Cambridge Public Schools

2025-2026
Guide to Policies for Students & Families

All forms in the enclosed Annual Student Forms booklet must be completed and returned with students to their homeroom teacher on the first day of school.

Translations of this publication are available on the CPS website: www.cpsd.us.

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This Guide to Policies is not intended to be a complete directory of all policies and administrative guidelines relating to the Cambridge Public Schools. Federal and state laws and regulations and policies, administrative guidelines and practices are subject to change. Many policies and the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* can be accessed from the website at www.cpsd.us. The Cambridge School Committee's entire policy manual can be accessed at http://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/Z2Browswer2.html?showset=cambridgeset. A copy of the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* as well as copies of individual policies and administrative guidelines may also be requested from the school principal.

The Cambridge Public Schools is an equal opportunity employer and is committed to the provision of quality educational programs for all students. The Cambridge Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition in its programs and activities and provides equal access to the Boy Scouts (since renamed Scouting America) and other designated youth groups.

SEPARATE INSERT ANNUAL STUDENT FORMS TO COMPLETE, SIGN & RETURN

Last Update: March 11, 2025

1. Student Privacy

The Cambridge Public Schools (CPS) seeks to ensure the privacy of students attending its schools in a manner consistent with the federal and state law, including the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and Massachusetts student records regulations as well as the Cambridge School Committee's Student Privacy Policy. For further information on student privacy issues, contact your school principal.

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), section 1232h of title 20 of the United States Code, affords parents/guardians/caregivers certain rights regarding the school department's conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

- Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas ("protected information survey") if the survey is funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education (ED): (1) political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian/caregiver; (2) mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family; (3) sex behavior or attitudes; (4) illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior; (5) critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships; (6) legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers; (7) religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents/guardians/caregivers; or (8) income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.
- Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of: (1) any other protected information survey, regardless of funding; (2) any non-emergency, invasive physical exam or screening required as a condition of attendance, administered by the school or its agent, and not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, except for hearing, vision, or scoliosis screenings, or any physical exam or screening permitted or required under State law; and (3) activities involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information obtained from students for marketing or to sell or otherwise distribute the information to others.
- Inspect, upon request and before administration or use: (1) protected information surveys of students; (2) instruments used to collect personal information from students for any of the above marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes; and (3) instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum.

These rights transfer from the parents/guardians/caregivers to a student who is 18 years old or an emancipated minor under State law.

CPS has adopted policies, in consultation with parents/guardians/caregivers, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected information surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. CPS will directly notify parents/guardians/caregivers of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. CPS will also directly notify, such as through U.S. Mail or email, parents/guardians/caregivers of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent/guardian/caregiver to opt their child out of participation in the specific activity or survey. CPS will make this notification to parents/guardians/caregivers at the beginning of the school year if the school department has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time. For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts,

parents/guardians/caregivers will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys listed below and be provided an opportunity to opt their child out of such activities and surveys. Parents/guardians/caregivers will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. In accordance with the Student Privacy Policy, the principal of your child's school will notify you of any activities requiring parent/guardian/caregiver notice and consent or opt-out during the school year. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement: (1) collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution; (2) administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or in part by ED, and (3) any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents/guardians/caregivers who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920
Phone: 800.USA.LEARN (800.872.5327)

2. Student Records

Under Massachusetts law, parents/guardians/caregivers of any student, or a student who has entered ninth grade or who is at least 14 years old, has the right, upon request, to inspect the student's record. The parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student should receive the student record no later than ten days after the request, and may ask to have the record interpreted by a qualified professional or amended by the principal. Additionally, state law sets out specific procedures which public schools must follow before student record information is provided to non-custodial parents. All requests to see a student's record should be directed to the attention of the principal at the student's school. Additionally, authorized school personnel of a school to which a student seeks or intends to transfer may have access to a student's record without consent of the eligible student and/or the student's parent/guardian/caregiver and the CPS forwards student records to schools in which a student seeks or intends to enroll.

A student's temporary record is destroyed no later than seven (7) years following their graduation, transfer or withdrawal from CPS. At the time of a student's graduation, transfer or withdrawal from CPS the student and the student's parent/guardian/caregiver will be given written notice of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record. A student's transcript is maintained by the school department and will be destroyed sixty (60) years following their graduation, transfer or withdrawal from CPS.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, and Massachusetts student record law, requires that the school department, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, CPS may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised CPS to the contrary in accordance with its procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow CPS to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications, such as a playbill, showing your child's role in a drama production; the annual yearbook; honor roll or other recognition lists; graduation programs; and sports activity sheets.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without their parent/guardian/caregiver's prior written consent.

CPS may release a student's name, address or email address to outside organizations including, but not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks for the specific and limited purpose of providing those institutional functions or services to students. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories—names, addresses and telephone listings—unless parents/guardians/caregivers have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent.

CPS releases the following information without the consent of the parent/guardian/caregiver: student's name, dates of attendance, class or grade, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, photographs/videos, membership on athletic Teams, degrees, honors and awards, major field of study, and post high school plans. Additionally, pursuant to M.G.L.c. 71, §89(g), CPS, upon receipt of a request from a Commonwealth charter school, releases the names and addresses of public school students to a third party mail house that has been approved by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education so that the Commonwealth charter school may send recruiting information to students who are eligible to enroll in the Commonwealth charter school.

If you do not want this information released without your consent, you must notify the principal of your school in writing by October 1 of each school year. A written opt-out form is enclosed with this handbook for completion by those students and their parents/guardians/caregivers who do not want to have this information released.

Copies of state regulations on student records and parents/guardians/caregivers' rights and students' rights to student records are available at each school.

Additionally, the School Committee has designated student and parents/guardians/caregivers address(es), telephone number(s) and email address(es) along with student's name as "directory information" that only may be released to parent/guardian/caregiver groups at a particular school for the specific and limited purpose of developing a school-based Family Contact Book and to school alumni groups for the specific and limited purpose of developing an Alumni Directory and the release of such information will only occur if parents/guardians/caregivers of the student have expressly given written authorization for the inclusion of this information in either a school-based Family Contact Book or a school-based Alumni Directory. If a parent/guardian/caregiver wants to participate in either of these publications, they must "opt-in" at the start of the school year.

The School Committee also has designated student name, telephone number(s), home address, and date of birth as "directory information" that only may be released to the Cambridge Public Library for the sole purpose of issuing library cards to CPS kindergarten students. Library cards will be issued during the beginning of the school year to all kindergarten students that are five and older, and library cards also will be issued to kindergarten students as they turn five during the course of the school year. If a parent/guardian/caregiver does not want this information released to the Cambridge Public Library, they must "opt out" at the start of each school year.

In addition, CPS may share student data with vendors that provide online and cloud-based instructional applications that are used with students, which is an institutional function or service, but only when the vendor signs a student data privacy agreement with CPS so that the vendor is functioning as a school official for the purposes of providing these online and cloud-based instructional applications that are institutional services and functions or if an express written consent form has

been signed by the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student. A list of approved online and cloud-based instructional resources can be found at: bit.ly/cps_student_privacy

Any student work that a student creates and saves on school department computers/servers will be maintained for up to seven years after the student leaves CPS and any student work that a student creates and saves through an online educational service provider that CPS utilizes is maintained in accordance with the retention and destruction requirements of that online educational service provider. In most instances, the retention period of an online service provider matches the length of the provider's contract with CPS, or will be shortened in response to a request from CPS.

In accordance with state law during the time that a student is enrolled in a school, the principal or designee shall periodically review and destroy misleading, outdated or irrelevant information contained a student's temporary record provided that the student and their parent/guardian/caregiver are notified in writing and are given opportunity to receive this information or a copy of it prior to destruction. Additionally, in accordance with state law the temporary record shall be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates, or withdraws from CPS. Written notice to the student and their parent/guardian/caregiver of the approximate date of destruction and their right to receive the information, in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of transfer, graduation or withdrawal.

In accordance with state law the transcript of a student is destroyed sixty (60) years following the student's graduation, transfer or withdrawal from CPS.

3. Release of Student Records to Non-Custodial Parents

Pursuant to 603 C.M.R. 23.07(5), non-custodial parents (i.e., parents who do not have physical custody of their children) are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records unless the school has been given documentation evidencing:

- that the parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitation, based on a threat to the safety of the student, specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation;
- that the parent has been denied visitation;
- that the parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order or any subsequent order modifying the protective order specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record; or
- that there is an order of a probate and family court judge which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

Non-custodial parents who fall into any of these categories may not have access to the student record.

A non-custodial parent must submit a written request for the student record to the principal. Upon receipt of the request the school must immediately notify the custodial parent by certified and first class mail, in English and the primary language of the custodial parent, that it will provide the non-custodial parent with access after twenty-one (21) days, unless the custodial parent

provides the principal with documentation that the non-custodial parent is not eligible to obtain access as set forth in 603 C.M.R. 23.07(5)(a).

In accordance with the requirements of state regulations all contact information (e.g., address, work and/or home telephone numbers or email addresses) of the custodial parent and student will be redacted from the student record provided to the non-custodial parent, and the records will be marked with the phrase: DOCUMENT CANNOT BE USED TO ENROLL STUDENT IN SCHOOL.

4. Release of Basic Contact Information to Military Recruiters, Prospective Employers, Colleges, and Universities

A provision of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, a federal law, requires secondary schools, upon receipt of a request, to release the names, addresses, email addresses and telephone numbers of students attending the high school to United States military recruiters, colleges, universities and other educational institutions and prospective employers. Secondary school students and their parents/guardians/caregivers have the option of requesting that secondary schools not release their basic information when such requests are received. If, however, secondary school students and/or their parents/guardians/caregivers do not take this affirmative step to block the release of the information, the law requires that the contact information be released when a request is received. A written opt-out form is enclosed with this handbook for completion by those secondary school students and their parents/guardians/caregivers who do not want to have their contact information released.

5. Notice of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA affords parents/guardians/caregivers and students over eighteen (18) years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within forty-five (45) days from the day the school receives a request for access. Parents/guardians/caregivers or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student believes are inaccurate or misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA. Parents/guardians/caregivers or eligible students who wish to ask the school to amend a record should write to the school principal, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it should be changed. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student, the school will notify the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for the amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

  One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is

a person employed by the School as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); or a person serving on the School Committee. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the school who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant or therapist; a parent/guardian/caregiver or student volunteering to serve on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee; or a parent/guardian/caregiver, student or other volunteer assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill their professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, or is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes of the student's enrollment or transfer.

- The right to file a complaint with the United States Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are:

  Family Policy Compliance Office
  U.S. Department of Education
  400 Maryland Avenue, SW
  Washington, D.C. 20202-5920
  Phone: 800.USA.LEARN (800.872.5327)

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students' education records, without consent of the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires the school to record the disclosure. Parents/guardians/caregivers and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures. A school may disclose PII from the education records of a student without obtaining prior written consent of the parents/guardians/caregivers or the eligible student:

- To other school officials, including teachers, within the educational agency or institution whom the school has determined to have legitimate educational interests. This includes contractors, consultants, volunteers, vendors that provide online and cloud-based instructional applications that are used with students or other parties to whom the school has outsourced institutional services or functions, provided that the conditions listed in §99.31(a)(1)(i)(B)(1) – (a)(1)(i)(B)(2) are met. (§99.31(a)(1))
- To officials of another school, school system, or institution of postsecondary education where the student seeks or intends to enroll, or where the student is already enrolled if the disclosure is for purposes related to the student's enrollment or transfer, subject to the requirements of §99.34. (§99.31(a)(2))
- To authorized representatives of the U.S. Comptroller General, the U.S. Attorney General, the U.S. Secretary of Education, or State and local educational authorities, such as the State educational agency in the parent/guardian/caregiver or eligible student's State (SEA). Disclosures under this provision may be made, subject to the requirements of §99.35, in connection with an audit or evaluation of Federal- or State-supported education programs, or for the enforcement of or compliance with Federal legal requirements that

relate to those programs. These entities may make further disclosures of PII to outside entities that are designated by them as their authorized representatives to conduct any audit, evaluation, or enforcement or compliance activity on their behalf. (§§99.31(a)(3) and 99.35)

- In connection with financial aid for which the student has applied or which the student has received, if the information is necessary to determine eligibility for the aid, determine the amount of the aid, determine the conditions of the aid, or enforce the terms and conditions of the aid. (§99.31(a)(4))
- To State and local officials or authorities to whom information is specifically allowed to be reported or disclosed by a State statute that concerns the juvenile justice system and the system's ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records were released, subject to §99.38. (§99.31(a)(5))
- To organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, the school, in order to: (a) develop, validate, or administer predictive tests; (b) administer student aid programs; or (c) improve instruction. (§99.31(a)(6))
- To accrediting organizations to carry out their accrediting functions. (§99.31(a)(7))
- To parents/guardians/caregivers of an eligible student if the student is a dependent for IRS tax purposes. (99.31(a)(8))
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena. (99.31(a)(9))
- To appropriate officials in connection with a health or safety emergency, subject to §99.36. (§99.31(a)(10))
- It is information the school has designated as "directory information" under §99.37. (§99.31(a)(11))
- To an agency caseworker or other representative of a State or local child welfare agency or tribunal organization who is authorized to access a student's case plan when such agency or organization is legally responsible, in accordance with State or tribal law, for the care and protection of the student in foster care placement. (20 U.S.C. §1232g(b)(1)(L))
- To the Secretary of Agriculture or authorized representatives of the Food and Nutrition Service for purposes of conducting program monitoring, evaluations and performance measurements of programs authorized under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, under certain conditions. (20 U.S.C. § 1232g(b)(1)(K))

6. Student Data and Online Instructional Applications

CPS may share student data with vendors that provide online instructional applications that are used with students, which is an institutional function or service, but only when the vendor signs a student data privacy agreement with the school department or if an express written consent form has been signed by the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student. A list of approved online instructional resources can be found at: bit.ly/cps_student_privacy

7. Attendance

Children learn better and achieve higher degrees of success when they consistently attend school. Regular and punctual attendance contributes to the general welfare of the entire student body by reducing disruption to the learning environment. Daily attendance and punctuality are essential to the child's future school and job success. As you know, under the Massachusetts General Laws: ALL

CHILDREN AGED 6-16 ARE MANDATED TO ATTEND SCHOOL.

It is important for all to understand that patterns for successful school attendance and academic success are started in kindergarten and first grade. Early patterns of non-attendance tend to continue throughout a child's school life and leave a child at risk for school failure and dropping out. We request the cooperation and assistance of parents/guardians/caregivers in making sure their child is in school every day and on time. When any child is absent, the parent/guardian/caregiver must call the school to give notification of the absence no later than the morning of the absence. If a call is not made, when the child returns to school, a note from the child's parent/guardian/caregiver stating the reason for the absence must be provided. These notes should be kept on file for the school year by the homeroom teacher.

Excused absences include: (a) personal illness or quarantine; (b) absences attributable to personal trauma; grieving, death in the family or serious illness in the family; (c) observance or practice of a religious holiday; (d) medical appointments that absolutely cannot be made outside of school hours or counseling visits; (e) legal matters requiring a personal appearance; (f) suspensions or expulsions in or out of school; (g) school-related trips, assemblies or meetings; (h) college visits (two days in junior year of high school and three days in senior year of high school); (i) one school-sponsored or school-approved trip or educational experience of no more than five days during a student's years in high school; or (j) weather so inclement as to endanger the health or safety of the child.

A student may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with the approval of the school administration not exceeding seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions in any six (6) month period. Any other absence that is not excused or any excusable absence that is not reported by a parent/guardian/caregiver by a telephone call or written note from a parent/guardian/caregiver or the student's medical provider upon the student's return to school constitutes an unexcused absence.

When a student is at school, the student is under the supervision of all teachers and school authorities and must get permission from the principal's office to leave early. Any student who does not sign out of school in the principal's office before leaving will be unexcused and receive no credit for all class activities or assignments missed. Each teacher shall keep a record of the absence or tardiness of students. A student who enters the classroom after the time appointed for the beginning of the session shall be recorded as tardy.

Parents/guardians/caregivers will be notified by the school when a student has any unexcused absence, or unexcused tardy or unexcused misses of two (2) or more periods of school. The school must ensure that it notifies the student's parents/guardians/caregivers of a student's absence within three (3) days of the absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from the student's parent/guardian/caregiver. The principal or designee also shall make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student who has five (5) or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal or designee, the student and the student's

parent/guardian/caregiver and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies, as appropriate.

Any student with an excused absence from school or classes has the privilege of making up the class assignments, missed homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects and other assignments. The principal shall ensure that there is a school-wide education service plan in place for all students who are suspended or expelled from school for more than five (5) consecutive days, whether in or out of school. Additionally, the principal shall ensure that any student suspended or expelled from school for more than five (5) consecutive days, whether in or out of school, has an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of exclusion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects and other assignments.

For any student who has five (5) or more days of excused absences, the school will make arrangements with families to have the student make up home assignments and upon return, the student will have the opportunity to make up class work, including tests, quizzes, class assignments, missed homework, exams, papers, projects and other assignments. The parent/guardian/caregiver of any student who will have a prolonged absence (2 weeks or longer) due to illness or injury must notify the school to make the necessary arrangements for homebound instruction.

Absences or tardiness without satisfactory explanation shall be grounds for disciplinary action. School officials are encouraged to take all other appropriate action in an effort to help a student with problems of truancy, tardiness and class cutting, including referral of the student to the Juvenile Court as a habitually truant child in need of services and/or referral for evaluation as a child in need of special education. No credit will be given to students who miss school work due to truancy, tardiness or class-cutting, unless the student makes up the missed work as directed by his teacher and teachers should afford students a reasonable amount of time upon their return to class to make up missed homework, quizzes, exams, papers, projects and other assignments. No adverse, prejudicial or discriminatory effect shall result to any student because they are absent to observe a religious holiday. Teachers should, to the extent feasible, refrain from scheduling any important tests, culminating activities, and/or major papers/reports during religious holidays.

Cambridge Rindge and Latin School and the High School Extension Program will treat five (5) unexcused and/or excused absences, or fifteen (15) or more tardies, or a combination of the two in the same class during a quarter as an Attendance Violation (AV). In addition, three (3) unexcused tardies to class will be counted as one (1) unexcused absence for purposes of calculating an AV. Additionally, a student who receives five (5) unexcused absences or fifteen (15) unexcused tardies in any one class, will result in an AV. Attendance Violations (AV) will be reported on progress reports and record cards. On or before issuance of the AV, the Dean of Students will schedule a meeting with the student and their parent/guardian/caregiver to discuss ways to improve attendance. There will be no reduction of a student's grade as a result of the issuance of an AV.

