon their arrival on the school grounds. There is to be no gathering or remaining in the school parking lots. Failure to observe this regulation could result in loss of your parking or bus privileges. Failure to report to the first period by 7:30 a.m. constitutes a tardy to school. When students arrive at school or class after 7:30 they are to sign in at the office.

## BUS TRANSPORTATION

- You must have a parental note to change buses, which must be brought to the office before school to obtain an afternoon bus pass. Parents/Guardians may also email requests for bus passes to [nipmucmainoffice@mursd.org](mailto:nipmucmainoffice@mursd.org).
- Transportation to school is a privilege not a right. As such, students are expected to behave properly while waiting at the bus stop, boarding the bus, riding the bus, and getting off the bus.
- When a student's conduct directly or indirectly interferes with the safe and efficient operation of the school bus, the bus driver will report the student's behavior to the Principal (or designee) for disciplinary action.
- Possible use of visual and audio surveillance operated by the bus company may be used while riding on the school buses.

## RETURN TO SCHOOL AFTER EXTENDED ABSENCES

Prior to a student's return to school after an extended absence due to medical, behavior, or other reason, a re-entry meeting will be requested to facilitate a successful transition back to school. A discharge summary will be requested indicating the student is medically able and safe to return to school.

Nipmuc Regional High School may provide support through Return Support Services (RSS). RSS is a short-term, intensive general education support available to some students returning to school after an extended absence. RSS provides clinical support, academic coordination, family support, and care coordination services to students who are transitioning back to a full schedule after an experience that has had a significant physical or emotional impact causing gaps in learning. Its supports are customized to meet each student's unique needs and are clinically informed. RSS staff will partner with families to help each student make the most efficient transition possible. The RSS staff will also provide consultation services directly to faculty and staff members to increase knowledge of strategies and support to assist all learners in the classroom.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION

### STUDENT VISITORS

Students will be allowed to attend school as a shadow from the School Counseling Department if there is clear intent of becoming a Nipmuc student or has written permission from Administration.

### ATTENDANCE AT SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

Any unexcused arrival to school after 11:05am, unexcused dismissal, dismissal from the health office or absence will result in a student being ineligible to participate in any extracurricular activity for that day, except in extraordinary

circumstances and with special permission from the Principal(s). Students who are suspended or are absent without an acceptable reason may not attend nor participate in any extracurricular activity during the period of the suspension or the day of the unexcused absence. These students will be requested to leave the function or activity.

## LOCKERS

Lockers for the use of students are provided in the hallways. Any student interested in obtaining a school lock and or being assigned a locker should see the administrative assistant in the school counseling session. Students are required to keep their lockers clean. Stickers are not allowed on the face of lockers. School locks may be purchased at a cost of \$6.00 from the school counseling office. Individuals are not allowed to use physical education issued locks on lockers outside the locker room nor locks purchased outside of school. Student lockers are school property and the administration reserves the right to inspect lockers when necessary.

## CARE OF SCHOOL-ISSUED PROPERTY AND TEXTBOOKS

The school provides a number of materials for student use, including but not limited to calculators, iPads, computers, textbooks. These materials must be kept in good condition at all times. When requested, or at the end of the school year, the student must return all materials issued to them. Except for reasonable wear, all materials should be in the same condition as when assigned to the student. Students and their families will be financially responsible for any school owned equipment that was originally assigned to the student in the event that these materials are lost, destroyed, or damaged.

## LAVATORY USE

Every effort is made by the school to keep the lavatories clean and sanitary. The staff monitors the lavatories. For your convenience and health we ask that you follow these simple rules:

- Individual stalls are designed to accommodate one person at a time.
- Report all damages to the office.
- The lavatory is not a sick room. Report to the nurse's office if you are ill.
- Keep the lavatory clean at all times.
- No food in the lavatories.
- No loitering in the lavatories.
- Locker room lavatory only for use during physical education classes.
- Gender neutral restrooms are located by the locker rooms, next to the cafeteria (adjacent to the elevator), in the nurse's office, and in the main office.

## DRESS CODE

A student dress code should accomplish several goals:

- Provide clear, accessible, and equitable guidelines about expected dress at school.
- Maintain a safe learning environment when students are in classes where protective or supportive clothing is needed, such as science labs (eye or body protection) or PE (athletic attire/sneakers).
- Allow students to wear clothing that expresses their self-identified gender.
- Allow students to wear religious attire without fear of discipline or discrimination.
- Ensure that students do not wear clothing that includes profanity, hate speech, and pornography.

- Ensure that students do not wear clothing with images or language depicting or advocating violence or the use of alcohol or drugs.
- Ensure that all students are treated equitably regardless of gender/gender identification, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, body type/size, religion, and personal style.
- Ensure that students do not wear clothing that causes school disruption or disorder or violates the rights of others.

## DRESS CODE GUIDELINES

- Students must wear clothing including a shirt with pants, shorts, skirt, or the equivalent, and shoes.
- Clothing must cover undergarments and private parts in a way that is non-transparent (waistbands and bra straps excluded).
- Hats, hoods, and other headwear must allow the face to be visible and not interfere with the line of sight to any student or staff (except as a religious observance or for medical reasons).
- Clothing must be suitable for all scheduled learning activities including physical education, science labs, and other activities where unique hazards exist.
- Specialized courses may require specialized attire, such as athletic clothing, professional attire, or safety gear.

## NON-ALLOWABLE DRESS

- Clothing may not depict, advertise or advocate the use of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other controlled substances.
- Clothing may not depict pornography, nudity, or sexual acts.
- Clothing may not use or depict hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or any other protected groups.
- Clothing (including gang identifiers) must not threaten the health or safety of any other student or staff.
- Visible undergarments, bathing suits, or similar attire. (Visible waistbands or straps on undergarments worn under other clothing are not a violation.)
- Sunglasses (unless they are required for documented medical purposes).

If students' attire threatens the health or safety of themselves or any other person, then discipline should be consistent with discipline policies for similar violations.

