Rockland Public Schools
Rockland, MA

Esten Early Childhood Center

Student/Parent Handbook
2026-2027



PLEASE SAVE THIS HANDBOOK AS A REFERENCE FOR THE 2026-2027 SCHOOL YEAR

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This document will be translated upon request.

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

The Rockland Esten Early Childhood Center is pleased to present the 2026-2027 Student/ Parent Handbook to inform students and parents of the important policies, programs, and procedures that are in effect in our school system.

Thank you for reviewing this Handbook and keeping it for future reference. Please contact the school for additional information or explanation of any material in this Handbook. Feel free to use the district mobile app by searching for *Rockland Public Schools, MA* in your App Store and looking for the Bulldog logo.

For updated information on the Rockland Public Schools website, go to: rocklandschools.org

Best wishes for a very successful 2025-2026 school year.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Jan Sheehan, Esten Early Childhood Center, Principal
Mrs. Lisa Makarski, Esten Early Childhood Center, Secretary
Mrs. Heather MacDonald, Esten Early Childhood Center, Early Childhood Coordinator
Mrs. Amanda MacMillan, Esten Early Childhood Center & Phelps Elementary Special Educationn Coordinator
Ms. Beth Peckham, Esten Early Childhood, School Psychologist
Mrs. Taryn Muolo, Esten Early Childhood Center, Adjustment Counselor

Rockland Public Schools Vision Statement

The Rockland Public Schools empower students to excel, to lead, and to become dynamic and successful members of our global society.

ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

Esten Early Childhood Center

- Morning Preschool **9:00-11:30 a.m.**

Arrival is in the front circular driveway & dismissal is in the back of the school (follow the arrows).

- Afternoon Preschool **12:30-3:00 p.m.**

Arrival is in the front circular driveway & dismissal is in the back of the school (follow the arrows).

- Begins for Kindergarten **8:35-8:45 a.m. with a rolling drop-off in the back of the school (follow the arrows)**
- Dismissal time is **3:15 p.m.** for Kindergarten **(wait on Levin Road, across the street from Esten for police officer to move cars over to the back of the school at 3:10 for dismissal).**
- Breakfast is available from **8:35-9:00 for kindergarten**

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is defined as: *A student must be at school or at a school-related activity (e.g.,field trip) for at least half the school day to be present.*

All students are expected to be in attendance each day unless they are ill or a family emergency arises. **If a student is absent or tardy, it is important that you call the school at the beginning of the day to report the absence/tardiness. Please remember that a written note explaining the absence is required when a student returns to school.** We realize that there will be instances when your child may be tardy, but please avoid this when possible. **Tardiness interrupts your child's instructional time, as well as the rest of the class. A note should accompany the student explaining the reason for his/her tardiness. A tardy student must report to the office before going to the classroom.**

If a student is absent five (5) consecutive days, a doctor's note is required.

Please avoid taking family vacations during non-scheduled school vacation weeks.

Please note that students who miss 10% of the school year (18 days) are considered "chronically absent" by the state of Massachusetts. Each principal is required by law to inform you of their status with a letter stating the number of days your child has been absent.

- Students dismissed before 12:00 p.m. at Esten will be considered absent for that day.
- If a student arrives before 12:00 p.m., they are considered tardy.

BICYCLES, SCOOTERS, SKATEBOARDS AND ROLLERBLADES

Students **are not** permitted to ride bicycles, scooters, skateboards or rollerblades to school as agreed to by the School and Police Departments.

BREAKFAST AND LUNCH PROGRAMS

This year the State of Massachusetts is providing free breakfast and lunch for all students. We encourage those families that are eligible for free and reduced lunch to apply, even though it is free again this year. Many of our state and federal grants are based on the percentage of our children eligible for free and reduced lunch. During the first week of school, all students will be given an application for free or reduced meals to be taken home to their parents.

Please remember, we are required to provide every parent the opportunity to apply and all information received is held in strictest confidence. Parents/Guardians may apply at any time during the school year if your financial situation changes.