In accordance with the school district's policy, the school will notify the parents/guardians/caregivers

after each absence and/or tardy of the student and also will notify the parents/guardians/caregivers after four (4) or more unexcused absences occur. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers may seek a medical waiver for any chronic condition, recurring illness or for any illnesses that exceeds four (4) days. Parents/Guardians/Caregivers will have the right to appeal any AV to the Appeals Review Committee at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School and the High School Extension Program within ten (10) days of the issuance of the AV and, if the appeal is denied, the parents/guardians/caregivers may within ten (10) days of the denial submit a written appeal to the Superintendent of Schools for review. The decision of the Superintendent of Schools shall be final.

8. Child Requiring Assistance (CRA)

The focus of the courts and school department with these offenders, regardless of age, is on early intervention. Massachusetts General Laws defines a habitual truant and a repeated school offender as a child that persistently and willfully fails to attend school, is truant, or persistently violates the lawful and reasonable regulations of their school. Under M.G.L. c.76, §2, parents/guardians/caregivers are required to cause a child to attend school, and, if the child fails to do so for more than seven day sessions or fourteen half-day sessions within any period of six months, the parent/guardian/caregiver shall on a complaint by the supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine.

Additionally, schools may seek a CRA application for any child between the ages of 6 and up to 18 who is habitually truant because they have eight or more unexcused absences in a school quarter, or because the child has repeatedly failed to obey school rules.

When internal school intervention efforts fail to resolve a chronic absence or tardiness, habitual truancy or repeated violations of school rules, the school department may initiate a CRA action with the court. Under the law, the Juvenile Court has access to all school information relative to these cases.

9. Notice Regarding Students Who Leave School

CPS is committed to having students complete their elementary and secondary education. In the event that a student who is sixteen years of age or older seeks to leave school, CPS adheres to the requirements of M.G.L.c. 76, §18 and follows the procedures set forth below:

1. The principal or designee issues a letter to the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student notifying the parent/guardian/caregiver that the student either (a) has expressed an intention of withdrawing from school without an intention of returning, or (b) has had fifteen (15) consecutive absences from school and indicating the student's last date of attendance at school.

   In order for the school to determine whether the student is withdrawing from school without intending to return, the school schedules a meeting with the student and the student's parent/guardian/caregiver for the purpose of discussing the reasons why the student wants to leave school and to explore alternative educational and other placements for the student prior to the student formally withdrawing from school. The parent/guardian/caregiver may request that the date and time of this meeting be changed provided that the extension of time shall be no longer than fourteen (14) days from the date of issuance of the letter by the principal or designee.

2. After the meeting has been held with the parent/guardian/caregiver and the student, the principal or designee issues a letter to the

parent/guardian/caregiver of the student summarizing what was discussed and any decision that was reached at the meeting, including but not limited to, whether the student is returning to school, pursuing an alternative educational placement, pursuing other support services or permanently leaving school.

3. In accordance with the provisions of M.G.L.c. 76, §18, any determination that a student would be permanently leaving school shall not be construed as a permanent exclusion of the student if the student wishes to resume their education.

10. Child Abuse

Section 51A of Chapter 119 of the Massachusetts General Laws requires that certain persons who in their professional capacity have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen (18) years is suffering serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse, or neglect, including malnutrition, inflicted upon the child shall immediately, via telephone, report this abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Professionals who must report cases of child abuse or neglect to the DCF include: physicians, medical interns, nurses, teachers, educational administrators, guidance counselors, family counselors, probation officers, school attendance officers, social workers, psychologists, and police officers. The telephone report should be made either to the appropriate area office or via the 24-hour reporting hotline: 1-800-792-5200. Within forty-eight (48) hours, these professionals are required under Massachusetts law to notify DCF in writing using a standard DCF report form. A new report form must be completed for each new injury or re-injury.

Staff who have reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen is suffering from serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse, including sexual abuse, or neglect, including malnutrition should notify their school principal immediately in order for a 51A report to be filed.

Child abuse and neglect is any incident in which there is reasonable cause to believe that a child's physical or mental health or welfare is harmed or is threatened with substantial risk of harm through abuse or neglect by a person (or persons) responsible for the child's health or welfare, including personnel in the public school system must be reported. Truancy, by itself, is not a reportable matter.

Abuse includes:

- physical, mental, or emotional injury by other than accidental means, i.e., beatings, cuttings, burns, broken bones, multiple bruises;
- physical dependency on an addictive drug at birth;
- any sexual act against another person either by force, or by threat of force or bodily injury, or against the person's will. This includes a sexual act against another person who is incapable of giving consent either because of temporary or permanent mental or physical incapacity or because the person is a minor. Such crimes as indecent assault and battery, rape, rape with force, rape and abuse, assault with intent to rape and unnatural and lascivious acts constitute a sexual assault.
- Indecent assault and battery includes, but is not limited to, inappropriate and unwanted touching of private body parts. A person under the age of 14 is legally unable to consent to this type of sexual activity.
- Neglect is deemed to exist when the person or persons responsible for a child's care, although financially able to do so, fail to provide the child with:

- adequate food, clothing, shelter, education or medical care and/or
- proper supervision and/or guardianship.

11. Care and Protection Actions

If the failure to send children to school occurs with other more serious abuse and neglect problems, a care and protection action may be initiated pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L. c.119, §24. In a care and protection action if the court "is satisfied that there is a reasonable cause to believe that the child is suffering from serious abuse or neglect or is in immediate danger" the court may order immediate transfer of custody of the child.

12. Unaccounted for or Missing Child

There are many possible scenarios that describe the unaccounted for and missing child. Some examples are:

- A child has not returned to class and has not been located in the building or on school grounds,
- The classroom teacher cannot verify the child went with a parent or designee at dismissal,
- The classroom teacher cannot verify that the child boarded a bus, and
- The parent/guardian/caregiver has called the school to state that the child did not arrive home at the usual time.

The principal or designee will follow school procedures for locating an unaccounted for or missing child, which includes but is not limited to, contacting the transportation office for all children who ride the school bus, notifying the Superintendent and the Office of Safety and Security, being in contact with the parent/guardian caregiver, calling the police in the event of an emergency, , being available until the child is located.

13. Transportation

Every school should have an in-house system ensuring that transported primary grade children board appropriate buses. Contact the Department of Transportation at 617-349-6862 for all unaccounted for children who are transported.

Those who are not met at scheduled stop by parent/guardian/caregiver or designee on more than three occasions are subject to loss of bus privileges.

14. Standardized Testing

CPS administers, on an annual basis, MCAS at grade levels as determined by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Additionally, on an annual basis, CPS administers ACCESS to English Language Learner students, as appropriate, in accordance with the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

15. Sexuality Education

Schools are required by law to notify parents/guardians/caregivers about curriculum, which primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. Every fall a letter is sent home about the health education curriculum, which describes the sexuality lessons that may occur at each grade level. Parents/guardians/caregivers do not have to give permission for their children to take these classes, and have the right to exempt their children from such classes. Parents/guardians/caregivers may do so by sending a letter to the school principal requesting to remove the child from the lessons. Any parent/guardian/caregiver who would like to review the material can speak with their child's teacher or with the Program Leader for Health Education at 617-349-6851.

16. Physical Restraints

It is the policy of the Cambridge School Committee to promote a safe and productive workplace and educational environment for its employees and students, and to ensure that every student in CPS is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's regulations, and that physical restraint shall only be used on students in emergency situations of last resort when needed to protect a student and/or member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm and with extreme caution in order to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of the physical restraint. Other lawful and less intrusive alternatives should be attempted first.

School personnel shall only administer a physical restraint on students in emergency situations of last resort when it is needed to protect a student and/or a member of the school community from imminent, serious, physical harm and with extreme caution in order to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of the physical restraint

This policy shall not be construed to limit the protection afforded to publicly funded students under other federal and state laws, including those laws that provide for the rights of students who have been found eligible to receive special education services. Additionally, this policy shall not be construed to preclude any teacher, employee or agent of a public education program from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

CPS has written procedures and guidelines related to this policy which are posted on the school department's website and which can be obtained in the principal's office, identifying: (i) appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention; and (ii) alternative methods that should be used first when seeking to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student, including alternative methods in emergency situations that avoid resorting to physical restraint.

Physical Restraint Procedures

Definitions

"Consent" shall mean agreement by a parent/guardian/caregiver who has been fully informed of all information relevant to the activity for which agreement is sought, in their native language or other mode of communication, that the parent/guardian/caregiver understands and agrees in writing to carrying out the activity, and understands that the agreement is voluntary and may be revoked at any time. The agreement describes the activity and lists the records (if any) which will be released and to whom.

"Restraint" shall mean limitation on a student's physical movement using force against the student's resistance.

"Physical restraint" shall mean direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student's freedom of movement. The term physical restraint does not include prone restraint, mechanical

restraint or medication restraint. Additionally, physical restraint does not include: providing brief physical contact, without force, to promote student safety or limit self-injurious behavior, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort. The use of physical restraints inconsistent with 603 C.M.R. 46.00 are prohibited.

"Physical escort" shall mean a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

"Mechanical restraint" shall mean the use of a physical device to restrict the movement of a student or the movement or normal function of a portion of their body. A protective or stabilizing device ordered by a physician shall not be considered a mechanical restraint. The use of a mechanical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and approved in writing by the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student.

"Seclusion" shall mean the involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented, or reasonably believes they will be prevented, from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined in 603 C.M.R. 46.02. The use of a seclusion restraint is expressly prohibited.

"Time-out" shall mean a behavioral support strategy in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During time-out, a student shall not be involuntarily confined and must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed or when thirty (30) minutes have passed, whichever is earlier. The preference is for time-out to be implemented within a classroom. Any space utilized for time-out outside of a classroom must be a clean, safe, sanitary space that is appropriate for the purpose of calming and this calming environment must have been approved by the Office of Student Services before it is utilized.

"Medication restraint" shall mean the administration of temporarily controlling behavior. The use of a chemical restraint is prohibited unless explicitly authorized by a physician and consented to, in writing, by the parent/guardian/caregiver of the student.

"Prone restraint" shall mean a restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student's body to keep the student in a prone position. The use of prone restraint is expressly prohibited.

"Principal" shall mean the instructional leader of a public education school program or designee.

<u>Use of a Restraint</u>

If all other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior and/or de-escalating potentially dangerous behavior occurring among groups of students or with an individual student, a physical restraint may be used as a last resort. In other words, a physical restraint can

only be used in emergency situations of last resort when needed to protect a student and/or member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious physical harm and with extreme caution in order to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of the physical restraint. Other lawful and less intrusive alternatives should be attempted first. In other words, staff should first attempt verbal re-directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions first unless such interventions are deemed inappropriate under the circumstances. Any physical restraint shall be limited to the use of such reasonable force as is necessary, for the least time necessary, to protect a student or another member of the school community from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm. A physical restraint may only be administered by school personnel who have been properly trained in the use of physical restraint.

Other Limitations on the Use of Restraint

The following practices are expressly prohibited: (i) use of restraint inconsistent with the provisions set forth above; (ii) use of a physical restraint as a means of discipline or punishment, as a response to the destruction of property, or disruption of school order, or as a response to a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats when those actions do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm; (iii) use of prone restraint, (iv) use of mechanical restraint, (v) use of medication restraint that has not been approved by a physician and consented to, in writing, by the student's parent/guardian/caregiver, (vi) use of restraint when a student cannot be safely restrained, and (vii) continued use of restraint when a student indicates that they cannot breathe or appears to be in severe distress (including but not limited to: difficulty breathing, sustained or prolonged crying or coughing).

Restraint may not be included as a planned response in an IEP. However, for students who present with repetitive self-injurious behaviors, principals may propose to the parent/guardian/caregiver a separate written agreement for the use of restraint on an emergency basis over a limited and specified time period. In such cases the plan must include detailed reporting to the parent/guardian/caregiver on the frequency of the use and duration of restraints, and the specific time period over which the use of physical restraint will be reduced and eliminated. The principal shall obtain the parent/guardian/caregiver's written consent to the plan prior to implementation.

Proper Administration of a Physical Restraint

Only trained school personnel shall administer physical restraints. Trained school personnel are those individuals who have received either the in-depth training or who have received the required basic training detailed below. Whenever possible, the administration of the physical restraint shall be witnessed by at least one adult who does not participate in the physical restraint. When administering a physical restraint, school personnel shall use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury. Additionally, school personnel administering a physical restraint shall use the safest method available and appropriate to the situation in accordance with the safety requirements detailed below, and shall discontinue the restraint as soon as possible. All physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the

student is no longer in immediate danger to themselves or others, or the student indicates that they cannot breathe, or if the student is observed to be in severe distress, such as having difficulty breathing, or sustained or prolonged crying or coughing. It should be noted, however, that these training requirements shall not preclude a teacher, employee or agent of the school from using reasonable and necessary force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

Safety Requirements

No restraints shall be administered in such a way that a student is prevented from breathing or speaking. During the administration of a restraint, school personnel shall continuously monitor the physical status of the student, including skin color, temperature and respiration. Any and all restraint shall be immediately released upon a determination by the school personnel administering the restraint that the student is no longer at risk of causing imminent physical harm to themselves or others. Additionally, restraints shall be administered in such a way as to prevent or minimize physical harm. If, at any time during a physical restraint the student demonstrates difficulty breathing or significant physical distress, including but not limited to, trouble breathing or prolonged coughing or crying, the student shall be released from the restraint immediately, and school staff shall take steps to seek medical assistance. School personnel shall review and consider any known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans regarding the use of physical restraint on an individual student as well as known or suspected trauma history. At any time during the administration of a physical restraint, school personnel may seek to contact the Office of Student Services behavioral specialists, or the Crisis Intervention Team, or take other steps to seek medical assistance if it appears that the student is demonstrating significant physical distress.

Follow-up Procedures and Reporting Requirements

At an appropriate time after a student has been released from a restraint, the principal or designee shall implement the follow-up procedures set forth below:

a. Review the restraint with the student to address the behavior that precipitated the restraint;

b. Review the incident with school personnel who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed; and

c. Follow-up should occur with students who witnessed the incident, including teacher debrief, counselor debrief or the use of restorative practices; and

d. Written notification of the restraint should be sent to the Office of Student Services and the immediate supervisor of the principal.

The following are the reporting requirements followed by the school:

a. Every use of restraint shall be reported in writing including the name of the student restrained and reported to the Office of Student Services and the immediate supervisor of the principal.

b. The school staff member who administers a physical restraint that results in an injury to a student shall verbally inform the principal or designee of the restraint as soon as possible and no later than the close of the school day in which the restraint was administered. A written report shall be completed and provided to the principal for review of the use of restraint no later than the next working day after the restraint was administered. If the principal has administered the restraint, the principal shall prepare the report and submit it to the Superintendent for review by a team designated by the Superintendent.

c. The principal shall maintain an on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint.

d. The principal or designee shall verbally inform the student's parents/guardians/caregivers as soon as possible but no later than twenty-four (24) hours after use of the restraint, and by a written report postmarked no later than three (3) school working days following the use of the physical restraint. The principal shall provide the student and the parent/guardian/caregiver an opportunity to comment in writing on the use of the restraint and on information in the written report.

e. The principal shall provide the Office of the Superintendent with a copy of the written report of a physical restraint when such restraint has resulted in an injury to a student as well as a copy of the school's on-going record of all reported instances of physical restraint for the thirty (30) days preceding the reported physical restraint. This documentation must be provided to the Office of the Superintendent by no later than one (1) working school day after the written report is received by the principal. The principal shall convene a student support team to make an assessment of an individual student's needs if a student has been restrained on two (2) separate occasions within a seven (7) day period or three (3) times within a thirty (30) day period. Members of the grade level Team and such other program staff as the principal may determine, shall participate in the assessment. Each member of the student support team shall read written reports of the restraint and any comments provided by the student and parent/guardian/caregiver about such reports and the use of restraints. In addition to the review and discussion of such reports by the student support team, the assessment shall include an analysis of the circumstances leading up to each restraint, including factors such as time of day, day of the week, antecedent events, and individuals involved. The assessment shall conclude with a plan for addressing any factors that may have contributed to the escalation of behaviors, consideration of alternatives to restraint, including de-escalation techniques and possible interventions, and such other strategies and decisions, as appropriate, with the goal of reducing or eliminating the use of restraint in the future. If the principal directly participated in the restraint, a duly qualified individual designated by the Superintendent shall lead the student support team's discussion. The principal shall ensure that a record of each individual student review by a student support team is maintained and made available for review by the

Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, upon request.

The principal shall conduct a monthly review of school-wide restraint data. This review shall consider patterns of use of restraints by similarities in the time of day, day of the week, or individuals involved; the number and duration of physical restraints; and the number and type of injuries, if any, resulting from the use of restraint. The principal shall determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify the school's restraint prevention and management practices and procedures, conduct additional staff training or restraint reduction/prevention strategies, such as training on positive behavioral interventions or supports, or take such other action as necessary or appropriate to reduce or eliminate restraints.

CPS Training Requirements

A. For All Program Staff

Within the first month of each school year, the principal of each school shall provide all program staff with training on restraint prevention and behavior support, the requirements of when restraint is used and this policy. Additionally, for all new school employees that are hired after the start of the school year, the principal shall within the first month of their employment provide the new employees with training on this policy. The training shall consist of the following: (a) this policy and related procedures and guidelines developed by the Superintendent; (b) interventions that may preclude the need for restraint, including de-escalation of problematic behaviors and other alternatives to restraint in emergency circumstances, including use of time-out as a behavior support strategy distinct from seclusion; (c) when behavior presents an emergency that requires physical restraint, the types of permitted physical restraints and related safety considerations, including information regarding the increased risk of injury to a student when any restraint is used, in particular a restraint of extended duration; (d) administering physical restraint in accordance with known medical or psychological limitations and/or behavioral intervention plans applicable to an individual student, including known or suspected trauma history; and (e) the role of the student, staff and family in preventing use of restraint; and (f) identification of program staff who have received in-depth training pursuant to 603 C.M.R. 46.03(3) in the use of physical restraint. See 603 C.M.R. 46.03(2).

B. For Staff Authorized to Serve as a School-Wide Resource on the Proper Administration of Physical Restraints

At the beginning of each school year, the principal of each school shall identify program staff that is authorized to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. The content of the in-depth training shall be competency-based and at least sixteen (16) hours in length. Such individuals shall participate in at least one refresher course during subsequent school years of no less than eight (8) hours in length. Training shall include, but not be limited to: (a) appropriate procedures for preventing the use of physical restraint, including the de-escalation of problematic behavior, relationship building and the use of alternatives to restraint; (b) description and identification of dangerous behaviors on the part of students that may lead to the use of physical restraint and methods for evaluating the risk of harm

in individual situations in order to determine whether the use of restraint is warranted; (c) the simulated experience of administering and receiving physical restraint, instruction regarding the effect(s) on the person restrained, including instruction on monitoring physical signs of distress and obtaining medical assistance; (d) instruction regarding documentation and reporting requirements and investigation of injuries and complaints; (e) instruction regarding the impact of physical restraint on the student and family, recognizing the act of restraint has impact, including but not limited to psychological, physiological and social-emotional effects; and (f) demonstration by participants of proficiency in administering physical restraint. See 603 C.M.R. 46.03(3) and 46.03(4).