*Nipmuc Regional's dress code was developed collaboratively through the school council and referenced the Oregon National Organization for Women Model Dress Code and the Portland (OR) Public School Dress Code.*

## NO SCHOOL ANNOUNCEMENTS

The decision to cancel school sessions, to delay opening, or to close early for weather or emergency conditions is made by the Superintendent of Schools. Bus times will vary according to the delay announced. The Superintendent will notify families of school closings and delayed openings by a phone message. The school district will also broadcast via:

School District website	<a href="http://www.mursd.org">http://www.mursd.org</a>
Channel 4 (WBZ)	<a href="http://boston.cbslocal.com">http://boston.cbslocal.com</a>
Channel 5 (WCVB)	<a href="http://www.thebostonchannel.com">http://www.thebostonchannel.com</a>
Channel 7 (WHDH)	<a href="http://www1.whdh.com">http://www1.whdh.com</a>
Radio	WMRC 1490 AM

Residents are urged *not* to call the fire or police departments in Mendon and Upton, as they will not have this information. Calls to them tie up their line and make it difficult for them to respond to emergency situations.

## STUDENT PARKING REGULATIONS

- Only vehicles with school-issued identification stickers will be allowed in the student parking lot. A school-year annual fee of \$50.00 will be charged for identification stickers.
- All students will be assigned a parking permit number.
- All vehicles must have a valid registration and inspection sticker to receive a school identification sticker.
- Student parking permit stickers must be affixed to the bottom corner of the front windshield on the driver's side.
- Vehicles must be registered to the student or an immediate family member.
- Students must park in designated student parking areas only. Students found parking in visitor or staff parking will be fined \$25.00 and may have their parking revoked for repeated offenses.
- Students are not to loiter in the school parking lot before or after school.
- All vehicles will enter and leave the parking area by the designated entrance and exit and stay to the right while exiting the parking lot.
- During school hours, students may not go to the parking lot without permission from the Principal (or designee). Students who leave school grounds without permission will have their parking permits revoked.
- There will be no speeding, racing of motor, "squealing" starts and turns, nor driving around in the parking area.
- The school is not responsible for the automobile or its contents.
- Student vehicles may be subject to search if there are reasonable grounds to believe that drugs, alcohol, stolen property, or other contraband might be present in that vehicle.
- Students are not allowed to share or transfer parking permits.
- Students may park in the designated spots in the main parking lot.
- Students may not park in visitor or staff parking areas. Students will be fined \$25.00 for a violation of this policy and parking permits may be revoked for repeat offenders.
- Any vehicle in violation of parking regulations may be fined \$25.00 and their parking permit may be revoked.
- Students with excessive absences, tardiness and dismissals may have their parking privileges revoked.
- The school reserves the right to suspend parking privileges.
- Students who violate a parking guideline(s) and receive a fine can request a meeting with the Principal or designee to discuss the violation and offer additional information for consideration.
- If a student will be driving a different vehicle (due to maintenance, repairs, etc.), the student must email [nipmucmainoffice@mursd.org](mailto:nipmucmainoffice@mursd.org), prior to driving the alternate vehicle. For an extended timeframe using an alternate vehicle, the office may ask the student to register the alternate vehicle in Clever.
- It is the student's responsibility to inform the office if the original car registered is no longer in use and they have a new vehicle. The new vehicle must be registered in Clever, and if a new parking permit is needed, the student must come to the office to retrieve one.

## BICYCLES

Students are allowed to ride bicycles to school and are encouraged to wear helmets. Bikes should be locked behind the gym as soon as the student arrives at school. Students are asked to walk their bikes on school property. The school is not responsible for bicycles parked on school grounds or their contents.

## CAFETERIA

School meals will be free for all students regardless of household income. There will be no cost to families for any student to receive school lunch or breakfast for the 2024-2025 school year.



Students who wish to purchase a second entree (if available) may do so at a cost of \$1.50. Additionally, snacks and water will be available for purchase during breaks and lunches.

## HIGH SCHOOL DANCES

- A school dance is not public; it is intended for Nipmuc students. An invited guest must be registered in the office before the dance. Students who have registered a guest are responsible for the guest's conduct. Only students under the age of 21 and in grades 9 or above are allowed to attend the prom, winter semi-formal, homecoming, and the ring dance. If anyone leaves the dance at any time without permission of the person in charge, they must leave the premises and will not be allowed to return.
- Consumption of alcohol or drugs prior to attending a school activity or on school property is a violation of school rules and Massachusetts State Law. The parents of any student violating this rule will be notified. Use of a breathalyzer is at the discretion of the Principal (or designee).
- If anyone is absent from school during the day of the dance (other than an absence approved by the administration), they may not attend the dance in the evening.
- Students must be appropriately dressed to enter a school dance. Students will not wear offensive clothing and/or inappropriately expose their bodies.
- No outside food or drink may be taken into dances unless medically ordered by a licensed prescriber.
- Band or DJ selection must receive prior approval from an administrator. Musical selections will be made at the discretion and approval of the sponsoring association. Songs with inappropriate lyrics will not be allowed.
- The total number of chaperones is dependent upon the number of tickets sold.
- Students will not be allowed entrance into the dance after the first hour without prior administrative approval.
- There will be no grinding, sexually-explicit dancing, slam-dancing, moshing, or other dancing that could be considered by the chaperones as a possibility of causing an injury or considered inappropriate. Students who do not cooperate with this rule will be sent home. Their parents will be called, and they will not be permitted to attend any other school dances.
- Entrance to dances in the cafeteria as well as dismissal will be from the cafeteria. Entry is located at the rear of the building. Entrance to dances in the gym will be from the main entrance only.
- Students are not allowed in the academic or administrative areas during a dance.
- All school dances (with the exception of Prom) will end at 10:00 PM.
- Students should arrange to be picked up promptly at the conclusion of the dance.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Student activities are offered at Nipmuc for both the student's benefit and enjoyment. Some of these activities may involve a fee. Nipmuc offers a wide range of athletic and extracurricular activities. The athletic program consists of football, soccer, basketball, ice hockey, baseball, softball, volleyball, field hockey, cross country, track & field, lacrosse, golf, and cheerleading. Some activities offered are impact team, student council, National Honor Society, band, chorus, peer leadership, yearbook, ski club, and DECA. (Check the main office and website for an updated list).