Our cafeterias operate on a computerized "point of sale" (POS) system which allows parents to prepay for meals. Information on this system will be sent home at the beginning of the year and is on our website:. Myschoolbucks.com

CAFETERIA RULES AND PROCEDURES

Students must maintain a calm atmosphere during breakfast and lunch, and must observe the following rules while in the cafeteria:

1) Enter and leave cafeteria walking in a line with a Level zero voice
2) Use a Level 2 voice at the tables (talk)
3) Raise your hand to ask for help
4) Say please and thank you
5) Eat your own lunch
6) Leave no trace
7) Sit in own seat
8) Walk in cafeteria to throw away trash
9) Stay in your space when lunch is over
10) Keep hands, feet and belongings to yourself

Failure to adhere to the above rules may result in serious disciplinary action and removal from the cafeteria.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE NUMBER

Parents must notify the school of any change of address, telephone number or other pertinent information as soon as possible. When a transfer from our school is anticipated, we would appreciate advance notice so that the student's records may be completed and forwarded to the new school. Please call our secretary, Lisa Makarski, at 781-878-8336 or email her: lmakarski@rocklandschools.org

CHROME BOOK LOAN AGREEMENT (District Policy)

All students in grades 1 through 12 will be issued a Chromebook and charger. Each Chromebook will be issued and registered to an individual student. The student is responsible for his/her device at all times.

Participation in this program is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- The student must be actively enrolled in the Rockland Public Schools.
- The Chromebook and charger are on loan and remain the property of the Rockland Public Schools.
- Both the student and parent/guardian agree to adhere to the terms and conditions of the online *Chromebook Care and Use Policy Guide.*
- For all technology use, the student will adhere to the terms and conditions of the Rockland Public Schools online *Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy.*
- The student shall be the exclusive user of the device and shall not grant access to any other individual.
- The student must comply with all applicable software license agreements.
- The Chromebook and charger must be returned to the Rockland Public Schools at the time of transfer, withdrawal, or graduation from the Rockland Public Schools.
- The Chromebook and charger will be returned in good condition with reasonable wear and tear as outlined in the online *Chromebook Care and Use Policy Guide.*
- Rockland Public Schools may charge a late fee and/or take disciplinary measures if the Chromebook and charger are not returned in accordance with the previous two (2) bulleted statements.
- The care of the Chromebook and charger are the responsibility of the student and parent/guardian while in their care. Chromebooks that are broken or fail to work properly must be taken to the school's office as soon as possible to be evaluated for repair.
- Students failing to return devices in good condition will be assessed payment. Charges for lost, damaged or defaced Chromebooks will be applied as follows:
    - First year (new device): Student will pay full replacement value;
    - Second year: Student will pay 75% of replacement cost;
    - Third year: Student will pay 50% of replacement cost;
    - Fourth year: Student will pay 25% of replacement cost.

  Report cards and credits will be withheld until this responsibility is met.

Please sign the loan agreement signature page (Appendix G)

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Please be advised that the School Department may release directory information about a student to third parties, unless a parent objects in writing, pursuant to the provisions of 603 CMR 23.00, et. seq.

DISCIPLINE

Please discuss with your children the importance of proper behavior and attitude while in school. Fighting, disrespect toward others, obscene language or destruction of school property will not be tolerated. Students who break rules continuously will be sent to the office and handled accordingly. If problems reoccur, parents will be called to help resolve them.

When necessary, suspension from school will be initiated by the Building Principal.

School should be a safe place for all, and in that regard any student found in possession of a dangerous weapon, controlled substance, or who assaults another student or a school staff person physically or verbally may be subject to suspension or expulsion.

DRESS CODE

Student dress should be school appropriate and in good taste. Hats, visors, belly shirts, lounge pajama bottom pants, flip-flops and clothing containing inappropriate messages or language may not be worn. Sneakers are required for all physical education classes. All footwear should have a heel strap for student safety. Shorts and skirts should be long enough so that the fingertips when extended down the leg touch the hem of the skirt or shorts. Shirt straps must be at least two (2) inches in width. During the winter months, when the weather permits, students will be going outside. Long pants are required during cold days. At the principal's discretion, students will have outdoor recess and need to be dressed appropriately (no bare legs).

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

In regard to electronic devices from home, this includes not only phones but Gizmos, Apple/Smartwatches, and any device that can text, calculate or connect to the internet. Devices must be kept in backpacks and not used at any time during the school day.
First offense: The item will be held in the office for the day
Second offense: The item will be held for parent retrieval.
The school staff is not responsible for investigating missing or stolen electronic devices brought to school by a student.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

We are a school community with rules, obligations and regulations. Please read and discuss with your child this code of discipline.

I. I will use appropriate language at all times.
   a. I will speak in a respectful manner to adults and classmates.
   b. I will show respect in my written work.