Complaint Procedures

A. Informal Resolution of Concern About Use of Physical Restraint

Before initiating a formal complaint procedure, students or parents/guardians/caregivers who have concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint, may seek to resolve their concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint by raising the issue with the principal. Students and/or their parent/guardian/caregiver should direct their concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint to the principal within ten (10) days of the parent/guardian/caregiver's receipt of the written report from the school detailed above. Principals shall attempt, within their authority to work with the individual to resolve the complaint fairly and expeditiously. If the student and/or their parent/guardian/caregiver are not satisfied with the resolution, or if the student and/or their parent/guardian/caregiver does not choose informal resolution, then the student and/or their parent/guardian/caregiver may proceed with the formal complaint process detailed below.

B. Formal Resolution of Concern about Use of Physical Restraint

Students or their parents/guardians/caregivers, who have concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint, may seek to resolve their concerns regarding a specific use of a physical restraint by submitting a written complaint to the Office of the Superintendent. The student and/or their parents/guardians/caregivers, should submit this letter to the Office of the Superintendent within twenty (20) days of the parent/guardian's receipt of the written report from the school detailed above. The written complaint shall include (a) the name of the student; (b) the name of the school where the physical restraint allegedly occurred; (c) the name of the individuals involved in the alleged physical restraint; (d) the basis of the complaint or concern; and (e) the corrective action being sought.

The Office of the Superintendent, through its designees, shall conduct an investigation into the complaint promptly after receiving the complaint. In the course of its investigation, the Office of the Superintendent and/or its designees shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. The Office of the Superintendent and/or its designees will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as is feasible. After completing the formal investigation, the Office of the Superintendent

shall contact the individual who filed the complaint regarding the outcome of its investigation and its determination as to whether any corrective action is warranted.

Other Complaint Processes Also Available

It should be noted that the provisions of this section does not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in CPS' Non-Discrimination Policy and/or Title IX Policy to seek resolution of any complaints of discrimination or harassment that is based on a characteristic protected by law race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition. It also should be noted that the provisions of this section does not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in Section 23.0 of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to seek resolution of any complaints regarding a student's deprivation of rights set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

CODES OF CONDUCT (Policies)

17. Introduction

Each school has its own set of rules - known as school-based rules - that its students are expected to follow. If a student breaks a school-based rule, they may be disciplined. School-based rules are written by a committee of administrators, teachers, parents/guardians/caregivers and middle school students at each school and are reviewed in each spring. School-based rules are posted in every classroom and are sent home with students every September. In addition to following its own school-based rules, every school also must follow the code of conduct set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. The *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* lists the rules that all students are expected to follow. A student who breaks these rules may be suspended or expelled from school. Both school-based rules and the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* apply to behavior of students while they are in school, at a school-sponsored activity, and on their way to and from school.

A summary of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* is provided below. You may obtain a copy of the school-based rules for the school your child is attending from the principal. You also may obtain a copy of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* from the school principal. It is also posted on the school district's website.

Additionally, provided below are brief descriptions of various policies of CPS, including anti-discrimination policies. Staff or students who violate these policies may be subject to disciplinary action. For a complete copy of any of these policies, contact the school principal.

18. Philosophy

The Cambridge School Committee's discipline policies urge all school personnel to help students solve conduct problems without resorting to extreme disciplinary measures. Student misconduct may be indicative of more complex underlying problems that a student may have with school and society, and every effort should be made by the elementary schools to help the students and their parents/guardians/caregivers deal effectively with these problems. Suspensions or expulsions are usually recommended only as a last resort. School personnel are encouraged to pursue and exhaust all other available and appropriate consequences or disciplinary actions to foster the education and good

conduct of a student before resorting to suspension or expulsion.

Schools shall try to work with the at-risk student on a one-to-one basis, attempting to find the source of the problem and recommend an alternative. At times it is necessary to have conferences with the parent/guardian/caregiver, or to conduct a home visit. The communication between home and school is critical to any success. School counselors or psychologists are a resource in making recommendations and finding solutions. Peer mediation, teacher mentors, Big Brothers and Sisters are also valuable assets. Cambridge is very fortunate to have social development teams in place that are responsive and critical to the needs of troubled students. Some examples of these teams are: the Student Support Teams (SSTs); the Teacher Assistance Teams (TATs); and the Administrative Response Teams (ARTs). Community agencies are critical partners in rendering valued support services. These agencies provide valuable advice to school teams and work with students individually or in groups. Such preventative services are a great deterrent to inappropriate behavior, potential suspensions, and maybe, in the long run, having the students drop out of school.

Behavior and Discipline Policies

19. Smoking: Tobacco-Free Policy

Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H prohibits the use of any tobacco products within the school facilities, school grounds or on school buses by any individual including all school personnel. The policy pertains to all school sponsored, school related events and athletic games. Staff and students who violate these laws will be subject to disciplinary action. Any staff member who sees a student smoking on school property should ask for the student's name and inform them that smoking is prohibited on school property. The student's name will be given to the principal or the assistant principal who will inform both the school nurse and the parent/guardian/caregiver. Tobacco Assistance Program (TAP) is available in our public schools and is meant to assist those choosing to quit tobacco addiction.

20. Statutory Prohibition Against Drugs, Weapons and Assault on School Staff

Massachusetts General Laws chapter 71, section 37H provides, in pertinent part, that:

(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 their 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 their appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

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

21. Drug Policy

A student is in violation of the drug policy if found on school premises, on the bus, or at school-sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C including, but not limited to: marijuana, cocaine or heroin. In such cases, a student may be expelled by the principal.

22. Weapons Policy

A student is in violation of a weapons policy if: the student brings a weapon to school; uses a weapon on school grounds or at a school activity; or has a weapon in their locker or pocket, or while at school, on the bus or at an after school activity.

Legally dangerous weapons include anything that is carried and used in a manner to intimidate or with the intent to cause harm to another person. Such weapons include:

- Firearms of any kind, including BB guns and air rifles;
- Any knife that has a double-edge blade, a switch blade or any knife that has an automatic spring device by which the blade is released from the handle; any stiletto or dagger;
- Metallic knuckles, nunchaku, shuriken or any other similar pointed star-like object that is intended to injure a person when thrown;
- Black jacks and blow guns;
- Any arm band or clothing that is made of leather which has metallic spikes, points or studs and any similar device made from any other substance;
- Mace, tear gas, or any other substance that is used to incapacitate another person;
- Fireworks or explosives of any kind; and
- All other such weapons as described in Massachusetts General Laws 269, Section 10.

There are other items, which are not defined as weapons under the Massachusetts General Laws 269, Section 10, but which are not permitted on school premises, at school-sponsored and/or at school related events, including athletic games. Use of these prohibited items will result in suspension and can result in expulsion from school. These include:

- Knives of any kind, shape or length, including key chain knives and drafting knives;
- Blades of any size
- Razors, box cutters; and
- Chains, whips, or any other metal object of no academic purpose.

There also are other ordinary items that if used in a dangerous threatening way may result in suspension and expulsion from school. Such items include:

- Pencils, scissors, needles and pins, nails, carpentry tools, etc.
- Engaging in or attempting to engage in any unreasonably dangerous athletic technique that endangers the health or safety of individuals such

as using a helmet or any other sports equipment as a weapon.

Note: No toy or replica weapons of any kind, including guns and knives, will be permitted on school premises, at school sponsored events or at school related events, including athletic games. Items such as these will be confiscated and may result in suspension and expulsion if they are determined by the principal or assistant principal to be in violation of this policy.

23. Staff Assault

Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other school staff on school premises, the bus, at school-sponsored events, or at school-related events, including athletic games, may be expelled by the principal. An act is considered an assault if the student:

- Intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causes bodily injury to another;
- Intentionally or knowingly threatens another with imminent bodily injury; or
- Intentionally or knowingly causes, threatens or uses physical force against another in such circumstances as to create a reasonable fear of imminent danger coupled with the apparent present ability to carry out the attempt if it is not prevented.

24. Students Charged With or Convicted of a Felony

If a student is charged with a felony and their continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, the student may be suspended until the matter is adjudicated by the court. If convicted, the student may be expelled by the principal, if their continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

In either situation, the student and parent/guardian/caregiver will be notified in writing of the charges and the reasons for the discipline prior to it being imposed and will be afforded an opportunity for a hearing. If discipline is imposed, the student also will be provided with written notification of their right to appeal and the processing for appealing the discipline; however, the discipline shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing being conducted by the Superintendent or designee.

25. Hazing

Hazing means any conduct or method of initiation into a student class or group, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any other student. All high school students will be required to sign a statement from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education regarding hazing.

Hazing is a violation of school policy. Students involved in hazing may be suspended. A criminal complaint will be filed. Information regarding this subject is distributed to all students at the opening of school.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 17

Crime of Hazing; Definition; Penalty

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

The term hazing as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such

conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or person, which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 18

Duty to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime, shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to themselves 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 or not more than one thousand dollars.

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 269, Section 19

Statutes to be Provided to Student Groups; Compliance Statement and Discipline Policy Required

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

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

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall, at least annually, before or at the start of enrollment, deliver to each person who enrolls as a full-time student in such institution a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the board of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams, or organizations and to notify each full-time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying

that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of higher education and, in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such reports.

Added by St. 1985, c. 536; amended by St. 1987, c. 665; St. 1998, c. 161, ss. 557, 558

26. Vandalism

No one is to injure, destroy, deface or trespass on school property. All students and staff are urged to treat school buildings with care and respect. Parents/guardians/caregivers will be responsible for paying for any damage done to the building by their child. The school department will take the parents/guardians/caregivers to court. People with any information about damage done to the building or its contents shall report it to the Office of Safety and Security. Writing or spraying inappropriately on or around the school graffiti, carving on a desk, mishandling a book, breaking a window, destroying equipment, or damaging materials are all infringements on the right of the school community to have a clean environment. Students who have vandalized and the parents/guardians/caregivers will be held responsible.

27. Fighting/Physical Assault

Severe, immediate disciplinary action may be taken against individuals who participate in a fight or encourage it in any way. Absolutely no disruptive behavior of this kind will be tolerated. The penalty for this behavior may be a one-day to ten-day suspension depending on the degree of involvement category, number of offenses and/or severity of incident. It should be noted that an assault or an assault and battery on a person are crimes and police are notified of all physical assaults and parents/guardians/caregivers are notified about their right to file a criminal complaint with the Middlesex County Court. Depending on the circumstances, CPS may, on its own accord, file a criminal complaint on an assault and/or assault and battery. Students know when they are in dispute and are expected to seek assistance, if necessary, to resolve it peacefully. A student has a responsibility to avoid fighting by bringing the situation to the attention of any school official. Student-faculty mediators are available through the Safety and Security Office, to help resolve disputes.

The following guidelines may be used in disciplining students who engage in fighting or physical assault.

Category 1 – Inciter/Promoter/Instigator:

A student who has been asked to leave the vicinity of a disruptive altercation or a fight and who refuses to do so falls under this category.

> First Offense – Up to three-day out of school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver notified.
>
> Second Offense – Three-day to five-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference.
>
> Third Offense – Five-day to ten-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference. Expulsion hearing at Principal's office.

Category 2 – Assault and Battery on a Person:

An assault on a person and/or an assault and battery on a person is a crime. Police will be notified and victims will be advised of their right to file a criminal complaint. CPS may file a criminal complaint against the perpetrator.

> First Offense-Three-day to five-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference.

Second Offense-Five-day to ten-day out-of-school suspension. Expulsion hearing at Principal's office.

Category 3 – Fight/Mutual Assault and Battery:

First Offense- Up to a three-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference. Mediation upon return to school made available and encouraged.

Second Offense-Three-day to five-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference. Mediation made available and encouraged upon return to school.

Third Offense- Five-day to ten-day out-of-school suspension. Expulsion hearing at Principal's office.

Category 4 – Fight/Mutual Assault and Battery in classrooms, cafeterias, assemblies, in the corridor, during passing time, or a school dance, etc. Altercations (physical or verbal), create a particularly volatile situation within our school climate when they erupt at any time but especially when large numbers of people are present. This extremely disruptive and pernicious behavior warrants strict disciplinary action. Examples include: lunch time in the cafeteria, outside during dismissal time or upon entering the building, at dances, sporting events, or at any school assembly or related event.

First Offense-Up to a three-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference. Mediation upon return to school made available and encouraged.

Second Offense- Three-day to five-day out-of-school suspension. Parent/guardian/caregiver conference. Mediation made available and encouraged upon return to school.

Third Offense – Five-day to ten-day out-of-school suspension. Expulsion hearing at Principal's office.

28. Anti-Bullying Policy and Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

CPS is committed to creating a safe, caring, respectful learning environment for all students and strictly enforces a prohibition against bullying of any of its students by anyone and also strictly enforces a prohibition against retaliation of any person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying. Site-based initiatives, developed collaboratively between school administration and personnel, students, families and community members will seek to: (1) help students of all ages and abilities stay safe, act wisely, and believe in themselves: and (2) help adults respond effectively to students' reports and their own observations.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target/victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the target/victim's property; (ii) places the target/victim in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target/victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target/victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For purposes of this policy, bullying shall include cyberbullying.

Consistent with state law, the CPS recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, national origin, ethnicity,

ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, physical appearance or parenting status or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one (1) or more of these characteristics.

Cyberbullying is defined as bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer or signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyberbullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyberbullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Aggressor or Perpetrator is defined as a student or a member of school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, school volunteer or a vendor, contractor or other person working under a contract with the school district who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L.c. 71, §37O, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

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

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target or Victim is defined as a student or an adult against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Bullying can take many forms and can occur in any setting. Bullying can include, but is not limited to, intimidation such as name calling or threatening; social alienation such as shunning or spreading rumors; or physical aggression such as assaults on a student or attacks on a student's property. Bullying can create an atmosphere of fear for all members of the school community. It also can create unnecessary and unwarranted anxiety that affects the ability of a student to attend school, learn in school, walk in school corridors, eat in the school cafeteria, play in the school yard or recreation areas, participate in or attend special or extracurricular activities or travel to and from school. More specifically, a "hostile environment" is defined as a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education. Bullying behaviors that are not addressed can lead to devastating consequences for young people, including depression, drops in school performance and

attendance. The failure to address bullying behaviors also gives other students the message that it is permissible to engage in negative behaviors.

Bullying of students occurring in the schools is prohibited by law and will not be tolerated by CPS. For purposes of this policy, "school" includes schools, school grounds, travel to and from school and/or school-sponsored events and functions, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions, programs whether on or off school grounds (such as social events, trips, sports events, or similar school-sponsored events and functions), at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the school district or a school, on the way to or from school or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by the school district or a school and at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim or witnesses, infringes on the rights of the victim or witnesses at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Consistent with state law, CPS recognizes that certain students may be more vulnerable to becoming a target of bullying or harassment based on actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, including race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or pregnancy-related condition, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, physical appearance or parenting status, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one (1) or more of these characteristics.

CPS takes allegations of bullying seriously and will respond promptly to complaints and allegations of bullying. Additionally, 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.

If any student, parent/guardian/caregiver of a student, staff member or other community member believes that the student has been subjected to bullying, or to retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying, they should bring the matter to the attention of the principal of the school where the child attends. This may be done verbally or in writing. Reports of bullying and/or reports of retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying may also be made anonymously to the principal where the student attends. Please note; however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report having been received.

All school staff (including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities or paraprofessionals) are trained on an annual basis regarding CPS' Anti-Bullying Policy and the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. The duties and responsibilities of staff are further set forth in CPS' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

Leadership and Coordination

District wide bullying prevention efforts are coordinated by the Coordinated School Health Teams, K-8 Lead Teacher for Health Education, Social Emotional Learning Director, the District Conflict Mediator, in collaboration with Principals, Assistant Principals/Deans of Students, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, school-based

and bi-lingual family liaisons, school counselors and safety specialists.

The following is a list of responsibilities:

Chief of Academics and Schools

• Oversee all bullying prevention and intervention activities

• Including a summary of the anti-bullying policy in all student handbooks

• Coordinate and prioritize bullying prevention and intervention professional development for all staff, including teachers, paraprofessionals, clerks and other staff

Assistant Superintendent for Student Services

• Implement supports that respond to the specific bullying prevention/intervention needs of students with disabilities

• Comply with state and federal regulations and guidelines

• Ensure that Student Services staff members receive appropriate training to enable them to develop IEPs that respond to concerns about students who are targeted or who may target others.

Principals

The principal of each school will take steps to raise awareness about the importance of a safe and welcoming school climate as an underlying component of student achievement, and of the harmful effects of bullying and retaliation. Examples of steps that may be taken include but are not limited to the following:

• Oversee the development and implementation of a coordinated system of supervision during break periods, recess, lunchtime (classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, playground)

• Receive and act on reports of bullying

• Conduct and document investigations for all bullying reports received

• Take appropriate disciplinary action if necessary

• Ensure that all CPS policies and procedures are followed when handling reported incidents of bullying

• Ensure that all students receive age-appropriate information and skill development on bullying prevention in each grade as well as on the potential legal consequences for engaging in acts of bullying and that this instruction is incorporated into the school's curriculum/classroom meetings

• Develop and disseminate rules that prohibit bullying and retaliation

• Facilitate annual bullying prevention and intervention training for staff

• Report bullying incidents to CPS Safety and Security and to the School Resource Officer if criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor

• Collect data regarding: 1) the number of reported allegations of bullying or retaliation; 2) the number and nature of substantiated incidents of bullying and retaliation; 3) the number of students disciplined for engaging in bullying or retaliation; 4) other information required by the department

• Collaborate with Coordinated School Health team members on data collection, student surveys and program evaluation

• Incorporate bullying prevention as an on-going responsibility of a school based team (i.e. School Site Council, Principal's Leadership team, or other school body)

Safety and Security

Receive incident reports on bullying when appropriate.

Collaborates with the Cambridge Police Department and School Resource Officers when appropriate.

Coordinated School Health Teams/K-8 Lead Teacher for Health Education

Include bullying prevention in grants when appropriate and collaborate with School Climate Coordinator in development of the Bullying Prevention/Intervention Plan and associated training. Oversee Tier I bullying prevention curriculum that is taught to all students in grades 2-9. They administer bi-annual teen health and middle grades surveys which include questions on bullying and school climate. They also ensure that bullying prevention information and skills are included in the health curriculum as appropriate.