The student's participation in any co-curricular activity, including but not limited to intra-mural or interscholastic athletics of any nature, is conditioned on compliance with all applicable laws, district policies (including but not limited to policies relative to student conduct and discipline, bullying, hazing, harassment, and discrimination), all MIAA policies, and district values and behavioral expectations. In the interest of student safety and compliance with these laws, policies, values, and expectations, coaches and/or other school staff will routinely monitor locker room activities. Such monitoring may include physical presence by coaches or other staff in locker rooms. While monitoring students in locker rooms, all coaches and staff will give appropriate consideration to student privacy. Students seeking increased privacy when changing clothes/uniforms may utilize individual stalls and/or privacy curtains or screens where available, and are encouraged to address any privacy related concerns with the coach, athletic director, or

building principal.

#### CRITERIA FOR ELECTED POSITIONS/CLASS OFFICERS

- The student must be in good academic standing (passing all courses).
- Good conduct is expected of all candidates and officers in order to be considered for an office and to continue to hold an office once elected. Inappropriate behavior may result in loss of office. Attendance at meetings and involvement in class functions are expected. Suspension from school will result in loss of office, subject to administrative review.
- Excessive unexcused absences/tardies/dismissals may be reason for loss of office.
- A class member may sign only one nomination form for any particular office. For student council, where there are multiple positions open, a class member may sign four nomination papers.
- Special elections will be held at the discretion of the class advisor.
- Student council members must adhere to the requirements of the student council constitution.
- No write-in candidates are allowed.
- A student may run for only one office per election.

## NIPMUC ATHLETICS

Nipmuc Regional High School strongly supports the commitment to the ideals of interscholastic athletes. We believe that our broad athletic program, directed by people committed to the goals of the school, will contribute to the future success and happiness of our students.

The athletic program is an essential school component that provides young men and women the opportunity to develop self-image, character, and good physical health. Only students in good academic standing are eligible to represent the school in interscholastic athletic contests. For the period from the beginning of the school year to the end of the regular marking period next preceding the contest, a student must secure a passing grade in five 1-credit courses of prepared work. Specific rules and eligibility regarding a particular sport will be issued at the beginning of that sport season. The Nipmuc Student Athlete Handbook can be found [here](#).

## ATHLETIC PARTICIPATION

### JV AND VARSITY LEVELS

Participation in the interscholastic athletic program is voluntary. No student has a protected right to participate in this program. Students who participate agree to abide by the rules promulgated by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), the league(s) to which the school belongs, and other rules and regulations adopted by the Mendon-Upton Regional School Committee.

## ACADEMIC ELIGIBILITY

A student must secure during the last marking period preceding the contest (e.g., second-quarter marks and not semester grades determine third quarter eligibility) a passing grade in the equivalent of five major subjects. To satisfy this requirement, a student must have passed sufficient courses so as to be earning for that marking period credit totaling the equivalent of five 1-year major English courses. A student cannot at any time represent a school unless that student is taking courses, which would provide credit, equivalent to five 1-year major English courses. To be eligible for the fall marking period, students are required to have earned credits for the previous academic year equivalent to five 1-year major English courses. The academic eligibility of all students shall be considered official and determined on the published date when the report cards for that ranking period are to be issued to the parents of all students within a particular class. Incomplete grades may not be counted toward eligibility.

1. A student who repeats work upon which they have once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility.
2. A student cannot count for eligibility for any subject taken during the summer vacation unless that subject has previously been pursued and failed.
3. Students receiving services under Chapter 766, whose individualized education plan is a 502.4 or more restrictive prototype, may be declared academically eligible by their principal provided that all other eligibility requirements are met.

## HEALTH & PHYSICALS

All students must pass a physical examination within thirteen months of the start of each season. Students who meet these criteria at the start of the season will remain eligible for that season.

## VIOLATION OF RULES AND/OR POLICIES

The sale of alcohol or drugs in school as well as out of school will result in a one-year suspension from all extra-curricular activities from the date of conviction.

All rules and regulations as stated in Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) "Blue Book" will apply to students involved in the athletic program. A copy of the regulations is available for students and parent review from your coach or the building principal.

Participation in athletics is contingent on students' adherence to the rules and regulations of the MIAA and Nipmuc Regional High School. Athletic participation may be limited for students who do not comply with academic, behavioral, or legal guidelines at the discretion of the principal.

### Minimum Penalties as Determined by the MIAA

#### *1st Offense:*

Loss of eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport.

#### *2nd and Subsequent Offenses:*

Loss of eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport.

## DRESS

Team members are expected to be dressed in a neat and well-groomed manner.

## ATTENDANCE

- Any student-athlete who is not in school on the day of practice or game is not allowed to attend practice or game (not allowed on school grounds). Arrival at school after 11:05 is considered an absence.
- Students who are dismissed from school (unexcused) are ineligible to participate in after-school and evening activities and events on the day of the dismissal.
- Students dismissed from school from the health office (excused/unexcused) are ineligible to participate in after-school and evening activities and events on the day of the dismissal, except in extraordinary circumstances and with special permission from the Principal(s).
- Students with unexcused tardies, absences, dismissals over the handbook limit are not allowed to participate in practice/games on that day.
- If an athletic event occurs over the weekend a student must be present in school (or have an excused absence) the preceding Friday.
- If a student-athlete cuts a class or leaves the building unannounced, they will be ineligible to play in that day's game or practice.
- If a student-athlete must miss school for a portion of, or the entire day due to extenuating circumstances such as a college interview that can not be scheduled on a weekend, or a prolonged orthodontist appointment, clearance must be given by a school administrator, in order for the athlete to practice or play in a game.
- A student-athlete may be removed from a team for excessive cuts or truancy. They may be reinstated upon sufficient evidence of improvement.

Please see the Nipmuc Student Athletic Handbook for complete details.

## FAN CODE OF CONDUCT

Students are expected to demonstrate sportsmanship and appropriate fan conduct during all athletic events.

- o Be an exemplary role model by positively supporting teams (including signs and cheers/chants)
- o Respect athletes, coaches, and other fans.
- o Recognize outstanding performance on either side of the playing field.
- o Even though you may not agree with them, respect decisions made by the contest officials.

## INTOLERANT/HATE SPEECH AND BEHAVIOR

Students who have been found to have used (verbal, written, recorded, or online, on social media or otherwise) speech that has the effect of marginalizing or targeting others based on their race, color, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, class, or religion will receive school consequences in line with the offense as outlined by the Student Handbook and in accordance with school rules, codes of conduct, district policies, and applicable law. Additionally, any student found guilty of this offense will have a two-week or 25% suspension from all co-curricular/athletic events (games, performances, competitions, etc). The suspension will conclude whenever a student reaches one of these limits. Additionally, students will be required to participate in educational programming designed to educate the student about the harm the language can cause, and the reason that it is unacceptable in our school community.

## ATHLETIC USER'S FEES

Fees will be collected by athletic department representatives with monies deposited in an athletic revolving account. Fees must be paid in full prior to tryouts.

Athletic fees are \$325 per sport per athlete at both the Varsity and Junior Varsity levels. (Football \$350, Unified Basketball \$150 and Cheerleading (check with Athletic Director) have a different fee associated)

Any player who fails to make the team will get a 100% refund for that sport.

Any participant in the free or reduced lunch program (application must be completed each year to determine eligibility) may have a waiver of the Athletic fee.

All other requests for refunds or prorated reimbursements will be considered on their individual merit upon the student's application in writing to the Athletic Director:

*Fees are not refunded for the following:*

1. If a player is removed from a team for disciplinary reasons.
2. If a player voluntarily leaves the team.
3. If a player becomes academically ineligible.
4. At the junior varsity level priority will be to play all team members as frequently as possible.
5. No guarantee will be made to ensure playing time at varsity-level sports.
6. Players will be required to abide by all school athletic policies and regulations.

## SCHOOL SAFETY

### ACCIDENTS

Report all accidents on school property or during school-related activities to the supervising staff member or the nearest teacher. If the situation warrants, seek help from the school nurse, particularly if first aid is needed.

### FIRE DRILLS/ LOCKDOWNS/ EVACUATIONS

In following directions during fire drills, lockdowns and evacuations, students are expected to cooperate fully with teachers. Directions for exit from the school are posted in each room. Exit from the building must be made as quickly as possible in an orderly manner. Because state law requires that attendance be taken after students have exited the building, students must remain together in the area designated by the teacher.

### ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

A copy of the AHERA management plan for Nipmuc Regional High School is available for review in the Superintendent's Office and the school office during regular school hours. Any inquiries regarding asbestos-containing materials in our schools should be directed to our AHERA Designated Person, Jay Byer [jbyer@mursd.org](mailto:jbyer@mursd.org) or Ken Choiniere [kchoiniere@mursd.org](mailto:kchoiniere@mursd.org), who can be reached at Superintendent's Office [\(508\) 634-1585](tel:5086341585) with any questions.

## SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

### DEFINITIONS FOR SCHOOL DISCIPLINE

For the purpose of the Nipmuc Regional High School discipline code, the school adopts the definitions approved under 603 CMR 53.00, which stipulates the purposes and definitions of specific types of offenses and consequences.

1. Disciplinary offense means any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student, *except for*: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, or 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, as provided in M.M.G.L. c71, §§37H or 37H ½.
2. Disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c71, §§37H or 37H ½ means one or more of the following alleged or determined disciplinary infractions: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such 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, as provided in M.G.L. c71, §§37H or 37H ½.
3. Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c71, §§37H or 37H ½.
4. In-School Suspension means the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a

school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than 10 days, it shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

5. Long-term suspension means 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) days cumulatively for multiple offenses during a single school year. The principal may allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.
6. Short-term suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. The principal may allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.
7. Suspension means short-term and long-term suspension, unless otherwise stated.

#### CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE REMEDIES (MGL c71, §37H ¾) as Amended November 2022)

Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

#### NOTICE OF POTENTIAL SUSPENSION AND HEARING (M.G.L. c. 71, §37H ¾)

1. A suspension will only be imposed as a consequence for a disciplinary offense after the student and parent/guardian have been provided oral and written notice, and the student has been provided an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent/guardian the opportunity to participate in such hearing.
2. For any disciplinary offense that could result in a suspension, a student shall be provided oral and written notice to the student 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 a 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;
  - g. If the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
    - i. The rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b) and

- ii. The right to appeal the principal's decision with the superintendent.
3. The principal shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parent/guardian orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without a parent/guardian present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian.
4. Written notice to the parent/guardian may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the parent/guardian and principal.

#### EMERGENCY REMOVAL FROM SCHOOL (MGL c71, §37H ¾)

1. The principal shall not be prevented from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days, following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the school shall:
  - a. Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need of said removal, and the other matters set forth above.
  - b. Provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian, as noted above.
  - c. Provide the student with an opportunity for a hearing with the principal and the parent/guardian the opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for the hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent/guardian.
  - d. Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.
2. A student will not be removed from school on an emergency basis until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

#### HEARING WITH THE PRINCIPAL (MGL c. 71, §37H ¾)

##### In the case of Potential Short-Term Suspension

1. The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
2. Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
3. The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in



603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

#### In the case of Potential Long-Term Suspension

1. The purpose of the long-term suspension hearing with the principal is the same as with the short-term suspension hearing.
2. In addition to the rights outlined for the short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:
  - a. 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;
  - b. The right to be represented by counsel or a layperson in the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense;
  - c. The right to produce witnesses on their behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
  - d. The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
  - e. The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal and a copy of the audio recording will be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. If said request is made, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made a copy provided to the parent/guardian and student upon request.
3. The principal shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
4. Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to the address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent/guardian. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:
  - a. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
  - b. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
  - c. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
  - d. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school;
  - e. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
    - i. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent/guardian may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that
    - ii. the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

## STUDENTS CHARGED WITH OFFENSES UNDER MGL CH 71 S 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 at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

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

## STUDENTS CHARGED WITH A FELONY (MGL CH71 S37H1/2)

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of their right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

## STUDENTS CONVICTED OF A FELONY (MGL CH71 S37H1/2)

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

## HEARING WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT (IN THE CASE OF LONG-TERM SUSPENSION) (MGL c. 71, § 37H¾)

1. A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

2. The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal or may allow the appeal in their discretion, for good cause.
3. The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.
4. The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent/guardian and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
5. The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.
6. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension as outlined above.
7. The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.
8. The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school with regard to the suspension.

#### IN-SCHOOL SUSPENSION (MGL c. 71, § 37H<sup>3/4</sup>)

1. The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.
2. The principal may impose an in-school suspension for any disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the principal follows the processes set forth below and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress.
3. The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
4. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent/guardian orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent/guardian to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such a meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the

parent/guardian after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent/guardian of the in-school suspension.