School Climate Coordinators (SSC)

Plan and implement ongoing professional development for all school administrators and staff, in collaboration with appropriate school and district administrators. SCCs lead professional development efforts in collaboration with appropriate school and district administrators. They also choose and implement the materials that the school or district will use with students, staff and parents/guardians/caregivers, in collaboration with appropriate school and district administrators. Collaborate with school based and bilingual family liaisons to disseminate parent/guardian/caregiver information materials. SCCs review and update the Plan each year, or more frequently if needed, in collaboration with appropriate school and district administrators and in accordance with the requirements of state law. They analyze district-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes. They collaborate with community agencies and non-public schools to promote a unified approach to bullying prevention and intervention. Collaborate with the Office of Student Services to provide bullying prevention/intervention materials for special education students whose research has shown they are at increased risk of being targeted for bullying. Collaborate with principals and classroom teachers to make schools more safe and welcoming for GLBT/gender non-conforming students and families for whom research has shown are at increased risk of being targeted for bullying.

Other School Based Staff Roles

School Counselors/Social Workers

• Plan supports that respond to the bullying prevention/intervention needs of students

•Ensure that IEPs respond to concerns about bullying

School Nurses

• Plan supports that respond to the bullying prevention/intervention needs of students

Teachers and Other Staff

• Teach students to identify and respond to bullying when it occurs

• Intervene appropriately when bullying is alleged

• Complete and file bullying reports when bullying is alleged

Family Liaisons

• Collaborate with Coordinated School Health Teams and school staff on outreach and education for families

District Conflict Mediator

• Implement a Peer Mediation Program at CRLS for student conflicts that do not involve bullying

• Mediate conflicts between staff and parents/guardians/caregivers or staff and staff

• Support prevention work in elementary schools that uses a conflict mediation approach

• Collaborate with School Climate Coordinator when bullying reports are received, to assess whether cases are appropriate for mediation

Data Collection

In addition to the collection of bullying data which will be reported annually, at least once every four

years, beginning with school year 2015-2016, the school district will administer a Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education developed student survey to assess school climate and the prevalence, nature and severity of bullying in the schools and will report the results in accordance with the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Prevention

CPS is working to implement a comprehensive, evidence-based approach to promoting positive behavior and school climate. This will be based on a three-tiered approach that includes implementing school wide prevention activities; early intervention activities for students exhibiting problem behaviors; and intensive support for students in need. Work in the district to create positive school climates and develop students' social competencies has been based on the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, and based on the evidence based work of the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Work of E. Englander at Bridgewater State, Responsive Classroom/Developmental Design Responsive Classroom (K-5) and Developmental Designs (6-9) promote social, emotional, and academic growth within a safe and welcoming school community. Key components to this approach are:

• Creating, teaching and modeling of school wide rules and positive behavior expectations, which include rules that prohibit bullying and retaliation

• Development and implementation of a coordinated system of supervision during break periods, recess, lunchtime (classrooms, hallways, cafeteria, playground)

• Age-appropriate information and skill development on bullying prevention and bystander empowerment

• Regular classroom meetings or advisories where bullying can be discussed

• Regular review of data regarding behavior and assessment of programs at the start of each school year, the student-related sections of this plan will be reviewed with students, including without limitation, information on prevention of bullying, reporting of bullying and the potential legal consequences of engaging in bullying. Additionally, information regarding the student-related sections of this plan will be incorporated into the comprehensive prevention approach that is detailed above.

In addition to all of the preceding steps, each school year, schools will take the following additional specific steps to support vulnerable students and to provide all students with the skills, knowledge and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying and harassment:

• Maintain safe and caring classrooms for all students

• Promote and model the use of respectful language

• Foster an understanding of and respect for diversity and difference

• Build positive relationships and communicate with families

• Teach students skills including positive communication, anger management, and empathy for others

• Engage students in school and classroom planning and decision-making as is developmentally appropriate

• Promote and model the use of restorative discipline practices in classrooms and schools

Training and Professional Development

CPS will provide annual staff training regarding the Anti-Bullying Policy and the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan to all school staff, including but not limited to, educators, administrators, safety specialists, substitute teachers, school counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school volunteers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities and paraprofessionals. The training will include, but not be limited to:

• Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents

• Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents

• Information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, victim and witnesses to the bullying.

• Research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment (including students who do not conform to stereotypical gender norms and students with special needs).

• Information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying

• Cyber safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying

CPS will continue to support staff training in Responsive Classroom and Developmental Designs as a way to support classroom and school-wide practices that help students build academic and social-emotional competencies. In addition it will continue to implement Second Step Social Emotional Learning Curriculum, Zones of Regulation and Social Thinking curriculums; comprehensive, evidence based approaches to promoting positive behavior and school climate. These approaches are proven to be widely accessible, promote equity and culturally relevant approaches to culture and climate development in schools. The Coordinated School Health teams in collaboration with the Social Emotional Learning division will create and facilitate extended professional development opportunities to examine bullying issues in depth, including (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, target, and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and (vi) internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying. Staff members who work with students with disabilities will receive training in ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities with a special focus on factors that must be considered when developing students' IEPs. This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development. CPS will provide all staff with an annual written notice of this Plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties in the school district's *Guide to Policies for Staff*, in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* and on the school district website.

Collaboration with Families/Community

The Welcoming Schools/School Climate Coordinator and Family Liaisons, in conjunction with the central office and principals, will provide opportunities for parents/guardians/caregivers to learn how to recognize bullying and understand its effects on targets, bystanders and on individuals who bully. Parents/guardians/caregivers will also be informed about the bullying prevention efforts of their child's school; the dynamics of bullying and online safety and cyberbullying; the impact of the law on bullying and the potential consequences that can occur if a student or member of the school staff engages in bullying and the process for reporting complaints of bullying and the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts student record regulations, 603 C.M.R. 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, and 603 C.M.R. 49.07 with respect to a principal's notification to a

parent/guardian/caregiver about an incident or report of bullying or retaliation. This will be done via the parent/guardian/caregiver and student handbooks as well as via annual training, handouts, email, and the CPS website. This information will be available in the major languages recognized by the district.

Resources and Services

CPS works to ensure that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, bystanders, families, and others are addressed.

A. Identifying resources

A Mental Health/Positive Behavior Task Force will work with appropriate staff to identify the district's capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, aggressors, and their families. This will include a review of current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on restorative approaches, early interventions and intensive services. Once this mapping of resources is complete, recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps will be established.

B. Counseling and other services

The Coordinated School Health Teams will work with appropriate staff to identify the availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources within the schools and community. The Coordinated School Health Teams, in consultation with appropriate school and district administrators, will identify staff and service providers who can assist in developing safety plans for students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, providing social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors.

C. Students with disabilities

As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines that the student has a disability that affects social skills development or that the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of their disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing. Teams must discuss bullying concerns for all students with a diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorders. In addition the team shall discuss bullying for any student for whom concerns have been raised by the student, parent/guardian/caregiver or staff. The team discussion must be documented in the student's IEP and/or Notice of School District's Proposed Action (N1 letter).

D. Referral to outside services

The Mental Health/Positive Behavior Task Force along with appropriate staff will review referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services to ensure that protocols comply with relevant laws and policies.

Intervention

Reporting Complaints of Bullying or Retaliation

If a student, parent/guardian/caregiver of a student, staff member or other community member believes that the student has been subjected to bullying, or to retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying, or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying, they should bring the matter to the attention of a staff member at the school where the student attends. In addition, confidential reports may be submitted through the district software reporting system Speakfully. All school staff (including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities or paraprofessionals) are required to immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation they witness or become aware of to the principal or designee of the school using the CPS Bullying Report

form (available on the school district's website). The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. When the complaint is received, the principal will immediately notify:

• Parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged target

• Parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged aggressor or the alleged aggressor if a member of the school staff

• Office of Safety and Security

The principal will promptly conduct an investigation of the complaint that has been received. The principal may consult with the School Resource Officer but shall not share identifying information of the alleged target or aggressor. In notifying the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target and aggressor, the principal must comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Record regulations, 603 C.M.R. 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, as set forth in 603 C.M.R. 49.07. More specifically, a principal may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent/guardian/caregiver unless the information is about the parent/guardian/caregiver's own child. A principal may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 C.M.R. 49.06 without consent of a student or their parent/guardian/caregiver but the principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Additionally, if the aggressor is a member of the school staff, the principal may take appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Additionally, if the principal has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals, a principal may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e) and 34 C.F.R. 99.13(a)(10) and 99.36. In this latter situation, the disclosure is limited to the period of the emergency and the principal must document the disclosure and the reasons that the principal determined that a health or safety emergency exists. The principal will provide a copy of the CPS Non-Discrimination Policy, Title IX Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy to all parties including the person making the complaint, the alleged student target, the parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged student target, the alleged aggressor and the parents/guardians/caregivers of the alleged aggressor, if the alleged aggressor is a student. Reports of bullying and/or retaliation for reporting bullying may also be made anonymously to the principal of the school where the student attends. Please note however, that no disciplinary action can be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report having been received.

<u>Complaint Investigation</u>

When CPS receives a complaint of bullying or retaliation for reporting bullying, providing information during an investigation of bullying or witnessing or having reliable information about bullying, CPS will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances and to protect from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of bullying. The investigation may include an interview

with the student, parent/guardian/caregiver, staff member or community member filing the complaint, the student alleged to be a victim of bullying or retaliation, the student(s) or staff member(s) alleged to have committed the bullying or retaliation, witnesses to any alleged incidents or other individuals as determined by the school department. Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target and the parents/guardians/caregivers of the aggressor, if the aggressor is a student, of this and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents/guardians/caregivers prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 C.M.R. 49.00. In notifying the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target and aggressor, the principal must comply with the confidentiality requirements of the Massachusetts Student Record regulations, 603 C.M.R. 23.00, and the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act regulations, 34 C.F.R. Part 99, as set forth in 603 C.M.R. 49.07. More specifically, the principal may not disclose information from a student record of a target or aggressor to a parent/guardian/caregiver unless the information is about the parent/guardian/caregiver's own child. A principal may disclose a determination of bullying or retaliation to a local law enforcement agency under 603 C.M.R. 49.06 without consent of a student or their parent/guardian/caregiver but the principal shall communicate with law enforcement officials in a manner that protects the privacy of targets, student witnesses, and aggressors to the extent practicable under the circumstances. Additionally, if the principal has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals, a principal may disclose student record information about a target or aggressor to appropriate parties in addition to law enforcement in connection with a health or safety emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health or safety of the student or other individuals as provided in 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e) and 34 C.F.R. 99.13(a)(10) and 99.36. In this latter situation, the disclosure is limited to the period of the emergency and the principal must document the disclosure and the reasons that the principal determined that a health or safety emergency exists. Additionally, consistent with state law, the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target(s) shall be notified of the results of the investigation and any actions that will be taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation if it is determined that such conduct has occurred. Additionally, consistent with state law and the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between CPS and the Cambridge Police Department, if it is determined that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and Security, shall:

• Notify School Resource Officer if the principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor or has determined that there is an immediate and significant threat to the health or safety of the student or other individuals

• Take appropriate disciplinary action consistent with the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*

• Notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the aggressor(s) if the aggressor is a student or notify the aggressor if a staff member

• Notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target(s), and to the extent consistent with state and federal law and regulations, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

Moreover, if an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative

school, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action.

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and Security, will notify local law enforcement. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 49.00 and the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the CPS and the Cambridge Police Department. Additionally, if an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private day or residential school or collaborative school, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement in a manner consistent with state and federal law and regulations. In making this determination the principal will, consistent with the Plan, applicable school district policies and procedures and the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding between the CPS and the Cambridge Police Department, consult with the school resource officer and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

Disciplinary Action/Responses to Bullying

The goal of CPS with regard to discipline is to create an atmosphere in which students learn how to repair the damage caused to the entire community when individual members harm each other. If it is determined that bullying or other inappropriate conduct has been committed, CPS will take action that is appropriate under the circumstances. The disciplinary action taken will balance the need for accountability with the need to repair the harm done to the school community, while also teaching appropriate behavior. Using a restorative framework as appropriate, the principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to, creating a personal safety plan; pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the aggressor in the classroom, at lunch, or on the bus; identifying a staff member who will act as a "safe person" for the target; and altering the aggressor's schedule and access to the target. The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of and after the investigation, as necessary.

There are a range of options for teaching appropriate behavior including: offering individualized skill-building sessions; modeling and using restorative practices; providing relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with school counselors and other appropriate school personnel, implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals; meeting with parents/guardians/caregivers to engage parental support and to reinforce bullying prevention and social skills building activities at home; adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills.

Action for students who are found to have engaged in bullying may further include requiring the aggressor to work with school personnel to improve behavior; a recommendation of counseling, support services or other therapeutic interventions for the student and appropriate family members of the student; disciplinary consequences for the student up to and including court involvement; or school-related discipline consistent with the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* up to and including expulsion. Action for staff who are found to have engaged in bullying may include disciplinary action up to and including termination and/or court involvement as necessary and as a last resort.

All students and staff members who are found to have engaged in bullying will be informed about the prohibition against retaliation and that any acts of retaliation will result in disciplinary action.

Where it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, CPS will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, which may range from requiring the offender to work with school personnel on better behavior, the recommendation for the provision of counseling or other therapeutic services and/or disciplinary action where appropriate, up to and including suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement. Additionally, consistent with state law, if it is determined that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal, in conjunction with the Director of Safety and Security, shall (i) notify local law enforcement if the principal believes that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor; and (iv) notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the target/victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation. Furthermore, if it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, they shall be subject to discipline consistent with the provisions of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* which may include suspension, expulsion and/or court involvement.

Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

In order to restore a sense of safety for the student target of bullying and assess the target's needs for protection, a meeting shall be held with the student, their parents/guardians/caregivers, and appropriate school personnel (i.e. school principal, assistant principal, dean of students, safety specialist and/or School Resource Officer). The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the development and implementation of a safety plan for the student, including staff to whom the student may report if any concerns arise. CPS also may, as appropriate, recommend counseling, support services or other therapeutic interventions for the student and appropriate family members of the student. Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately. If a restraining order is in place, one purpose of the meeting will be to review the implications of the restraining order and procedures for reporting if any violation of the restraining order occurs. If the restraining order is against another student or an employee, a separate meeting should be held with that individual to review the restraining order and its implications, expectations and the consequences for violation of the order.

False Accusations/Retaliation

If it is determined that a student has knowingly made a false accusation of bullying or retaliation, they shall be subject to discipline consistent with the provisions of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. All students shall be afforded the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

Review of School-based Actions

If the person making a complaint about bullying, the alleged target of bullying and/or the parents/guardians/caregivers of an alleged target of bullying are unable to resolve their concerns after a good faith attempt to use the informal means detailed above in cooperation with the Principal, a written complaint may be filed with the Superintendent and the Chief of Academics and Schools. The written complaint shall state the concerns and include a brief statement of the facts and the specific relief being requested. Within seven (7) days of receipt of the written complaint, the Superintendent or designee shall mail a notice establishing a date and time for a meeting to discuss the concerns. After the meeting, the Superintendent or designee shall determine if bullying or other inappropriate conduct has occurred, what appropriate relief has been taken, to date, to assure that the bullying or other inappropriate conduct ceases to occur and whether additional supportive measures are needed. A letter addressing these matters and any additional actions that the school district will be taking to address the concerns that were raised will be issued within five (5) days of the meeting. If the person making a complaint about bullying, the alleged target of bullying and/or the parents/guardians/caregivers of an alleged target of bullying still is unable to resolve their issues and concerns after the meeting with the Superintendent or designee has occurred, a request for review may be submitted to the School Committee. The School Committee in its discretion may hear witnesses, receive additional evidence, and review the findings and recommendations at the school level as well as the findings and recommendation of the Superintendent or designee's review meeting. Within five (5) days of conducting its review, the School Committee shall issue a written decision which shall affirm, overrule or otherwise modify the findings and recommendations of the Superintendent, including addressing what, if any, additional actions that the school district will take to address the concerns that have been raised.

Other Complaint Processes Also Available

It should also be noted that the provisions of these procedures detailed in this plan do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in the Non-Discrimination Policy and/or Title IX Policy to seek resolution of any complaints of discrimination or harassment that is based on a characteristic protected by law such as sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, marital status, genetic information, gender identity or expression or sexual orientation. It also should be noted that the provisions of this section do not preclude a student from using the complaint process set forth in Section 23.0 of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* to seek resolution of any complaints regarding a student's deprivation of rights set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook.*

Relationship To Other Laws

Consistent with federal and state laws and regulations and the policies of the school district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any city or town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of sex, race, color, ancestry, national origin, ethnicity, religion, marital status, genetic information, disability, gender identity or expression or sexual orientation. Nothing in this Plan prevents a school or the school district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law or school district policies. In addition, nothing in this Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of a school or the school district to take disciplinary action under M.G.L.c. 71, sections 37H and 37H 1/2, other applicable laws, or local school or school district policies in response to

violent, harmful or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether this Plan covers the behavior.

29. Policy Against Teen Dating Violence

CPS is committed to providing a learning environment in which dating violence is not tolerated. Consistent with this philosophy, CPS is committed to promoting an environment free from dating violence. Accordingly, CPS seeks to increase awareness of teen dating violence and help in responding to the needs of victims and children who are witnesses to such violence.

Teen dating violence occurring in any setting is unlawful and teen dating violence occurring in any school setting will not be tolerated. Further, retaliation against an individual who has complained about teen dating violence or cooperated in an investigation of teen dating violence will not be tolerated. CPS will respond promptly to complaints and reports of teen dating violence or retaliation and corrective action will be taken where necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate.

The definitions used in this policy are as follows:

Domestic Violence/Interpersonal Violence: Domestic Violence is a pattern of coercive behavior in which one partner attempts to control another through threats or actual use of tactics, which may include any or all of the following: physical, sexual, verbal, financial, psychological abuse and/or through the use of technology (i.e. cyberbullying).

Domestic Violence affects every community across the country, regardless of ethnic group, culture, or background. People of all ages, income levels, faiths, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression and education levels experience domestic violence.

Teen Dating Violence: Dating violence (or relationship abuse) is a pattern of over-controlling behavior that someone uses against their romantic partner. Dating violence can take many forms, including mental/emotional abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse and/or through the use of technology (i.e. cyberbullying). Someone may experience dating violence even if there is no physical abuse. It can occur in both casual dating situations and serious, long-term relationships.

Child Witness/Exposure to Domestic Violence: Witnessing violence can affect every aspect of a child's life, growth, and development. Exposure can include seeing or hearing the abuse, discovering the effects of abuse (their parent/guardian/caregiver's injuries or broken furniture, etc.) and/or being injured/hurt defending a parent/guardian/caregiver against the abusive behavior.