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

## EDUCATION SERVICES AND ACADEMIC PROGRESS WHILE SUSPENDED

Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, makeup assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

1. Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.
2. The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents/guardians of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students.
3. The principal shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

## PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION(S) NOT EXCEEDING 10 SCHOOL DAYS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) school days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities and in accordance with the due process procedures in this handbook. The school provides additional procedural safeguards for students with disabilities prior to any suspension beyond 10 consecutive days or more than 10 cumulative days (if there is a pattern of suspension) in any school year.

## PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION(S) EXCEEDING 10 SCHOOL DAYS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

- If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, this removal may be considered a "change of placement". A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.
- Federal law defines a "change of placement" as:
  - o Removal for more than 10 consecutive school days; OR
  - o A series of removals that constitute a pattern 1) because the series of removals total more than 10 cumulative days in a school year; 2) because the student's behavior is substantially similar to that

in previous incidents that resulted in the series of removals; and 3) because of such additional factors as the length of each removal, the total amount of time the student has been removed, and the proximity of the removals to one another. Please note that determination of whether a pattern of removals is a “change of placement” is made by the District.

- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must convene a meeting to determine whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is manifestation of your child’s disability. Parents have a right to participate in this meeting. At the meeting, all relevant information will be considered including the IEP or Section 504 Plan, teacher observations, and evaluations reports.
- At a manifestation determination meeting, the team will consider two questions:
  - Did the student’s disability cause or have a direct and substantial relationship to the conduct in question?
  - Was the conduct a direct result of the district’s failure to implement the IEP/Section 504 Plan?
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the conduct in question was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to your child’s disability OR a direct result of the district’s failure to implement the IEP/Section 504 Plan, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (unless under the special circumstances or parents agree). The Team will review the IEP or Section 504 Plan and any behavioral intervention plans and may amend those plans as appropriate. The Team will complete a functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plan if it has not already done so.
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the conduct in question was NOT caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to your child’s disability OR was NOT the direct result of the district’s failure to implement the IEP/Section 504 Plan, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according the school’s code of conduct. The Team may, as appropriate, complete a functional behavioral assessment and behavioral intervention plan and modification, to address the behavior so that it does not recur. For students with IEPs, during the period of time of removal from school that exceeds 10 school days, the school district must provide educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension under federal law, however, state law does provide all students with the right to receive educational services during periods of suspensions lasting longer than ten days.

## SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES FOR EXCLUSION FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Special circumstances exist if your child: 1) possesses, uses, sells or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; 2) carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or, 3) inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension under federal law, however, state law does provide all students with the right to receive educational services during periods of suspensions lasting longer than ten days.

School personnel will provide Parent’s Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Parent and Student Rights Under Section 504 for students with disabilities prior to any suspension constituting a change in placement. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. Parents, guardians, and/or students may petition the Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing or the Office for Civil Rights (Section 504).

## PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS NOT YET DETERMINED TO BE ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION OR A 504 PLAN

1. If, prior to the disciplinary action, a district had knowledge that the student may be a student with a disability, then the district makes all protections available to the student until and unless the student is subsequently determined not to be eligible. The district may be considered to have prior knowledge if:
  - a. The parent had expressed concern in writing; or
  - b. The parent had requested an evaluation; or specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student. The district may not be considered to have had prior 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 has resulted in a determination of ineligibility.
2. If the district had no reason to consider the student disabled, and the parent requests an evaluation subsequent to the disciplinary action, the district must have procedures consistent with federal requirements to conduct an expedited evaluation to determine eligibility.
3. If the student is found eligible for an IEP or 504 Plan, then one receives all procedural protections subsequent to the finding of eligibility.

## BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

Nipmuc Regional High School puts guidelines in place and establishes norms that promote a culture of responsibility, respect, safety, and belonging. Our school community recognizes that actions that contradict these values will vary in seriousness and impact on others. Our school will consider these factors when working with students and families to address concerns about behavior or decision-making. Included below is a list of behaviors/actions that go against the values of our school and potential consequences for those actions. This is not an inclusive list.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** We expect members of our school community to:

- Arrive promptly for class and assigned responsibilities ready to learn and engage.
- Engage in the learning in an honest and ethical way that represents their unique talents, opportunities for growth, and curiosities.
- Adhere to the guidelines of the technology acceptable use policy.

**RESPECT:** We expect members of our school community to:

- Work cooperatively and collaboratively with their classmates and teachers.
- Care for the school building, grounds, and resources.
- Communicate with members of the school community in a kind, empathetic, and respectful manner.
- Respect the property of others.

**SAFETY AND BELONGING:** We expect members of our school community to:

- Value and celebrate the diversity of expression, thought, and personal identity of members of our school community.
- Prioritize their health and wellness, as well as the health and wellness of others, by avoiding the use of nicotine, alcohol, drugs, or illegal substances.
- Access supports to deescalate frustration and resolve conflicts in a peaceful and nonviolent manner.
- Recognize the impact of their words and actions on members of the school community.
- Act as an ally to members of the school community.

As a community of learning, our school recognizes that addressing actions that contradict our values may not only result in consequences but also provide opportunities for learning and personal growth. When appropriate, as determined by the administrator(s) working with the student and the family, the school may use restorative practices to support student learning. In some circumstances, these restorative practices may mitigate or replace consequences.

Restorative practices may include (but are not limited to) mediations, messages of apology, cessation programs, community service, and restitution of damages.

## GENERAL DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

### BREAK DETENTION

Break detentions are held on a daily basis during a student's assigned break during the school day. Break detentions can be assigned by teachers or the main office for a variety of reasons. Students are not allowed to use their electronic devices during detention (unless directly related to their academic work). Failure to attend a break detention will result in an after school detention.

### AFTER SCHOOL DETENTION

After school detentions are held on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and occasional Wednesdays from 2:00 – 2:45pm. Students attending after school detentions are expected to come to the detention will school work to complete. Students are not allowed to have their heads down, sleep, or use cell phones. iPads will be allowed for academic purposes only. Failure to attend an after school detention will result in additional after school detentions or in-house suspension.