Family Violence: Family Violence is a broader definition, including child abuse, elder abuse, and other violent acts between family members.

Victim/Survivor/Battered: Interchangeable terms to refer to the person who has been hurt, abused or threatened with harm, whether or not there has been actual physical abuse.

Abuser/Perpetrator/Batterer: Interchangeable terms to refer to the person inflicting the abuse and causing harm, whether or not there has been actual physical abuse.

Additionally, such conduct may also constitute harassment, a form of discrimination, that is prohibited by federal and state law; and/or such conduct may constitute bullying, including without limitation, cyberbullying, which is prohibited by state law. Such conduct also is prohibited by CPS' Non-Discrimination Policy, Title IX Policy, Anti-Violence Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and Anti-Cyberbullying Policy.

Recognizing Warning Signs

Signs of abusive behavior include: acting really jealous if their partner talks to others, trying to decide what the other should do, blowing disagreements out of proportion, constantly threatening to break up, losing their temper verbally, blaming the other for

their own problems, physically and emotionally hurting their partner, or acts of cyberbullying.

Signs of victimization include: constantly canceling plans for reasons that do not sound right, always worrying about making their partner angry, giving up things that are important to them, showing signs of physical abuse, such as bruises or cuts, getting pressured into having sex or feeling like a sex object, having a partner that wants them to be available all the time, and becoming isolated from family or friends, or been cyberbullied.

Procedure for Reporting Teen Dating Violence

Students who believe that they have been a victim of teen dating violence, believe that they are in danger of teen dating violence, or have a restraining order against an individual, may report the matter to any of the following individuals: (1) principal, (2) assistant principal, (3) dean, (4) teacher, or (5) school nurse.

The person who receives the report must immediately notify the principal.

Additionally, any employee who observes an incident of teen dating violence on school property or at a school related event, must immediately notify the principal.

The principal must immediately do the following: (1) notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the victim, and (2) notify the Office of Safety and Security.

The principal must also refer the student and/or the student's parents/guardians/caregivers to the Non-Discrimination Policy and Title IX Policy which addresses procedures for informal resolution and filing of formal complaints and Anti-Bullying Policy and provide copies of the same upon request.

When a report of teen dating violence is received, whether it occurred off school property or has occurred on school property, on the way to or from school or at a school related event, or a violation of a restraining order on school property, on the way to or from school or at a school related event is received, CPS will act promptly to notify the appropriate authorities of the alleged incident. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality *to the extent practicable* under the circumstances.

It is important to take third party information seriously where teen dating violence is concerned. It is recommended that an appropriately trained member of the school staff approach the student to discuss what has been heard and potential concerns. If abuse is acknowledged, a "safety plan" should be worked on, in addition to recommending and sharing referrals for counseling, support groups, and police/court assistance.

Additionally, school staff must remember to comply with all statutory reporting obligations for suspected abuse and neglect (51A reporting). Filing of 51A complaints should be done by following CPS' Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Guidelines, including notifying the principal of the suspected abuse and neglect. Furthermore, school staff also must remember to report all crimes to the police. Staff should notify the principal, who will notify the Director of Safety and Security, and who will coordinate notification to the police. Reporting of any such incident will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality *to the extent practicable* under the circumstances.

Procedures When the School Is Provided With a Copy of a Restraining Order

When a student has a restraining order against an individual and provides a copy of the order to the school, the principal should hold a meeting with the student and the student's parents/guardians/caregivers to review the restraining order and its implications. A "safety plan" should be worked out to address the victim's needs and concerns, including staff to whom the student may report if any concerns arise or any violation of the restraining order occurs while the student or employee is on school property or at a school

related event. If the restraining order is against another member of the school community, a separate meeting should be held with that individual to review the restraining order and its implications, expectations and the consequences for violation of the order. The development of the "safety plan" will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

Disciplinary Action

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has been committed, CPS will take such action as it deems appropriate under the circumstances. Such action may range from counseling and/or discipline up to and including suspension or expulsion from school.

Other Remedies

In addition to reporting a teen dating violence incident that occurs on school property, on the way to or from school, or at a school related event in accordance with the procedures above, a student who believes that they have been the victim of teen dating violence on school property, on the way to or from school, or at a school related event may also file a complaint of harassment and/or bullying in accordance with the procedures set forth in either the Non-Discrimination Policy, Title IX Policy and/or Anti-Bullying Policy. Furthermore, students who believe that they have been the victim of teen dating violence that has occurred off school grounds and/or during non-school hours may report the alleged incident to the police.

Students who believe that they are in danger may also seek a restraining order to protect a person from physical pain or injury or the threat of pain or injury by filing an application for a restraining order at the local courthouse.

Discipline Proceedings (Due Process)

Discipline procedures are set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. A brief summary of these procedures follows:

30. Suspensions

It is the policy of CPS that every effort should be made to help students solve conduct problems without resorting to extreme disciplinary measures. Suspension action is recommended only as a last resort. To that end, principals or designees employ alternative remedies, including but not limited to, mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice and collaborative problem solving and other available and appropriate interventions to foster the education and good conduct of a student before resorting to suspension. However, in those cases where a student's behavior is disruptive to the school, hurtful to themselves or others, or engages in activity forbidden by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, then a suspension may be warranted.

The suspension of the student is to be conducted by the principal or designee. Extenuating or mitigating circumstances will receive consideration before a decision on suspension is made. See the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* for further information.

The principal may suspend a student from school for a period from one to ten days for violation of school rules that occur while in school buildings, on school grounds, in transit to and from school, or during any authorized school activity, whether on or off school grounds. Depending on the severity of the incident, a student will be suspended from one to ten days if the student is found to have violated the codes of conduct set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* or violated school-based rules. Conduct that can result in a suspension, includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- used violence, force, coercion, threats, intimidation or other comparable conduct;
- set fire or damage to any school building or property;
- sounded a school type alarm with knowledge that no fire emergency exists;
- been or is in possession of a weapon;
- possessed or under the influence of controlled substances or alcohol;
- has been charged with a felony and is determined that their continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school;
- prevented or attempted to prevent by physical act the convening or continued functioning of any school or educational function or any lawful meeting on school property.
- damaged or stole personal property of another or was found in possession of stolen personal property while in school;
- caused or attempted to cause damage to school property, stole or attempted to steal school property;
- intentionally caused or attempted to cause physical injury to any student;
- failed to comply with the directions of any school personnel acting legitimately in their official capacity which resulted in any disruptive effect upon the education of other students;
- interfered with any school personnel or student by use of threats, harassment or coercion or disrupted or obstructed any school activity with or without the use of force or violence;
- engaged in any activity forbidden by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts which constituted a disruption of school activity;
- caused or done any act repeatedly which constituted a knowing and intentional violation of any of the rules and responsibilities set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*;
- been involved in any activity which violated the Massachusetts law prohibiting the practice of hazing (G.L. c.269, Sections 17-19);
- threatened, harassed or intimidated any person while on school grounds, at a school activity on or off school grounds;
- engaged in conduct violative of M.G.L. c. 71, Section 37H and/or 37H½ ; and/or
- engaged in other conduct violative of school-based rules or the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*.

While on suspension, a student is not to be within the vicinity of the school and is not eligible to participate in or attend any school events or activity. Failure to comply with these conditions can result in the suspension being extended by the principal.

31. Expulsions

It is the policy of CPS to provide a safe environment in which students can learn and participate in all programs.

Unfortunately, because there are situations where a student's behavior is a threat to the health and safety of other students or school department personnel, it may be necessary to expel the student.

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H, the principal can expel or suspend a student for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, and/or assault on a staff member.

Under Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H½ , the principal can indefinitely suspend a student who has been charged with a felony, and may expel a student who has been convicted of a felony if the student's continued presence in school

will have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

Expulsion Appeals Process: If, after the hearing, the principal decides to expel the student for a violation under M.G.L. c. 37H, the student shall have ten days from the date of the hearing to notify the Superintendent of the appeal. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provision of this section. If, after the hearing, the principal decides to expel or indefinitely suspend the student for a violation of M.G.L. c. 71, Section 37H½, the student shall have five days from the date of the hearing to notify the Superintendent of the appeal. The student will remain out of school until a decision is rendered on any appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee will notify the parent/guardian/caregiver of the decision on the appeal in writing. See the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* for further information.

32. Special Education/504 Plan Discipline Procedures

Students with disabilities, as defined by federal and state laws and regulations, shall be subject to the provisions of the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook,* except as otherwise provided by Section 18 of the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook.*

The Individual Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Plan for every eligible student will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code as set forth in the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* or if the student's disabilities require a modification of the discipline code or to any school-based rules. Any required modifications to the discipline code or any school-based rules will be set forth in the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan.

If a student's behavior is impacted by the student's disabilities, such behaviors will be dealt with through the TEAM process.In conjunction with making any administrative decision under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* the Principal (or designee) will notify the Office of Student Services (or designee) of the suspendable offense of a student with disabilities whose IEP and/or 504 Plan does not reflect the need for modifications to the discipline code set forth in the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* or any school-based rules, and a copy of the suspension notice will be forwarded to the Office of Student Services.

Staff from the Office of Student Services shall be involved in all administrative decisions under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* involving students with disabilities.

If an administrative decision under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* will not impact the student's placement and/or will not result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year, a TEAM meeting is not required.

If an administrative decision under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* will impact the student's placement and/or will result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year, a TEAM meeting is required before any administrative decision with respect to discipline is made.

Prior to making an administrative decision under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook*, the Principal shall determine whether or not the student has been designated a student with disabilities or has been referred for a special

education evaluation but not yet determined to be eligible. A student who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violated any rule or code of conduct may assert any of the protections provided by state and federal special education laws if the school had knowledge that the student is a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.
The school department is deemed to have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action the following occurred: (i) the parents/guardians/caregivers have expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel or a teacher of the child that the student is in need of special education and related services; or (ii) the parents/guardians/caregivers have requested an evaluation of the student; or (iii) the student's teacher or other school personnel have expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the director of the Office of Student Services or other supervisory personnel in the Office of Student Services.

The school department is deemed not to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability if: (i) the parents/guardians/caregivers have not allowed an evaluation of the student; or (ii) the parents/guardians/caregivers have refused services for the student; or (iii) the student was evaluated and found ineligible for special education and related services. If the school department is not deemed to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability, the student may be disciplined under the discipline code set forth in the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* except that the following limitations apply: (i) if the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student request an evaluation during the time period that the student is subjected to discipline, then the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner; and (ii) until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities.

If an administrative decision under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* will impact the student's placement and/or will result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year and/or will result in an expulsion, the following provisions shall apply:

A manifestation review will be conducted by the school, the student's parents/guardians/caregivers and other relevant members of the student's TEAM to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of the student's disability. In making this determination the TEAM will consider whether: (a) the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability; or (b) the conduct in question was the direct result of the non-implementation of the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan. Depending upon the result of the manifestation determination, the proposed disciplinary action may or may not be implemented.

If the TEAM concludes that the student's conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability, the student shall be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the parents/guardians/caregivers and the school district agree to a change of placement as part of the behavioral intervention plan for the student. Additionally, the TEAM must take immediate steps to remedy any deficiencies found in the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan, placement or implementation in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including conducting a functional

behavioral assessment for the student, provided that such an assessment had not been conducted prior to the occurrence of the conduct that led to the manifestation determination team meeting; and either implement a behavioral intervention plan or review and modify as necessary the student's existing behavioral intervention plan.

If the TEAM concludes that the student's conduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability: (a) the TEAM shall develop an alternative plan that provides a free appropriate public education to the student during the period of the suspension; (b) the TEAM shall present the alternative plan to the student's parents/guardians/caregivers along with the written notice as required under state and federal laws and regulations. Refusal or failure by the parents/guardians/caregivers to consent to provision of services under the alternative plan shall not prevent the suspension from being implemented; and (c) if the student's parents/guardians/caregivers request a hearing before the Massachusetts Department of Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals, the student shall continue in the interim alternative educational placement identified by the school as a result of an administrative decision under the *Rights & Responsibilities Handbook* until either the expiration of the term of discipline or an order by a hearing officer changing the student's placement, whichever occurs first.

In all instances in which a change in placement or a suspension of ten (10) or more school days will be imposed, the student must be provided with a free appropriate public education. School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by- case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student who has violated a code of conduct.

Within ten (10) school days after the date of the administrative decision to impose a disciplinary action, the following shall occur: (a) the TEAM must convene to conduct a functional behavioral assessment of the student, if such an assessment does not already exist; (b) the TEAM must implement the student's behavioral intervention plan if such plan was not implemented prior to the behavior resulting in the discipline; or (c) the TEAM must review and modify the behavioral intervention plan for the student if such plan was implemented prior to the behavior resulting in the discipline.

The TEAM may determine a change in placement, with or without the parents/guardians/caregivers permission, to an interim alternative educational setting for a period not to exceed forty-five school (45) days, as long as a free appropriate public education is provided in one or more of the following instances: (a) a student carries a weapon to school or to a school function; (b) a student knowingly possesses, uses, sells or solicits the sale of an illegal drug and/or controlled substance while at school or at a school function; or (c) a student inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function. "Serious bodily injury" is more specifically defined as involving substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

The school also may seek an order from the Massachusetts Department of Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals for the removal of a student for up to forty-five (45) school days to an interim alternative educational setting if the school determines that the student remaining in the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

33. Education Services and Academic Progress Under Suspension or Expulsion

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, make up assignments, tests, papers and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of the student's removal from the classroom or school. Any student who is expelled or suspended for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school shall have the opportunity to receive educational services and make progress toward meeting state and local requirements through the school wide education service plan developed by the Principal. The Principal shall inform the student and parents/guardians/caregivers of this opportunity when the suspension or expulsion is imposed.

34. Student Searches and Questioning

The Cambridge School Committee's policy relative to student searches and questioning by school security is as follows:

AT THE K-8 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal or designee must authorize student searches and questioning by school security or other non-school-based personnel.

AT THE 9-12 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal, dean or designee must authorize student searches by school security.

ALL GRADE LEVELS (K-12): The principal, assistant principal, dean or designee, whenever reasonably possible, may request which security staff person is to be dispatched to the school and/or small learning community.

AT THE K-8 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal, or designee must be present during searches and questioning of students conducted by school security, or other non-school-based personnel.

AT THE 9-12 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal, dean or designee must be present during searches of students conducted by school security or other non-school based personnel.

AT THE K-8 GRADE LEVEL: An individual from the school staff of the student's choice, whenever reasonably possible, must be present for the questioning of students by school security. An individual school safety specialist of the student's choice, whenever reasonably possible, must conduct all searches of students.

AT THE 9-12 GRADE LEVEL: An individual school safety specialist of the student's choice, whenever reasonably possible, must conduct all searches of students.

AT THE K-8 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal or designee, must notify parents/guardians/caregivers prior to a search of a student conducted by school security. If prior notice is not successful, the parents/guardians/caregivers will be notified as soon as possible thereafter, and a letter will be sent the same day.

AT THE 9-12 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal, dean or designee must immediately notify parent/guardian/caregiver after school security has conducted a search. Further, a letter will be sent the same day.

AT THE K-8 GRADE LEVEL: The principal, assistant principal or designee must notify the parent/guardian/caregiver or emergency contact prior to any questioning of a student by school security. If prior notice is not successful, the parent/guardian/caregiver will be notified as soon as possible, and a letter will be sent the same day.

NOTE: Emergency contact is an individual designated by the parent/guardian/caregiver to respond to instances involving disciplinary issues, including questioning or searches. Every academic year, parents/guardians/caregivers will be asked to designate an emergency contact for disciplinary issues, including questioning or searches, and that contact shall act for the parent/guardian/caregiver with respect to disciplinary issues, including questioning or searches, to the extent authorized by the parent/guardian/caregiver.

ALL GRADE LEVELS (K-12): The principal, assistant principal, house administrator or designee must inform students of their rights prior to a search or interview by school security.

AT THE 9-12 GRADE LEVEL:
Parent/guardian/caregiver notification is not required when school security is questioning a student.

School Security will not initiate any independent investigation without the Superintendent's prior approval.

NOTE: Independent investigation refers to any investigation of a serious threat to the safety of students, faculty and/or staff that is ongoing and is not merely the result of an isolated incident. The investigation must also involve one or more schools or CRLS in the district.

35. Student Grievance Process

When the student or parent/guardian/caregiver believes that the student's rights set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* have been violated by a CPS employee, and all good faith attempts have failed to resolve the situation, the student or parent/guardian/caregiver may file a written complaint with the Superintendent. The written complaint should include the grievance, the specific right being denied, a brief statement of the facts, and a specific request of relief. If the Superintendent is unable to resolve the grievance to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party within seven school days after receipt of the written complaint, the Superintendent shall mail a notice to both parties.

The notice shall contain:

- the time and place for a conference to be held no later than ten days after the receipt of the complaint with the exception being that both parties will have an extra five school days to prepare for the hearing; a statement of the grievance formalized in the written complaint;
- a full statement of the facts, including names of witnesses;
- a statement of relief requested, and;
- a statement of the rights of all parties, the right of all parties to have an attorney or other person represent them in the conference, to present witnesses and evidence, and question adverse witnesses.

The conference shall conform to the following guidelines:

- conducted before the Superintendent or designee,
- conducted in closed session and informally,
- all parties are entitled to representation by counsel or another person of the party's choice,
- all parties may inspect school records and other documents relevant to the complaint, and
- all parties be permitted to question witnesses and have the right to present witnesses and evidence.

If the Superintendent or designee determines that the student's rights have been violated, they can decide appropriate relief.

36. Participation in Extracurricular Activities

CPS Administration and the Department of Safety and Security reserve the right to deny admission to

extracurricular activities to anyone who poses a potential threat to the safety and security of spectators and participants.

Students who fall under the conditions listed below will be excluded from athletic, drama, music, dances, prom, field trip and other extracurricular activities that have spectators:

- Students serving a suspension;
- Former students who have been expelled; and/or
- Students enrolled at an alternative program due to issues of discipline.

Any student who falls within the above categories who feels that their behavior warrants consideration for admittance must submit a request to the Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students. A mutual agreement must be reached between the Director of Security and the Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean of Students in order for this student to receive permission to attend any extracurricular activity.

CPS also reserve the right to exclude from any athletic, drama, music, dances, proms, field trips, and other extracurricular activities that have spectators, members of the community who:

- Have been involved in a serious incident in the community;
- Have a history of violence; and/or
- Have been disruptive and/or disrespectful to staff.

RIGHTS AND PRIVILEGES

37. Non-Discrimination Against Students

Chapter 76, section 5 of the Massachusetts General Laws provides, in pertinent part, that: "[no] person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, gender identity or sexual orientation."

CPS is committed to providing an atmosphere in which all students can learn and can participate in all activities pertaining to their education. Corporal punishment in any form is expressly forbidden. Moreover, any behaviors that insult the dignity of others, interfere with their freedom to learn is unacceptable, or creates a hostile academic environment is unacceptable and shall result in disciplinary action being taken. Additionally, any intimidation, threats, harassment, degradation, humiliation or other retaliatory conduct of students will not be tolerated and shall result in disciplinary action being taken. School staff will not attempt to impede or discourage students or their parents/guardians/caregivers from reporting such conduct to school officials. Any such interference should be reported immediately to the Superintendent.

Below you will find a brief description of the various anti-discrimination policies of CPS.

38. Title IX -Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex

CPS has a commitment to fostering and maintaining an educational environment that is free from all forms of sex/gender-based discrimination, sex/gender-based harassment, gender identity/gender expression discrimination, gender identity/gender expression harassment, including sexual assault and/or retaliation in any of its programs or activities.

The Cambridge Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment.

Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the Cambridge Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both.

The Cambridge Public Schools' Title IX Coordinator is Rasheeda Abdul-Musawwir, Director of Talent Acquisition & Management - Licensed Staff and District Title IX Coordinator, Cambridge Public Schools, 135 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, MA 02141 Email address: rabdulmusawwir@cpsd.us Phone: 857-998-7437.

The Cambridge Public Schools' nondiscrimination policy and grievance procedures can be located on the school department website at http://bit.ly//CPSDTitleIX

If you believe you have experienced or witnessed gender bias in any aspect of CPS, including disparities in athletics or sexual misconduct toward students or wish to report a gender bias concern or to report any information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to either the online or printed forms that are posted on the school department's website here or through Speakfully, CPS' online incident reporting system or contact the District's Title IX Coordinator either via email at rabdulmusawwir@cpsd.us or via phone at 857-998-7437.

Even if you are unsure if the behavior you experienced or witnessed could be gender bias, we are happy to speak with you about your concerns.

39. Reasonable Accommodations Policy and Procedure

CPS does not discriminate in admission, treatment or access to its programs or activities and or in employment in its programs and activities. It is the policy of CPS to provide reasonable accommodations to known physical and mental impairment of students. Requests for Section 504 accommodations for students can be made directly to the 504 Coordinator at the student's school. The 504 Coordinator for the school district is Karyn Grace, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Cambridge Public Schools, 135 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, MA 02141, 617-349-6500.

40. Notice of Rights Under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

These rights apply to parents/guardians/caregivers and students who have reached the age of majority, which in Massachusetts is 18 (eighteen), and are as follows:

1. The parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority has a right to receive a copy of a notice of procedural rights when the school district identifies, evaluates, refuses to evaluate, makes a new educational placement, denies a new educational placement or makes any significant change in the placement of the student because of the student's disability or suspected disability.
2. The parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority has the right to an evaluation of the student if the school district has reason to believe that the student has a mental or physical impairment that substantially limits learning or some other major life activity. The parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority has the right to this evaluation before any plan for accommodation and before any subsequent significant change in the educational placement of the child. An example of a significant change in educational placement is a referral for expulsion.
3. The student has the right to a free appropriate public education. The parent/guardian/caregiver is responsible for the same costs as the

parents/guardians/caregivers of children who are not disabled.

4. To the maximum extent possible, the student has the right to be educated with children who are not disabled.
5. The parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of fourteen or older or entered ninth grade has the right to examine all relevant records the school maintains on the student.
6. The parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority has the right to an impartial due process hearing if they wish to contest any action of the CPS with regard to their student's identification, evaluation, or placement under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.
7. If the parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority wishes to contest an action taken by a Section 504 Team by means of an impartial due process hearing, a Request for Hearing must be submitted to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals (BSEA), 14 Summer Street, 4th Floor, Malden, MA 02148, or by fax to the BSEA at 781-397-4750. This written request for a hearing must also be submitted to the attention of the Superintendent of Schools, Cambridge Public Schools, 135 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, MA 02141. If the parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority ultimately disagrees with the decision of the hearing officer, they have a right to seek review of that decision by filing a complaint with the federal district court.
8. If the parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority has other issues surrounding the student's education that do not specifically involve identification, evaluation or placement, the parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority have the right to present a grievance or complaint to the school department's Section 504 Coordinator, who is Karyn Grace, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Student Services whose office is located at 135 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02141. The telephone number of the Office of Student Services is 617-349-6500.
9. The parent/guardian/caregiver or student who has reached the age of majority also has the right to file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109-3921 Phone: 617-289-0111; Fax: 617-289-0150; TDD: 1-800-877-8339; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov.

41. Special Education

Federal and state law guarantees every student the right to a free and appropriate public education regardless of disability. If you believe that your child is in need of special education services, you have the right to seek an evaluation of your child to determine if they are eligible for such services. If a staff member has a specific concern regarding the academic and/or social and behavioral needs of a child, they should bring those concerns to the attention of the principal for initiation of a Response to Intervention and/or Instructional Support Team process.

42. Students with IEPs and 504 Plans

Students receiving special education or who have 504 Plans are subject to the provisions of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. Students with disabilities and students with 504 Plans, as defined by federal and state laws and regulations, shall be subject to the provisions of this *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook,* except as otherwise provided by section 18 of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*. More specifically, IEPS

and 504 Plans will indicate whether the student can be expected to meet the regular discipline code as set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* or if the student's disability requires specially designed discipline procedures that address a student's needs. If a student's behavior is impacted by a disability, such behaviors will be dealt with through the IEP and/or 504 Team process. In conjunction with making any administrative decision under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* the Principal or designee will notify the Office of Student Services of the suspendable offense of a student with a disability whose IEP or 504 Plan does not reflect the need for modifications to the discipline code set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* or any school-based rules, and a copy of the suspension notice will be forwarded to the Office of Student Services.

Staff from the Office of Student Services shall be involved in all administrative decisions under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* involving students with disabilities. If an administrative decision under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* will not impact the student's placement and/or will not result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year, a Team meeting is not required. If an administrative decision under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* will impact the student's placement and/or will result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year, a Team meeting is required before any administrative decision with respect to discipline is made. Prior to making an administrative decision under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook*, the Principal shall determine whether or not the student has been designated a student with a disability or has been referred for a special education evaluation but not yet determined to be eligible for special education services. A student who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violated any rule or code of conduct may assert any of the protections provided by state and federal special education laws if the school had knowledge that the student is a student with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

The school department is deemed to have knowledge that a student is a student with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action the following occurred:

- The parent/guardian/caregiver has expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel or a teacher of the child that the student is in need of special education services; or
- The parent/guardian/caregiver has requested an evaluation of the student; or
- The student's teacher or other school personnel have expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services or other supervisory personnel in the Office of Student Services.

The school department is deemed not to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability if:

- The parent/guardian/caregiver has not allowed an evaluation of the student; or
- The parent/guardian/caregiver has refused services for the student; or
- The student was evaluated and found ineligible for special education and related services.

If the school department is not deemed to have knowledge that the student is a student with a disability, the student may be disciplined under the discipline code set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* except that the following limitations apply:

- If the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student request an evaluation during the time period that

the student is subjected to discipline, then the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner; and

- Until the evaluation is completed, the student remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities.

If an administrative decision under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* will impact the student's placement and/or will result in a cumulative suspension of more than ten (10) school days during a school year and/or will result in an expulsion, the following provisions shall apply:

A manifestation review will be conducted by the school, the student's parents/guardians/caregivers and other relevant members of the student's Team to determine whether the student's misconduct was a manifestation of their disability. In making this determination the Team will consider whether: (a) the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the child's disability; or (b) the conduct in question was the direct result of the non-implementation of the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan. Depending upon the result of the manifestation determination, the proposed disciplinary action may or may not be implemented. If the Team concludes that the student's conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability, the student shall be returned to the placement from which the student was removed unless the parent/guardian/caregiver and the school district agree to a change of placement as part of the behavioral intervention plan for the student. Additionally, the Team must take immediate steps to remedy any deficiencies found in the student's IEP and/or 504 Plan, placement or implementation in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations, including conducting a functional behavioral assessment for the student, provided that such an assessment had not been conducted prior to the occurrence of the conduct that led to the manifestation determination Team meeting; and either implement a behavioral intervention plan or review and modify as necessary the student's existing behavioral intervention plan.

If the Team concludes that the student's conduct is not a manifestation of the student's disability:

- The Team shall develop an alternative plan that provides a free appropriate public education to the student during the period of the suspension;
- The Team shall present the alternative plan to the student's parents/guardians/caregivers along with the written notice as required under state and federal laws and regulations. Refusal or failure by the parents/guardians/caregivers to consent to provision of services under the alternative plan shall not prevent the suspension from being implemented.

If the student's parents/guardians/caregivers request a hearing before the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals, the student shall continue in the interim alternative education placement identified by the school as a result of an administrative decision under the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* until either the expiration of the term of discipline or an order by a hearing officer is received changing the student's placement, whichever occurs first.

In all instances in which a change in placement or a suspension of ten (10) or more school days will be imposed, the student must be provided with a free appropriate public education. School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a student who has violated a code of conduct.

Within ten (10) school days after the date of the administrative decision to impose a disciplinary action, the following shall occur:

- The Team must convene to conduct a functional behavioral assessment of the student, if such an assessment does not already exist;
- The Team must implement the student's behavioral intervention plan if such plan was not implemented prior to the behavior resulting in the discipline; or
- The Team must review and modify the behavioral intervention plan for the student if such plan was implemented prior to the behavior resulting in the discipline.
- The Team may determine a change in placement, with or without the parent's/guardian's/caregiver's permission, to an interim alternative educational setting for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) school days, as long as a free appropriate public education is provided in one or more of the following instances:
- A student carries a weapon to school or to a school function;
- A student knowingly possesses, uses, sells or solicits the sale of an illegal drug and/or controlled substance while at school or at a school function; or
- A student inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function. "Serious bodily injury" is more specifically defined as involving substantial risk of death, extreme physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement or protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ or mental faculty.

The school also may seek an order from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Bureau of Special Education Appeals for the removal of a student for up to forty-five (45) days to an interim alternative educational setting if the school determines that the student remaining in their current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or to others.

43. Affirmative Action/ Non-Discrimination Notice

CPS is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in every aspect of its operations, both with respect to academic and employment opportunities. It prohibits and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition in its programs and activities or in admission to or employment in its education programs or activities. CPS also provides equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups as required by federal law. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Manager- Employee and Labor Relations, Office of Human Resources, Cambridge Public Schools, 135 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, MA 02141, 617-349-6438.

For further information on non-discrimination you may also contact the Office of Civil Rights of the United States Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Boston, MA 02109 Phone: 617-289-0111; Fax: 617-289-0150.

44. McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison

CPS is committed to providing homeless children and unaccompanied youth with equal access to a public education as is provided to other children in Cambridge. Assistance in addressing issues relating to the education of homeless children and unaccompanied youth should be directed to the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison for the Cambridge Public Schools. The office for the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Liaison is located in the Title I office at 135 Berkshire Street,

Cambridge, MA 02141. The telephone number 617-349-6490.

45. Freedom of Assembly

Students should enjoy the right to assemble freely and peaceably on school property and to be able to express their views and opinions. Students who are planning an assembly or meeting need prior approval by the principal or assistant principal. Students also have the right to invite and hear outside speakers in school facilities. School officials may regulate the time and place of speeches and require advance notice in order to avoid conflicts and to ensure proper protection of the school community. Students are required to submit the names of outside speakers to the principal or assistant principal for prior approval. The school officials will approve an outside speaker unless there is a substantial factual basis for believing that the speaker will cause substantial disruption of school activities. Student government meetings and school community meetings are the appropriate places to plan such events.

46. Freedom of Expression

Students in a school setting have certain constitutional rights as defined by the courts. Students have the right to express themselves by speaking, writing, wearing, or displaying symbols such as buttons, badges, emblems and arm bands, or through other media or forms of expression. The principal or assistant principal may regulate expression if there is substantial factual basis for believing a specific form of expression will cause or is causing imminent and substantial disruption of school activities. Such disruption may consist of supporting all kinds of racism, pornographic materials, libelous or defamatory statements, or inciting others to break school rules.

47. Freedom of the Person

Students have the right to be safe and secure while in school buildings, on school grounds, transit to and from school, and during any organized school function. Students, school personnel or school officials should in no way use physical force in any manner to cause or attempt to cause physical injury to another student, teacher or school official. A teacher or school official may use physical force if it is reasonable and necessary. The three situations where this is permissible are:

- to obtain possession of a weapon or other dangerous object,
- for the purpose of self defense, and
- for the protection of another person or property.

Common sense and experience dictate when necessary force is used. Physical force in any manner for the purpose of student discipline or imposing punishment is forbidden. Corporal punishment in any form is expressly forbidden.

48. Non-Discrimination

I. Introduction

CPS has a commitment to maintaining an educational environment and workplace where bigotry and intolerance, including discrimination are not tolerated. Discrimination and harassment consists of harmful unwelcome conduct that is based on a characteristic protected by law, such as race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition. CPS strictly enforces a prohibition against discrimination of any of its employees, students, students' parents/guardians/caregivers or visitors by anyone, including any fellow student, teacher, supervisor, co-worker, vendor, or other third party,

as such conduct is contrary to the mission of CPS and its commitment to equal opportunity in education and employment.

CPS will not tolerate discrimination that affects employment or educational conditions that interferes unreasonably with an individual's school or work performance, or that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or school environment. Any retaliation against an individual who has complained about discrimination or any retaliation against any individual who has cooperated with an investigation of a discrimination complaint will not be tolerated.

CPS takes allegations of discrimination seriously and will respond promptly to complaints. Where it is determined that discrimination has occurred, CPS will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose corrective action as necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate, which may include termination of employment or school-related discipline.

II. Definitions

"Complainant" is defined as the individual who has filed a complaint of discrimination within CPS.

"Discrimination" is defined as harmful conduct that is based on race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition. Discrimination includes, but is not limited to:

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

Many forms of discrimination have been recognized as violations of the civil rights laws (including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VI and Title IX) by federal courts, state courts, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights and the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination.

The above definition of discrimination is broad. In addition to the above examples, other conduct, whether intended or not, that has the effect of creating a school or work environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating will be considered discrimination.

"Investigator" is defined as the CPS Director of Employee and Labor Relations or the Chief Talent Officer of the CPS Office of Human Resources.

"Resolution" is defined as the result of a discrimination complaint investigation established by this policy.

"School" is defined as CPS-supported on-line and/or digital platforms, CPS school-sponsored social events, trips, sports events, work-related travel or similar events connected with CPS' school or employment, including without limitation, extracurricular and athletic activities and programs,

traveling to and from CPS' school or on a CPS school-sponsored field trip.

"Witness" is defined as the individual or office that receives a complaint of discrimination within CPS.

III. Reporting Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment

If any CPS student or employee believes, in good faith, that they have been subjected to any form of harassment or discrimination, the individual has a right to file a complaint and seek resolution. If any CPS student or employee wishes to file a complaint and seek resolution, they may do so by contacting their immediate supervisor, the Chief Talent Officer or the CPS Director of Employee and Labor Relations - in the case of employees; and their teacher, Principal, Assistant Principal, Dean, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education or Assistant Superintendent for Secondary Education – in the case of students. This may be done verbally or in writing.

Teachers or other staff members who observe incidents of discrimination involving students shall report such incidents immediately to the student's Principal, Assistant Principal or Dean. Administrators aware of harassment involving any employee shall report such incidents to the CPS Director of Employee and Labor Relations or the Chief Talent Officer.

No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any CPS employee or student for processing, in good faith, a complaint, or for participating in any way in these complaint procedures. No reprisals or retaliation shall be invoked against any employee or any student who, in good faith, has testified, assisted, or participated in any manner in any investigation, proceeding, or hearing of a complaint or for otherwise participating in any way in the complaint procedures established by this policy.

IV. Complaint Investigation

When CPS receives a complaint of discrimination, it will investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. If the complaint involves conduct that occurred off school, as school is defined in Section II, CPS will, as part of its investigation, consider the effects of the off school conduct when evaluating whether there is a hostile environment in school. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances. If the individual filing the complaint of discrimination is under the age of eighteen (18), the school will notify the parents/guardians/caregivers of the student before beginning the investigation. The investigation may include an interview with the person filing the complaint and also may include interviews with witnesses or other individuals who CPS believes would be useful to the investigation. CPS also will interview the person alleged to have committed the discrimination. Whenever possible, interviews should be scheduled during a time that does not conflict with regularly scheduled work and/or school programs. When CPS has concluded its investigation, CPS will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of the investigation.

The investigation procedures are designed to promote the sensitive handling of employee and student issues, the thorough investigation of complaints, to facilitate a prompt and expeditious internal review, and to reach a fair and equitable resolution of complaints alleging discrimination as defined in Section II. A CPS employee or student may select any of the routes identified above in Section III or identified below in this Section IV to file a complaint of discrimination. CPS employees and students may seek advice from appropriate individuals within their school or administrative

office or from the CPS CPS Director of Employee and Labor Relations or the Office of Human Resources without being required to file a complaint.

Complaint Investigation Procedure

The complainant shall file a written complaint that will state the name of the individual and the location of the school/department where the alleged discriminatory practice occurred, the basis for the complaint, and the corrective action the employee or student is seeking.

After filing the written complaint, the witness shall promptly give written notification to the appropriate school and/or department identified in the complaint. The investigator will conduct the necessary investigation promptly after receiving the complaint. In the course of their investigation, the investigator shall contact those individuals that have been referred to as having pertinent information related to the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant, the complainant's parent/guardian/caregiver if the complainant is under the age of 18, and the person against whom the complaint was filed, and/or the principal or appropriate authority involved. If further documentation is needed, the investigator shall present to the appropriate authorities, written requests for additional information pertaining to the complaint. Strict timelines cannot be set for conducting the investigation because each set of circumstances is different. For example, sometimes the employees or students that are involved in the complaint are not immediately available. The investigator, however, will make sure that the complaint is handled as quickly as is feasible and will strive to complete the investigation within thirty (30) working days. When more than thirty (30) working days is required for the investigation, the investigator shall inform the complainant, in writing, that the investigation is still on-going and shall confirm receipt of notice of said extension.

After completing the investigation of the complaint, the investigator may request a meeting with the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the principal or appropriate authority involved to discuss the investigation's findings. The purpose of said meeting shall be to give the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the principal, supervisor or appropriate authority involved, an opportunity to respond to the findings, and to seek to resolve the complaint. When feasible and appropriate, the investigator will make every attempt to resolve the issue within the time parameters of this initial meeting; however, more than one meeting may be necessary. The investigator will strive to reach a determination of responsibility within thirty (30) working days. When more than thirty (30) working days is required to reach a determination, the investigator shall inform the complainant and the individual against whom the complaint was filed and/or the principal or appropriate authority involved, in writing, that additional time is needed for the determination process. The investigator shall confirm receipt of notice of said extension.