### STUDENT PROBATION

Students who violate school rules and/or fail to follow reasonable expectations may be placed on probation for a period of time to be determined by the administration. During the probationary period, the student will be denied the opportunity to participate in school activities and functions such as dances, clubs, class office, student council, athletics, etc. Students are allowed on school grounds during normal school hours. Conditions of the probation will be outlined by the Principal (or designee) for the involved student with the objective of improving that student's behavior and restoring his or her privileges.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE

School-based community service is an option for students, with approval of the administration, for offenses that do not warrant an external suspension.

### IN-HOUSE SUSPENSION

In-house suspension is designed as a middle-level disciplinary consequence. Students will be expected to stay in their seats, complete assigned work, keep their area clean, and raise their hands before talking. Students are not allowed to have their heads down, sleep, or use electronic devices. Provision for lunch will be made by the supervisor. Students must report with all necessary materials at the beginning of the school day to the in-house room.

The hours of in-house suspension run from 7:30am – 2:45pm. Students are expected to remain in the in-house suspension area for the entirety of the session. Students who miss an in-house suspension due to an unexcused absence and students who leave the in-house suspension without permission will receive a two-day suspension from school. Students leaving an in-house suspension with an unexcused dismissal will be expected to repeat the day of in-house suspension. After 10 days of in-house suspension per year for disciplinary issues, students will be suspended outside of school.

### EXTERNAL SUSPENSION

During the length of the suspension, students are to remain off school grounds both during the school day and after school hours for the duration of the suspension. Students appearing on school grounds during the suspension hours without prior administrative approval will be considered trespassing. Further disciplinary action, including possible

court involvement, may result. Attending school-sponsored activities either at home or away is not allowed during the suspension period.

Students do have the right to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as well as the opportunity to earn credits, make-up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the time of removal from the school.

## DISCIPLINARY ACTION

The following list of misbehaviors and potential disciplinary actions is not all-inclusive, as that would be impossible to produce. The list is designed to provide students with information to better understand the impact of actions and behaviors that contradict the values of the school. The potential disciplinary actions listed below may be modified on a case-by-case basis, in light of applicable relevant mitigating or aggravating factors. Actions outside of those listed will result in reasonable disciplinary measures commensurate with the misbehavior.

OFFENSE	DISCIPLINARY ACTION
Falsifying signatures and/or altering notes or other school documents	First offense: after school detention(s), one to three days in-house suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.  Second offense: one to three days in-house suspension or external suspension. Parents/Guardians, school counseling department notified.
Harassment/Sexual Harassment	First offense: warning, after school detention, possible suspension. Parents/Guardians, school counseling department and police notified.  Second offense: in-house suspension or external suspension, mandatory meeting with parents/guardians, school counseling department, and school resources officer police officer will be notified.
Hazing	Possible suspension or expulsion from school. Police notified. Possible court action
Intolerant/Hate Speech, Behavior, and/or Hate Crimes	Possible suspension or expulsion from school. Police notified. Possible court action. Two-week or 25% suspension from all co-curricular/athletic events (games, performances, competitions, etc). Educational programming.
Failure to report to the office as directed	First offense: In-house suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.  Second offense: In-house suspension or external suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.
Failure to report to assigned office break detention or after school detention.	First offense: after school detention(s) or in-house suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.



	Second offense: one day in-house suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.
Possession of tobacco/nicotine products/vaporizer pens	Three-day external suspension, confiscation of contraband. Student may be placed on bathroom restriction list.
Use of tobacco/nicotine/vaporizer products on school grounds or at school functions.	First offense: five days external suspension, confiscation of contraband. Student may be placed on the bathroom restriction list.  Second and subsequent offenses: ten days external suspension, confiscation of contraband, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.
Leaving school grounds without authorization.	First offense: one day in-house suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified. Parking permit revoked.  Second and subsequent offenses: three days external suspension, parents/guardians and school counseling department notified.
Falsifying or refusing to give name to staff members	First offense: one day in-house suspension, parents/guardians, school counseling department notified.  Second offense: one to three days external suspension.
Improper use of motor vehicle.	Warning up to one-day in-house suspension. Parking permit may be revoked.
Student in an unassigned area without authorization.	Warning, break detention, after school detention, or in-house suspension issued. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified. Parking permit may be revoked.
Disrespect or open defiance, disruption of specific class or school event, insubordination, or flagrant disregard for the authority of a teacher or other staff member.	First offense: after school detentions, in-house suspension, external suspension. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified. Second offense: External suspension. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified.
Vandalism of property belonging to the school district, school personnel or students.	After school detention(s), in-house suspension. External suspension. Restitution for damages may be required.
Possession of stolen property and/or any theft of money or personal or public property and/or entering unauthorized areas, including lockers.	In-house or external suspension. Parents/Guardians, police and school counseling department notified. Restitution.
Physically or verbally aggressive behavior, fighting, and/or acts of violence.	External suspension from school/possible expulsion. School counseling, parents/guardians, police notified. Possible police/court action. Student provoked may be, but does not have to be suspended.
Possession and/or use of dangerous/deadly weapon(s) or instruments that may be perceived as dangerous or used in a dangerous manner.	Minimum ten-day external suspension. Parents/Guardians, police, and school counseling department notified. Possible expulsion and/or court action.
Possession or use of explosives, fireworks, or incendiary devices that have the potential to do bodily harm or great physical damage.	External suspension. Parents/Guardians, school counseling office and police notified. Possible court action.