If the investigator finds that there is reasonable cause, based upon a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., more likely than not), for believing that a discriminatory practice has occurred, the investigator will refer the matter to the Chief Talent Officer or CPS Director of Employee and Labor Relations or to the Superintendent for appropriate action, up to and including termination for employees or expulsion for students. The investigator will notify, in writing, both the complainant and the individual against whom the complaint was filed of the outcome of the investigation.

If it is determined that discriminatory conduct has been committed by a CPS employee or student, the

CPS shall take action that is appropriate under the circumstances as defined in Section V.

Section V. Disciplinary Measures

If it is determined that discriminatory conduct has been committed by a CPS employee or student, the CPS shall take action that is appropriate under the circumstances. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, counseling, restorative practices, or termination of employment–in the case of employees–or expulsion–in the case of students. While these measures relate to the heretofore established CPS policy of promoting a workplace and educational setting free from discrimination, these procedures are not designed nor intended to limit CPS' authority to discipline or take remedial action for workplace and educational conduct which CPS deems unacceptable.

Section VI. Conflict Resolution Measures

Additionally, CPS has a conflict mediation program which individuals may access for the resolution for matters or conflicts during or outside of the resolution processes detailed above.

Section VII. Resolution Appeal

If the complainant has entered into a complaint process and is not satisfied with the resolution, they may appeal the resolution for the Superintendent's review. The appeal submitted to the Superintendent shall state the grievance, including the specifics relating to the discriminatory or practice that has occurred and shall include a brief statement of the facts and specific request for relief. The Superintendent will conduct the necessary investigation promptly after receiving the complaint. This process shall include, at a minimum, contacting the complainant, the complainant's parent/guardian/caregiver if the complainant is under the age of 18, and the person against whom the complaint was filed and/or the principal or appropriate authority involved and reviewing any prior investigation that has been conducted by the school district with respect to the matter.

The Superintendent will strive to complete the resolution of the appeal within ten (10) working days. When more than ten (10) working days is required for the investigation and resolution process, the Superintendent shall inform the employee or student who filed the complaint and the individual against whom the complaint was filed and/or the principal or appropriate authority involved that additional time is needed for the resolution process. The Superintendent shall confirm receipt of notice of said extension.

If the Superintendent finds that there is reasonable cause, based upon a preponderance of the evidence (i.e., more likely than not), for believing that a discriminatory practice has occurred, the Superintendent will take appropriate action, up to and including termination for CPS employees or expulsion for CPS students. The Superintendent will notify, in writing, both the complainant and the individual against whom the complaint was filed of the outcome of the investigation.

Section VIII. State or Federal Remedies

Using CPS' discrimination complaint process, as established by this policy, does not prohibit a complainant from filing a complaint with the relevant agencies described below.

For CPS students, complaints may be taken to the:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Education
5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor
Boston, MA 02109-3921
Phone: 617.289.0111; Fax: 617.289.0150;

TTY: 1.800.877.8339
Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov;

Problem Resolution Systems Office
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
75 Pleasant Street
Malden, MA 02148-4906
Phone: 781.338.3700; Fax: 781.338.3710;
Email: compliance@doe.mass.edu;

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD) at the addresses listed below; or other appropriate state or federal agency.

For CPS employees or applicants for employment, complaints may be taken to the:

Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD)
1 Ashburton Place, Suite 601
Boston, Massachusetts 02108
Phone: 617.994.6000
Email: MCAD@mass.gov; or at any other MCAD office listed as follows:

Boston Headquarters
1 Ashburton Place, Suite 601
Boston, MA 02108
Phone: 617.994.6000

Springfield Office
436 Dwight Street, Room 220
Springfield, MA 01103
Phone: 413.739.2145

or other appropriate state or federal agency, including the following:

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
JFK Federal Building
15 New Sudbury Street, Room 475
Boston, MA 02203-0506
Phone: 1.800.669.4000, TTY: 1.800.669.6820, ASL Video Phone: 844.234.5122, Fax: 617.565.3196

Section IX. Sexual/Gender-Based Discrimination Procedures

All complaints of sex/gender-based discrimination, sex/gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, and/or sexual misconduct will be processed in accordance with the procedures set forth in the Title IX/Sexual Misconduct Policy.

49. Student Marriage, Pregnancy and Parenthood

Students who are pregnant, parents or married shall be encouraged to continue in school. Such students are permitted to remain in their regular academic classes and to participate in extracurricular activities with other students. Additionally, pregnant students, after giving birth, are permitted to return to their same academic classes and extracurricular activities as before giving birth. No student who is pregnant, a parent or married shall be denied access to classroom instruction or extracurricular activities, nor be suspended, expelled, excluded or otherwise disciplined because of marriage, pregnancy or parenthood.

50. Freedom of Religion

Massachusetts General Laws chapter 151C, section 2B, provides that:

> Any student in an educational or vocational training institution, other than a religious or denominational educational or vocational training institution, who is unable, because of their religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study, or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with an opportunity to make up such examination, study,

> or work requirement which they may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section.

Students who miss school because they are observing a religious holiday are to be recorded as an excused absence. Secondly, teachers are asked to refrain from scheduling any important tests, culminating activities, major papers or reports during these days. Finally, teachers are to give their students a reasonable amount of time upon return to their class to make up homework assigned during these days.

51. Pledge of Allegiance Guidelines

Massachusetts General Laws: Chapter 71, Section 69 provides that:

> Each teacher at the commencement of the first class of each day in all grades in all public schools shall lead the class in a group recitation of the "Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag."

Participation in the pledge of allegiance may not be required of any student. It is expected that any student who does not wish to take part in the pledge will respect the right of others who wish to do so without interruption or disruption.

GENERAL POLICIES

52. Acceptable Use Policy for Computer Network (AUP)

It is the policy of CPS that all technology used for the purpose of electronic communication, including without limitation, technology used to access CPS' network and to access the Internet and all electronic devices issued to staff and/or students by CPS (such as computers, phones, etc.) will be used in a responsible, legal and ethical manner.

CPS computer network and electronic devices are established for a limited educational purpose, and have not been established as a public access service or a public forum. CPS has the right to place restrictions on the use of the computer system and all electronic devices it issues, and to require users to abide by system rules and School Committee policies, including but not limited to, CPS' Non-Discrimination Policy, Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy and to protect the confidentiality of student record information and personnel record information.

While there are many valuable resources on the Internet, there also are many sites that can be considered inappropriate for students and serve no educational value. All individuals using the Internet must use the computer network responsibly to ensure it is only used for educational purposes, and must be consistent with the academic activities of CPS and will be under the supervision of CPS staff. By using CPS' networked information resources, both student and adult users are agreeing to accept this policy. Use of CPS networked information resources for any illegal or commercial activities is prohibited.

CPS uses a filtering system designed to prevent access to educationally inappropriate sites, including those that contain material that is obscene, pornographic or harmful to minors. However, it is

important to understand that no solution is perfect and CPS cannot guarantee that students might not access an inappropriate site. It is the student's responsibility to report any inappropriate site to a teacher and return to the educational topic assigned.

Teachers, administrators and other school personnel who are using the Internet as part of their teaching may call CPS' Information, Communication and Technology Systems (ICTS) to request that a specific site be blocked or unblocked. Such decisions will be made by those responsible for monitoring the CPS filtering system in consultation with appropriate school personnel.

Use of CPS' computers, computer network, including Internet access and email, and other electronic devices (such as cell phones) is a PRIVILEGE and not a right. *It is important for all CPS employees, students and the parents/guardians/caregivers of students to understand that refusal to sign the Acknowledgement of Receipt of the Acceptable Use Policy and/or any violation of the Acceptable Use Policy may result in the loss of computer, Internet, computer network, other electronic devices and/or email privileges, and/or disciplinary action, and/or prosecution under state and federal law.*

CPS makes no warranties of any kind, whether expressed or implied, for the services it is providing. CPS will not be responsible for any damage you suffer including but not limited to, loss of data, interruption of service, delays, non-deliveries, or mis-deliveries caused by any reason. CPS is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the network, and use of any such information is at your own risk. CPS will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the use of the network.

It is the policy of the Cambridge School Committee and CPS that all transmission of electronic communications and storage of all information is subject to this Acceptable Use Policy, as applicable. All electronic information transmitted by, received from or stored is considered property of CPS and/or Cambridge School Committee, as applicable, and is subject to random, suspicion-less monitoring, archiving and retrieval. It is important for all CPS employees, students and parents/guardians/caregivers of students to understand that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to the use of CPS' computer network, including Internet access and email and that there is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to the content of electronic communications made to or from CPS' computer network, including Internet access and email no matter whose electronic communications equipment is used. CPS and Cambridge School Committee can and will monitor and investigate the use of email files, computers, hard drives and other electronic communications files, systems, devices and platforms regardless of whether accessed in school, in work or remotely if linked directly to the school district server.

Responsible network users will not use CPS' computer network, including without limitation Internet access and email:

(a) for commercial purposes of any kind;

(b) for political lobbying, although users may use the system to communicate with representatives and to express their opinion on political issues;

(c) for illegal activities;

(d) for posting, disclosing or otherwise disseminating personal contact information about themselves or other people, including name, address, telephone, school or work address, without the prior permission of a school administrator, and the prior written permission of the individual whose personal contact information is to be posted;

(e) for posting, disclosing or otherwise disseminating student record information without the prior permission of a school administrator, and the prior written permission of the student's parent/guardian/caregiver unless such disclosure or

dissemination is permitted by Massachusetts student record regulations;

(f) for posting or otherwise disseminating a message that was sent to them privately without permission of the person who sent the message. This provision does not prohibit a user from promptly disclosing to a teacher or school administrator any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel unsafe;

(g) to threaten, humiliate, bully, harass, intimidate or send offensive information to another person or about another person;

(h) for posting chain letters, engaging in spamming or engaging in any other inappropriate form of communication over the computer network;

(i) for posting, disclosing or otherwise disseminating personnel record information without prior permission of a school administrator unless such disclosure or dissemination is permitted by federal or state law;

(j) for viewing, possessing, posting, disclosing, sending, sharing or otherwise disseminating sexually explicit digital pictures, text messages, emails or other material of a sexual nature on any computer, cell phone or other electronic device regardless of whether federal or state child pornography law is violated;

(k) for activities which disrupt the educational environment;

(l) for unethical activities, such as cheating on assignments or tests;

(m) for activities that invade the privacy of others;

(n) for personal use; in other words, CPS' network and electronic devices should only be used for business and/or school purposes;

(o) to engage in any other conduct which violates any CPS policy and/or the provisions of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* or school-based rules in any way;

(p) not use or permit students to interact with any websites that require input of personal or student identifiable information (such as name, address, telephone number, email address, etc.) unless the use of such website has been approved by ICTS; and

(q) to violate the provisions of M.G.L.c. 71, §37O, including its provisions regarding bullying, cyberbullying and retaliation.

Responsible network users will:

(a) never reveal personal information about any user, such as address, telephone number, credit card number, social security number, unless express written permission is granted; and student users will never agree to meet with someone they meet on-line without a parent/guardian/caregiver's approval;

(b) notify a system administrator of any security problems they identify on the computer network;

(c) be responsible for the use of their electronic devices and account at all times and never divulge their password for any device or account to anyone;

(d) recognize that there is no privacy in the contents of email, data or personal files on any electronic device and/or the network, and that all electronic devices and the system are subject to archiving, routine maintenance, access and monitoring of messages and files may be accessed in appropriate circumstances;

(e) promptly disclose to a teacher or school administrator any website that they locate or receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel unsafe;

(f) not attempt to gain unauthorized access to CPS' computer network or any other computer network or go beyond the user's authorized access, make deliberate attempts to disrupt the computer network or destroy data by spreading computer viruses or by any other means, or otherwise

vandalize, tamper with, destroy or interfere with the computer network, with programs, data, files or any other electronic information or devices;

(g) honor the legal rights of software producers, network providers, copyright and license agreements;

(h) not use the system to access material that is profane or obscene (i.e., pornography), that advocates illegal acts, that advocates violence or discrimination toward other people (i.e., hate literature), or that is illegal (i.e., gambling);

(i) comply with the policies of the Cambridge School Committee and CPS, including without limitation, its Non-Discrimination Policy, Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Policy, Non-Tolerance of Hate Crimes Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy in connection with the use of the computer network, computer system and email;

(j) use the same level of care, judgment and professionalism in communicating on the computer network, computer system and email as they would for other written communications of the school department, including without limitation those on school department or individual school letterhead;

(k) report any incidents or receipt of threats, humiliation, bullying, cyberbullying, retaliation, harassment, intimidation or offensive communications (whether via email, text message, social networking site or otherwise) in accordance with the provisions of CPS' Non-Discrimination Policy, Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy;

(l) when posting material in a distance learning course, ensure that the posted material is made available only for students officially enrolled in the course for which the transmission is made, whether such transmission of digital information is a distance education course or a supplement to a live course; ensure reasonable measures are implemented to prevent retention of works longer than the class session and prevent unauthorized dissemination of materials (i.e., use passwords, user and location authentication through Internet protocol checking, content timeouts, print disabling, and disabling the cut and paste tool), provide clear notice to students that the work is protected by copyright and only posted material that is lawfully made, acquired and part of a systematic mediated instructional activity for the class under the control or supervision of the instructor, used in a manner analogous to performances or displays in a live classroom and the amount of material used must be comparable to the amount used in a live classroom setting and not post any digital educational works; and

(m) ensure students are educated about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites, chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.

Discipline

Any violation of this policy may result in cancellation of network privileges and/or appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with CPS rules, and legal action, if appropriate.

Any user identified as a security risk or having a history of problems with other computer systems may be denied access to the network, at the discretion of the school department.

The school department will cooperate fully with local state or federal officials in any investigation related to any illegal activities conducted through the network.

53. Software Code of Ethics

Unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software violates the law and is contrary to CPS' standards of conduct. CPS disapproves of such copying and recognizes the following principles as a basis for preventing its occurrences:

- CPS will neither engage in nor tolerate the making or using of unauthorized software copies under any circumstances.
- CPS will provide legally acquired software to meet legitimate software needs in a timely fashion and in sufficient quantities for all our computers that require such software.
- CPS will comply with all license or purchase terms regulating the use of any software that the CPS acquires or uses.
- CPS will enforce strong internal controls to prevent the making or using of unauthorized software copies, including effective measures to verify compliance with these standards and appropriate disciplinary measures for violation of these standards.

54. School Visitors

To maintain safety and security, all visitors are expected to report to the main office of the school before going elsewhere in the school building. If a visitor disrupts or interferes with the work of students, teachers or other employees by behaving inappropriately or insisting on visiting at inappropriate times, the principal may place limitations on the individual's ability to visit the school, including but not limited to, requiring appointments to be made before visiting, being accompanied by school staff when in the building, or being barred from entering the building. If you have questions about the school's policy on visitors, speak to the principal.

55. No Idling of Motor Vehicles

Massachusetts General Law chapter 71, section 37H prohibits all operators of school buses and operators of personal motor vehicles from idling vehicles on school grounds or within one hundred (100) feet of school grounds.

56. Student Lockers

Many CPS schools, especially the newer ones, have lockers for students. Lockers are a privilege.

Students who are assigned lockers must abide by the following conditions:

Every effort should be made to keep the lockers secure and allow for the privacy of its contents.

Students should not share lockers unless authorized to do so by the person in charge.

Writing graffiti or failure to keep lockers neat and clean will not be tolerated.

Lockers are for the students' clothing and instructional materials such as books, notes, projects, supplies, lunches, etc.

Students must comply with their school's locker regulations, including scheduled times for access, etc.

Students should take what they need from their lockers at the end of the school day. If it is necessary to get something important from the locker after school hours, an administrator's permission is required.

Since lockers are property of the school department, the schools maintain the right to search lockers if there is reason to believe the locker contains contraband, weapons, or evidence that will link the locker to trafficking in contraband, or if there is present danger of immediate physical threat to the school or its staff or students. The schools will conduct announced and unannounced locker inspections. See Section 4.0 of the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* for further information on the locker policy.

CPS is not responsible for the loss of property during the school year. CPS also is not responsible for the loss of property left in a locker after the last school day. These rules and regulations along with the school's school-based procedures also apply to students' desks.

57. Criminal Offender Record Information

The Cambridge Public Schools seeks to provide a safe learning environment for its students and a safe working environment for its employees. Accordingly, it is the policy of the Cambridge Public Schools, in accordance with the provisions of M.G.L.c. 71, §38R, as amended by Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002, M.G.L.c. 6, §§168-178L, as amended, to conduct criminal background checks ("CORI checks") pursuant to M.G.L.c. 6, §§178C-178P, as amended, to conduct Sexual Offender Registry Information ("SORI checks"), at least every three (3) years on current and prospective employee(s), contracted service providers, volunteer(s), school transportation provider(s) and other individual(s) who may have direct and unmonitored contact with children. CORI/SORI checks will be conducted on current and prospective employee(s) and service providers prior to employment and/or contracting and on any volunteer prior to accepting the person as a volunteer.

Additionally, in accordance with state law, CORI/SORI checks also will be obtained from individuals who regularly provide transportation to children, including, taxicab company employees, and the school district may also have access to CORI/SORI check information from any subcontractor, laborer or vendor who performs work on school grounds, and who may have direct and unmonitored conduct with children, and shall notify them of this requirement.

Additionally, in accordance with state law, a fingerprint-based state and national criminal history record check is conducted on all current and prospective employees.

58. Field Trips

The Cambridge School Committee recognizes that first-hand experiences provided by field trips and school-sponsored trips are a most effective and worthwhile means of learning; therefore, the Cambridge School Committee encourages that field trips and school-sponsored trips be of significant educational value which are related to the total school program and curriculum. Additionally, due to the inherent educational value of field trips and school-sponsored trips that all students be able to participate in and have equal access to field trips and school-sponsored trips.

Consistent with this goal, the Superintendent has established guidelines for field trips and school-sponsored trips. These guidelines address the process for screening, evaluating and approving field trips and school-sponsored trips in order to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the health, safety and welfare of the participants and to ensure no substantial disruption of the educational process and the inherent educational value of the field trip and/or school-sponsored trip. Additionally, the guidelines provide that no student be denied participation in a field trip or school-sponsored trip as a consequence or form of punishment for previous behavior for which the student already has been disciplined. A student may only be excluded from a field trip or school-sponsored trip if the date or dates of the suspension or expulsion from school for a violation of school-based rules or the codes of conduct set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* coincides with the scheduled date or dates of the field trip or school-sponsored trip, or if, in the judgment of the principal, a student's previous or current behavior poses a substantial risk to the health, safety and welfare of the student, other students and/or staff participating in the field trip and/or school-sponsored event. The guidelines also

require the prior approval of all field trips or school-sponsored trips by the principal, and the prior approval by the Superintendent and/or designee of all overnight and out-of-state or out-of-country trips. Furthermore, the guidelines establish procedures to assure that: (i) all students have parent/guardian/caregiver permission for trips; (ii) all trips are properly supervised, (iii) all safety precautions are observed, (iv) all student files have been reviewed to determine if any accommodations or modifications are required in order for a student to participate in and have equal access to any field trip or school-sponsored trip, (v) all trips contribute substantially to the educational program, (vi) the district is monitoring whether students are excluded from participation in and/or having equal access to field trips and/or school-sponsored trips, and if so, for what reasons; and (vii) there are procedures in place for parents/guardians/caregivers to appeal a decision to exclude a student from participation and access to a field trip and/or school-sponsored trip.

Approval of all field trips and school-sponsored trips is conditional. Approval for any field trip or school-sponsored trip may be revoked if a change in circumstances, whether man-made or natural, would warrant cancellation of this field trip or school sponsored trip in the interest of the safety of the students and staff of CPS.

CPS and the Cambridge School Committee will not be responsible for any financial obligations incurred as a result of the planning of the field trip or school sponsored trip, or for any monies that are non-refundable or are otherwise lost due to the subsequent cancellation of the field trip or school-sponsored trip or due to a student's exclusion from participation and access to a field trip or school-sponsored trip as a result of the student's suspension or expulsion from school on the date or dates of the field trip or school-sponsored trip.

All rules and codes of conduct established for student eligibility to participate in the proposed trip must be distributed to parents/guardians/caregivers and students at the time that a field trip is initially announced. Either at the time that the field trip is initially announced and not later than at least six weeks prior to any planned field trip, appropriate school staff should review all student files to determine if any accommodations or modifications are required in order for the student to participate in the planned field trip. If necessary, a Team meeting should be convened either at or near the time that the field trip is initially announced and not later than at least six weeks prior to the planned field trip to review and discuss any accommodations or modifications that are required in order for the student to participate in and access the planned field trip.

No student shall be denied participation in a field trip or school sponsored trip that takes place during the school day (and is not an overnight trip) because of financial inability to pay the fee. Each club, Team or group is responsible for raising all of the money necessary to fund a field trip or school sponsored trip that is being proposed by a group of students. No fundraising or other preparations for a field trip or school sponsored trip should occur until the field trip or school sponsored trip has been approved. No financial support will be available from CPS or the Cambridge School Committee for any overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country travel.

CPS and the Cambridge School Committee will not be responsible for any expenses incurred as a result of a chaperone's decision to send a student participant home earlier than the scheduled return date due to the student's unacceptable behavior. Students and their parents/guardians/caregivers will be held responsible for any damage done to hotels, rental properties, real or personal property. Parents/guardians/caregivers must agree to pay for any damages that may be done by their child and/or aid school officials in collecting money necessary to do so.

For all field trips requiring transportation, transportation must be provided by a common carrier that is licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, or in an approved CPS licensed vehicle or by public transportation, such as the MBTA, bus, train or other form of public transportation. All charter services for field trips or school sponsored trips must be provided by a common carrier that is licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to provide charter services and is licensed for passenger transport by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. All vendors that provide transportation for field trips or school sponsored trips must provide evidence that their driver(s) are licensed in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to drive the vehicles being used to provide the transportation for the field trips and/or the charter services for the field trips. All transportation vendors also must maintain liability insurance with a minimum of $500,000 (five hundred thousand dollars) per occurrence for bodily injury. No transportation vendor shall be used to provide transportation and/or charter services for field trips or school sponsored trips if it has a rating of "conditional" or "unsatisfactory" issued by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration. Nothing in this field trip policy should be construed to prohibit field trips where students travel by means of walking.

Use of privately owned vehicles or leased vans to transport students to and from field trips, athletic events or school sponsored trips are strictly prohibited, except in the case of a bona fide emergency. Determination of the existence of a bona fide emergency will be made by the Principal and/or Trip Leader if the Principal is not present. Staff and parents/guardians/caregivers who use their own vehicles risk being legally liable for any injury a student sustains while in the vehicle.

Overnight accommodations should be made in advance with safety and security in mind and, whenever possible, travel between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m. should be avoided, trip itineraries should leave enough room for drivers to rest in conformity with federal hour-of-service requirements and common sense and take into account the likelihood of delays due to weather, traffic and unanticipated factors.

Specific guidelines for field trips can be accessed on the policy page of our website at: www.cpsd.us

59. Immunizations

State law requires that before registering for school students have been successfully immunized against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, measles, rubella (German measles), mumps, poliomyelitis and hepatitis B and other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the department of public health.
Parents/guardians/caregivers are responsible for keeping immunizations current.

60. Family Involvement

CPS recognizes that families are their children's first teachers. As each of us desires and deserves respect for our family and cultural differences, CPS encourages each student, family member and educator to be sensitive to and respectful of human differences in the entire school community. Families are encouraged to: (a) become aware of what their child is learning; (b) ask questions about their child's education; and (c) support their child's learning. The goal of family involvement in CPS is the development of a partnership between home and school that ensures all children become successful lifelong learners. For a copy of CPS' Family Involvement Policy contact the principal.

61. Promotion and Retention

The Cambridge School Committee recognizes that each child develops socially, emotionally, and intellectually at a rate unique to that child and that each child must be afforded the opportunity to progress continually through school community environments that meet their individual needs. A student who struggles to be successful in school may advance to the next grade when in the judgment of the principal, based upon input from school staff and parent/guardian/caregiver, advancement is in the best interest of the student.

Students are expected to progress through the grade levels. When a student struggles to meet grade-level standards, school staff, students, and parents/guardians/caregivers will work together to customize support services to help the student succeed. Retention should be considered a last resort and will take place only after very careful consideration and implementation of a retention intervention plan. With the exception of kindergarten students who due to age may remain in the same grade for a second year, a student may be retained no more than once prior to entering high school. Decisions made regarding students with IEPs must be consistent with the IEP Team findings. The decision to retain a student shall be made by the building principal, in consultation with appropriate staff members and parents/guardians/caregivers. At the elementary and upper school levels, should the parent/guardian/caregiver disagree with the decision, the principal will write a letter to be placed in the student's cumulative folder attesting to the recommendation of the principal while allowing the parent/guardian/caregiver to have the final decision. At the secondary level, the accrual of appropriate credits determines the student's status of grade enrollment unless otherwise determined by the IEP Team findings.

No student who has completed a grade successfully shall be retained or allowed to repeat a grade in order to improve their ability or lengthen their eligibility to participate in extracurricular athletic programs.

62. Administration of Prescription Medication and Management of Life Threatening Food Allergies

It is the policy of CPS to have procedures in place for the safe and proper administration of prescription medications to students attending CPS and for addressing issues relating to the management of life threatening food allergies in the school setting. The procedures supporting this policy can be found on the website. If your child needs to have prescription medication administered during the school day or a plan for managing a life threatening food allergy, contact the school principal.

63. Wellness Policy

The Cambridge School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness policy.

Wellness Council

The School Committee has designated the Superintendent and the Superintendent's designees to establish a Wellness Council that may serve as a resource in connection with the implementation and evaluation of this policy.

Nutrition Guidelines

CPS' goal is that all students will have opportunities, support and encouragement to make healthy nutrition choices throughout the school day through meals, snacks and beverages provided as part of the school meal program, at other times during the school day such as through food and nutrition education integrated in the health curriculum, school gardens and in school events taking place outside school hours.

CPS' food service program will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious and appealing foods and beverages that:

* Meet health and nutrition needs of students and adhere to USDA school meal regulations
* Meet the Massachusetts School Nutrition regulations, as applicable
* Accommodate the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning
* Provide clean, safe and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat; and a minimum of 20 minutes for lunch and a minimum of 10 minutes for breakfast, after sitting down.
* Ensure that no student need go hungry while in school
* Schools will adhere to the nutritional standards set by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for competitive foods and beverages including vending machines, a la carte items offered in school cafeterias, school-sponsored or school-related events.
* In addition, the schools will maintain the same Massachusetts standards for concession stands, booster sales, fundraising activities and school-sponsored or school-related events.

Physical Education and Physical Activities

CPS' goal is that all students will have opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis throughout the school day through physical education (PE) classes, before and after school activities, active transportation and the integration of physical activity into the academic curriculum where appropriate. Additionally, there will be daily recess periods with active play for K-8 students.

Health, Physical Education and Athletic departments will provide all students, including students with disabilities, special health care needs and those in alternative education settings with access to a variety of opportunities for physical activity that:

- Adhere to or exceed the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education Standards
- Ensure that students learn skills for lifelong activities
- Provide students with the opportunity to participate in physical activity through a range of programs including but not limited to, intramurals and competitive interscholastic athletics, and activities that are available to all students, regardless of skill level, such as intramurals and physical activity clubs
- Students will not be kept from recess or excluded from a physical education class except if the removal is necessary to protect the health, safety and welfare of the student, other students and staff and/or is related to the students engaging in conduct, during recess or the physical education class, that is in violation of the codes of conduct set forth in the *Rights and Responsibilities Handbook* and/or in school-based rules or other policies (e.g., Anti-Bullying Policy, Hazing Policy, Non-Discrimination Policy, etc.), or the permission of the student's parent/guardian/caregiver has been given for the student's removal or exclusion.
- Physical activity or recess will neither be denied nor required as a form of punishment.
- All students in grades K-8 will have at least 20 minutes of recess actively supervised by trained staff, preferably outdoors, during which the schools will encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through provision of space and equipment.

- Students will not be denied recess to conference with teaching staff, finish projects or make up work unless under unusual circumstances.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to engage in active transportation to and from school and to support a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age by working to make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing mode of transportation.

Health and Nutrition Education Activities

CPS' goals for health and nutrition education activities include

- Students will receive encouragement, support and education to adopt healthy behaviors through health education, including nutrition education and social emotional learning
- Students receive health education that teaches the skills they need to adopt and maintain healthy behaviors.
- Students receive consistent health messages from all aspects of the school program.
- Health education curriculum standards and guidelines address both nutrition and physical education.
- Nutrition is integrated into the health education curriculum. Staff who provide health and nutrition education will have appropriate training
- Health and nutrition education curriculum will be aligned to the Massachusetts Comprehensive Health Curriculum Framework, National Health Education Standards and the National Sexuality Education Standards and will establish linkages between health education, school meal programs and related community services. Kindergarten through grade 5 staff will attend district health education training.
- Nutrition promotion will support and enhance classroom nutrition education through eating experiences in the school cafeteria provided by CPS' food service in partnership with the Cambridge Public Health Department and through opportunities to grow, harvest and taste organically grown fruits and vegetables in school gardens.
- Where practicable, school gardens will be maintained as a health and nutrition resource and all gardens will include edible fruits and vegetables and use organic practices.

64. Sports-Related Head Injury & Concussions

All schools subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) rules are required, by state law, to have their student-athletes and their parents/guardians/caregivers, coaches, athletic directors, school nurses, and physicians learn about the consequences of head injuries and concussions through training programs and written materials. The law requires that athletes and their parents/guardians/caregivers inform their coaches about prior head injuries at the beginning of the season. If a student-athlete becomes unconscious during a game or practice, the law now mandates taking the student out of play or practice, and requires written certification from a licensed medical professional for "return to play." More specifically, regulations promulgated under the state law provide, in pertinent part, that "[a]ny student, who during a practice or competition, sustains a head injury or suspected concussion, or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion, or loses consciousness, even briefly, shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately and may not return to the practice or competition that day." 105 C.M.R. 201.010(B).

Parents/guardians/caregivers and students who plan to participate in any athletic program must also take a free on-line course. Two free on-line courses are available and contain all the information required by

the law. The first is available through the National Federation of High School Coaches at: www.nfhslearn.com

The second on-line course is available through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at: www.cdc.gov/headsup

A concussion is an alteration of mental status resulting from the brain being jolted inside of the skull due to a blow to the head or body. It is one of the most complicated injuries faced by medical professionals as the signs and symptoms are not always straightforward and the effects and severity of the injury can be difficult to determine. Among the symptoms associated with concussion are: headache, dizziness, confusion, amnesia, nausea, and disorientation. Loss of consciousness occurs in less than ten percent of all injuries and is not an indicator of concussion severity. Following an injury, the athlete may also experience other difficulties such as sensitivity to light and sound, forgetfulness, fatigue and emotional changes such as anxiety or depression.

Most athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as the brain has had time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many student athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms of injury, the severity concussive injuries pose or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents/guardians/caregivers, Teammates or others to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome. Therefore, CPS encourages the following care when an athlete sustains a concussion in a school-sponsored sporting event:

1. When any injury occurs, the injured athlete should promptly report the injury to the athletic trainer, coach and school nurse.
2. When any injury occurs, including a head injury or suspected concussion, or signs or symptoms of a concussion are exhibited, or there is a loss of consciousness, the parent/guardian/caregiver is notified and the injured athlete should visit the local hospital emergency room or review their condition with their primary care physician to ensure there is not a need for emergency medical care.
3. Communication is vital. Subsequently a care Team consisting of the injured athlete's primary care physician and parents/guardians/caregivers along with CPS' athletic trainer, school nurse, teachers, head coach and athletic director should monitor the symptoms of injury.
4. Engage the injured athlete in a battery of tests that include a combination of self-report symptoms, balance and neuro-cognitive testing. The combined assessment will provide a more sensitive and objective evaluation of the effects of the concussion that will help better determine when it is safe for the athlete to return to play.
5. The injured athlete will not be allowed to return to play or practice until a certified licensed athletic trainer from CPS has authorized the athlete's return to play.

65. HIV/AIDS Policy

CPS does not discriminate on the basis of HIV/AIDS or association with another person with HIV/AIDS. Children living with HIV/AIDS are entitled to the same rights and privileges related to attendance and participation in education within CPS as other children who are attending CPS schools. Staff and/or students living with HIV/AIDS are not required to

disclose HIV/AIDS status. Such disclosure is only made with the express written consent of the individual or the individual's parent/guardian/caregiver if under the age of eighteen (18). The risk of transmission of HIV in the school setting is extremely low when universal infection control guidelines are followed consistently and all employees are required to consistently take and follow universal precautions in all school settings and at all school times. A complete copy of the school district's HIV/AIDS policy is posted on the school district's website.

66. Teaching Students about Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Abuse Prevention

CPS provides age appropriate, developmentally based drug, alcohol, tobacco and substance abuse education and substance abuse prevention programs in all grades. The objectives of this educational program are to educate students about the consequences of substance use and abuse, including the legal, emotional, psychological and social consequences of alcohol, tobacco and other drug use. The educational program seeks to help students develop the ability to make informed decisions, to have effective strategies to cope with emotional distress, and to be able to resist peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. A copy of the entire policy can be found on the website.

67. SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment)

In order to help prevent students from using substances in the first place or to intervene with early use, CPS utilizes an interview based screening called SBIRT for all seventh and ninth grade students about the use of alcohol, marijuana and other drugs. The screening sessions take about five minutes and are conducted confidentially as a private questionnaire by the school nurse or a trained staff member from the high school's guidance department.

The individual conducting the screening will provide brief feedback to any student who reports using substances or is at risk for future substance abuse and all students who participate in the screening will receive some educational material and a list of resources. If necessary, the student will be referred to a school nurse or a team member for further evaluation.

The results of the screening are not included in the student's school record and there is no disciplinary action taken as a result of the findings of the screener, nor will the results of the screen be shared with any school staff other than the SBIRT team.

Parents/guardians/caregivers of students will also receive written notice prior to the administration of the screener and will have the right to opt their child out of the screening.

68. Curriculum Assessments

CPS uses a variety of assessments over the course of the school year in order to gather evidence of student understanding and to inform instructional decisions. While educators utilize daily formative assessments aligned to instructional objectives, the CPS also administers MCAS and common district assessments that are used to determine how all students are performing on cumulative subject matter and how subgroups are progressing relative to all students as well as to provide information about curricular gaps and professional learning needs.

More detailed information about the assessment calendar for grades kindergarten through grade 5, grades 6 through 8 and for grades 9 through 12 are posted on the school district's website at bit.ly/CPSci and can also be obtained from your child's school principal.

69. Prohibition Against Tobacco Use on School Premises

Use of any and all forms of 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. The term "tobacco products" shall mean tobacco in any form, including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes, nicotine vaporizers, smokeless tobacco products and other products of a similar nature. This policy shall pertain to all school-sponsored and/or school-related events, including athletic games, whether such events occur on CPS property or grounds. School property and/or grounds shall be defined as all ground up to the curbs of sidewalks surrounding each school. Specifically, the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School grounds include the Cambridge Public Library grounds which are considered school grounds as to all student policies.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action. Based upon the specific circumstances of a violation of these requirements, a student may be subject to disciplinary action and may be referred to an appropriate City/health education program on tobacco assistance and/or substance abuse.

Additionally, in accordance with the City of Cambridge policy on establishment of a "no smoking zone" around municipal buildings, a "no smoking zone" will be in effect outside all entrances, ventilation air intakes and operable windows to CPS buildings for a distance of twenty (20) feet.

SAFETY INFORMATION

70. Safe Firearms Storage

Providing a safe and secure learning environment for our students and staff is a top priority for our district. Our Safety & Security team, educators, and administrators work diligently every day to ensure that our students feel and are safe in our school buildings, and the ongoing partnership with our families is a critical piece of our efforts.

Statistics show that 4.6 million children in the US live in homes where there is at least one loaded, unsecured firearm (1), and each year, nearly 350 children under age 18 unintentionally shoot themselves or someone else. (2)

As incidents of gun violence are on the rise in communities across the country, we want to take this opportunity to remind our families of the importance of safe firearms storage to help avoid tragedies.

- Massachusetts state law requires all firearms owners to securely store firearms in homes and vehicles when they are not under the direct control of an authorized individual.
- State law regarding child access prevention of minor age children also states that if a child can gain access to a firearm without carrying the firearm, using it or causing any injury, the authorized adult is liable.

The American Academy for Pediatrics (AAP) says that the absence of guns in homes is the most effective deterrent of suicide, homicide, and other firearm-related incidents. However, AAP also acknowledges that storing guns unloaded and locked, with ammunition kept in a separate place, can reduce the risk of a child being injured by a firearm. You can learn more and find helpful resources, including a secure storage fact sheet and suggestions for how to discuss firearms safety at besmartforkids.org.

1 Deborah Azrael et al., “Firearm Storage in Gun-Owning Households with Children: Results of a 2015 National Survey,” Journal of Urban Health 95, no. 3 (June 2018): 295–304, https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-018-0261-7.
2 Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund, “Preventable Tragedies: Findings from the #NotAnAccident Index,” August 30, 2021, https://everytownresearch.org/report/notanaccident/. For more information on unintentional shootings by children, see: everytownresearch.org/notanaccident.