Intentional vulgar and/or indecent or inappropriate acts, gestures or words. Sexually explicit or inappropriate drawings.	First offense: Based on the nature of the violation, warning, after school detention, in-house suspension, or external suspension. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified. Possible police notification.  Second offense: one to ten days external suspension Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified. Possible police notification.
Possession, sale and/or distribution of obscene material.	Based on the nature of the incident, in-house or external suspension. Parents/Guardians, school counseling department and police notified.
Unauthorized photographic, video, or voice recording	Based on the nature of the violation, after school detention to external suspension. Possible police notification.
Possession, serving, consumption or under the influence of any alcohol on school property or at any school function while representing the school.  Failure to comply with the use of a breathalyzer.	External suspension for ten school days. Students placed on the bathroom restriction list. Possible probation. Police notified.
Possession with intent to sell/distribute or selling/distributing of alcoholic beverages on school property or at any school function while representing the school.  Possession, use, inhalation and/or under the influence of dangerous substances (e.g. synthetic marijuana, Coricidin, aerosols or over the counter drugs) or illegal drugs on school grounds, while representing the school or attending any school function.	External suspension for ten school days. Students placed on the bathroom restriction list. Police and school counseling department notified.
Selling/distributing or possession with the intent to sell/distribute illegal/dangerous drugs on school property or at any school function while representing the school.	External suspension for a minimum of ten days. Police and school counseling department notified. Possible probation or expulsion from school. Student may be placed on the bathroom restriction list.
Possession, sale or distribution of drug paraphernalia.	External suspension for a minimum of ten days. Police and school counseling department notified. Students placed on the bathroom restriction list.
Betting and/or gambling	After school detention, in-house suspension, or external suspension, depending on the nature of the behavior.
Setting off a false fire alarm and/or tampering with fire alarm system or fire extinguisher.	Ten days external suspension. Parents/Guardians, school counseling department, police and fire department notified. Possible court action.
Inciting other students to create a disturbance, which disrupts the operation of the school.	One to ten days external suspension. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified. Police notified. Possible court action.
Late to class (three times between 1-4 minutes or more than five minutes)	First offense: break detention or school detention  Students who are habitually tardy or who leave class for an excessive amount of time may lose their pass privileges or may receive after school detention or in-house suspension.
Class cutting	First offense: after school detention. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified.

	Second offense: two-day external suspension. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified.
Failure to sign in at the office upon arriving.	First offense: after school detention.  Second offense: after school detentions or in-house suspension. Parents/Guardians and school counseling department notified.
Threatening school personnel/students with bodily harm.	Based on the nature of the incident (after administrative/teacher consultation) in-house suspension or external suspension. Police and/or school counseling may be notified.
Truancy	Students who are truant will receive detentions or in-house suspensions. Habitual truancy will lead to referral to police and possible court action.  Students aged 16 and over, while no longer under the provision of the Compulsory Attendance Statute, will adhere to the same rules as students under 16 and will face the same penalties for non-attendance. Continued non-attendance may lead to withdrawal from school.
Dress code violation	Administrative conference with the student. Depending upon the nature of the concern, additional disciplinary action may be taken in a manner that is consistent with the school's overall discipline plan.
Inappropriate use of technology and/or violating the MURSD's Technology Acceptable Use Policy.	After school detention, in-house suspension, external suspension.
Unauthorized use of a cell phone/earbuds/headphones	Phone/earbuds/headphones may be held in the main office, coaching, detention, in-house suspension, external suspension
Unexcused absence from in-house suspension	Two days external suspension.
Unexcused dismissal from in-house suspension	Repeat the day of in-house suspension.
Inappropriate behavior and/or dangerous behavior.	After school detention, break detention, in-house suspension, or external suspension, depending on the nature of the behavior.
Bullying behavior	Depending upon the nature of the incidents, warning (written), after school detention, break detention, in-house suspension or external suspension. Parents/Guardians, school counseling department, and police may be notified.

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### POLICY ON NON-DISCRIMINATION

It is the policy of the Mendon-Upton Regional School District (File AC - Nondiscrimination) not to discriminate in its educational programs, services, activities, or employment practices on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, age, disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law.

Inquiries regarding the District's compliance with Title IX and other Civil Rights laws may be directed to the following:

Title IX/Civil Rights/504 Coordinator	IDEA/Homeless Coordinator	Other Resources
Cheryl Kirkpatrick Assistant Superintendent <a href="mailto:ckirkpatrick@mursd.org">ckirkpatrick@mursd.org</a> Phone: 508-488-5125	Frank Alves Director of Student Support Services <a href="mailto:falves@mursd.org">falves@mursd.org</a> Phone: 508-634-1581	U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights 33 Arch Street Boston, MA 02110 Phone: (617) 289-0111 Fax: (617) 289-0150

## HAZING

Hazing of students is prohibited by state law and is defined as any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of the student.

Any student who violates the following hazing laws will be subject to disciplinary action.

In compliance with our requirement to provide each student with a written copy of the law forbidding hazing, we include the text of Chapter 269, S. 17-19. MGL:

### SECTION 17

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 by 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.

### SECTION 18

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.

### SECTION 19

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge, or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization or individual has

received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college 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 the provisions of this section and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, 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 a report.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY (MURSD POLICY JICFB)**

The Mendon-Upton Regional School District 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 a school staff member of a written, verbal, or electronic expression, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

"Cyber-bullying" 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.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of electronic medium 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 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.

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 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:

- On school grounds;
- On property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- At school-sponsored or school-related activities;
- At functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- At school bus stops;
- On school buses or other vehicles owned, leased or used by the School District; or,
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the Mendon-Upton Regional schools;

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 Mendon-Upton Regional School District if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or
- materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

#### BULLYING 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 intervention plan within his or her school.

#### BULLYING 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 bullying.

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 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.

#### TARGET ASSISTANCE

The Mendon-Upton Regional 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 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 Mendon-Upton Regional School District website.

#### HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION

The Mendon-Upton Public Schools, in accordance with federal and state laws, prohibits discrimination in its operations. Harassment is a form of discrimination.

#### STUDENT-TO-STUDENT HARASSMENT (MURSD SC POLICY JBA)

Harassment of students by other students will not be tolerated in the Mendon-Upton Regional School District. This

policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of the School District, school buses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment prohibited by the district includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, homelessness, age, disability, and any other class or characteristic protected by law. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass, distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student; or,
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment, as described above, may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, physical or written (including texting, blogging, or other technological methods) harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter;
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

The district will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

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

The Superintendent will develop administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

#### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT (MURSD SC POLICY ACAB)**

All persons associated with the Mendon-Upton Regional School District including, but not necessarily limited to, the Committee, the administration, staff, and students, are expected to conduct themselves at all times so as to provide an atmosphere free from sexual harassment. Any person who engages in sexual harassment while acting, as a member of the school community, will be in violation of this policy. Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperating in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

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

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



the definition of sexual harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment: Unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature may constitute sexual harassment where:

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

The Grievance Officer:

The committee will annually appoint a sexual harassment grievance officer who will be vested with the authority and responsibility of processing all sexual harassment complaints in accordance with the procedure set out below:

Complaint Procedure:

1. Any member of the school community who believes that they have been subjected to sexual harassment will report the incident (s) to the grievance officer. All complaints shall be investigated promptly and resolved as soon as possible.
2. The grievance officer will attempt to resolve the problem in an informal manner through the following process:
  - a. The grievance officer will confer with the charging party in order to obtain a clear understanding of that party's statement of the facts and may interview any witnesses.
  - b. The grievance officer will then attempt to meet with the charged party in order to obtain their response to the complaint.
  - c. The grievance officer will hold as many meetings with the parties as is necessary to establish the facts.
  - d. On the basis of the grievance officer's perception of the situation they may:
    - Attempt to resolve the matter informally through reconciliation.
    - Report the incident and transfer the record to the Superintendent or their designee, and so notify the parties by certified mail.
3. After reviewing the record made by the grievance officer, the Superintendent or her designee may attempt to gather any more evidence necessary to decide the case, and thereafter impose any sanctions deemed appropriate, including a recommendation to the committee for termination or expulsion. At this stage of the proceedings the parties may present witnesses and other evidence, and may also be represented. The parties, to the extent permissible by law, shall be informed of the disposition of the complaint. All matters involving sexual harassment complaints will remain confidential to the extent possible. If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct.
4. The grievance officer, upon request, will provide the charging party with government agencies that handle sexual harassment matters.

Additional Information:

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the

following are some examples of conduct which, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its 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 or 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.

Further, any retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment or retaliation against individuals for cooperation in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint is similarly unlawful and will not be tolerated.

#### TOBACCO USE (MURSD SC POLICY ADC)

Use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses 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.

#### ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND DRUGS

Nipmuc Regional High School will adhere to all state and federal laws regarding the selling of drugs or alcohol in and around school grounds. In addition, the following activities are hereby prohibited at school functions or on school property: 1) the distribution or consumption of alcoholic beverages; 2) the possession, use, or transfer of substances defined by the law as drugs; and 3) the presence of an individual under the influence of either of these substances.

Parents, police, and/or appropriate authority will be notified of any of the above infractions. If a student is suspected of substance abuse, the school will notify the parent and will recommend a referral to an appropriate agency.

Use of a breathalyzer is at the discretion of the administration. Students who fail to comply with the use of a breathalyzer may be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Violation in regard to alcohol and drugs will result in a suspension and immediate notification of parents. Such a violation may be cause for expulsion from school. The administration reserves the right to require documentation of treatment before considering re-admittance to school.

#### FIREARMS (CH.269, S.10)

Whoever, not being a law enforcement officer, and notwithstanding any license obtained by him under the provisions of chapter one hundred and forty, carries on his person a firearm as hereinafter defined, loaded or unloaded, in any building or on the grounds of any secondary school, college or university without the written authorization of the board or officer in charge of such secondary school, college or university shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment for not more than a year, or both. For the purpose of this paragraph, "firearm" shall mean any pistol, revolver, rifle, or smoothbore arm from which a shot, bullet or pellet can be discharged by whatever means. Amended by St. 1987, CH.150, S.2. (This includes paintball guns)

## DANGEROUS WEAPON, ASSAULT, FELONY COMPLAINT

Mass. General Laws Chapter 71, Section 37H, and Section 37H1/2 as amended by Section 36 of Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1993 (the Education Reform Act), and further amended by Section 1 of Chapter 380 of the Acts of 1993.

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

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

c. Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph A or B shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After said hearing, a principal may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph a or b.

d. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to notify the 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. 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.

## SCHOOL SEARCHES

A student search by a public school official or teacher will be found reasonable under the U.S. Supreme Court standard if there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student has violated or is violating either the law or rules of the school. The search itself is conducted in a manner reasonably related to its objectives and not excessively intrusive in the light of the age and sex of the student and the nature of the infraction. "Reasonable grounds" for student search may include, for example, a school official's personal observation that the student possesses contraband material on school premises, or the official's receipt of a report to that effect from a teacher, another school employee, student, or some other reliable source.

Search of student lockers, backpacks, pocketbooks, and cars on-premises: Certain items (including, for example, weapons, illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, stolen property, and so on) may not be stored in lockers, backpacks, pocketbooks, or cars. The school retains the right to inspect lockers periodically. All lockers are school property and there is no expectation of privacy by a student. The school also retains the right to inspect

backpacks, clothing, belongings, pocketbooks, and students' cars (on the premises) for compliance with these rules.

## STUDENT RECORDS REGULATIONS

School records include all the information about you as an individual that the school system keeps, regardless of where or how it is kept (except for certain personal notes which teachers, counselors, etc. do not share with anyone else). It is made up of your "transcript" (name, address, courses taken, credits, and grades) and the "temporary record" (everything else, including progress reports, tests scores, class rank, extracurricular activities, etc.). Temporary records should contain only information which is accurate and which concerns you educationally.

If you are fourteen (14) years of age or older or if you are in the ninth grade or above, you and your parents have the right to see all of your records. If you are neither fourteen nor yet in the ninth grade, only your parents have this right. You must give 10 days' written notice to see your records, and a qualified school professional will explain to you any items they contain.

When you turn eighteen and are attending Nipmuc Regional High School, you have the legal rights of an adult. However, Nipmuc Regional High School can continue to keep your parents informed about your progress and whereabouts. Nipmuc Regional High School will continue to notify your parents if you are absent. Parents do have access to their student's records even if they are eighteen.

The school system must keep your transcript for at least 60 years after you have left the school system. Everything else (the temporary record) must be destroyed within seven to five years after you leave the system. The principal may also destroy records while you are still in the school if the information is misleading, outdated, or irrelevant. Before any records are destroyed, you/your parent(s) must be given notice and an opportunity to get a copy.

You/your parent(s) can add any relevant written material to your record, which you choose. The records regulations also provide an appeals process you may use when you/your parent(s) feel that improper action has been taken concerning your records. This includes situations where you/your parent(s) feel that certain information in your record is inaccurate, misleading, or irrelevant and you want it removed. This appeals process begins with notifying the principal in writing or requesting a conference. Within one week of this notification or conference, the principal shall make a decision in writing. If you/your parent(s) are not satisfied, you may appeal, first to the superintendent and then to the school committee.