II. I will act in an appropriate manner at all times.
   a. I will listen respectfully when others are speaking.
   b. I will follow the teacher's directions at all times.
   c. I will keep hands, feet and objects to myself.

III. I will show respect to the school community.
   a. I will walk quietly at all times.
   b. I will use the bathroom and return to class or lunch in a timely manner.
   c. I will care for my books and materials.

IV. I will use the playground in a safe manner.
   a. I will use all playground equipment as directed.
   b. I will avoid contact games.

V. I will work to the best of my ability at all times.
   a. I will be responsible for completing my school work assignments.
   b. I will be responsible for completing and returning my homework assignments.
   c. I will work collaboratively with my classmates.
   d. I will work independently.

VI. All bullying is strictly prohibited. Please refer to the District Bullying Policy and the District Bullying Plan later in this document.

The elementary school policies concerning student behavior will be consistent with the Rockland Public Schools' discipline procedures.

School Wide Expectations: **B**e Respectful, **A**ct Responsibly, **R**emember Safety, Show **K**indness Always (**BARK**)

EARLY DISMISSAL

Please schedule your child's doctor and dentist appointments after school hours. If this is not possible, a note from home with the time and reason for the early dismissal is required. Parents/Guardians must sign their child out at the main office. It is also imperative that you inform the school if your child is to be picked up by someone other than a parent. **For the student's safety, the teacher will not release the student unless instructed by the office. Proper identification is also required when picking up a student.**

FIRE DRILLS/EVACUATION DRILLS

Fire drills/evacuation drills are necessary for the safety of the students, staff and faculty. Everyone must know the specific directions for reaching a point of safety. Specific information for fire drills is posted in each room and practiced regularly.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a privilege. A student may not be allowed to go on a field trip if behavior is a concern. The Principal may allow the student to participate if accompanied by a parent or legal guardian. Students on field trips are not permitted to visit gift shops. All chaperones must first submit to a C.O.R.I. check two weeks prior to the trip.

GUM CHEWING

Gum chewing is not permitted in the school building at any time, even as part of recess or lunch. There may be special times, such as MCAS testing, when gum chewing is permitted.

INAPPROPRIATE ARTICLES

Inappropriate articles such as knives, toys, fireworks, water guns, electronic games, electronic devices, dolls, skateboards, scooters, hoverboards, sporting equipment, etc. are not allowed at school. Possession of a knife and/or object that could be used as a weapon may result in suspension or police action at the discretion of the Principal.

MEDICATION POLICY

School nurses may dispense medication that has been prescribed by a doctor. However, a consent form signed by the parent/ guardian, a signed medication order from the doctor (this form may be obtained from the school nurse), and the medication in the original container from the pharmacy is required. Medicines must be delivered to the nurse by the parent/guardian.

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

A monthly newsletter will be given to every student to take home or sent electronically, which will include the school menu, as well as inform you of important dates, events, and early dismissals.

EVERY STUDENT SUCCEEDS ACT - TITLE I

Our elementary schools receive Title I funds and are subject to the following regulations:

Districts that receive Title I, Part A funds are required to notify the parents of students attending any school that received funds and the district will provide the parent on request (and in a timely manner) information regard.ing **the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher(s),** including, at a minimum, the following:

Whether the teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

- Whether the teacher is teaching under an emergency license or waiver through which the state qualification or licensing criteria has been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field or discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications.

In addition, schools that receive Title I funding shall provide each individual parent *timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified.*

"NO SCHOOL" OR DELAYED OPENING PROCEDURES

"No School" announcements, including two hour delayed openings, will be made over the Boston TV stations and the following radio station: A.M. Preschool will be cancelled.

WATD 95.9 FM

If there is a two hour delayed opening of school, this includes kindergarten. Everyone will start two hours later than their normal start time.

Please do **not** call the police or fire stations for this information. This unnecessarily ties up emergency lines. You may call 781-878-1540 or 781-878-3893 for NO SCHOOL information.

Whenever possible, all parents/guardians will be notified by phone using our recorded call system.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT / VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers are encouraged and welcomed as a part of the school community. Please contact your child's teacher or building principal if you are interested in volunteer work at school. C.O.R.I. forms must be filled out before volunteering in the Rockland Public Schools.

Each family is encouraged to become involved in the Parent Advisory Council (PAC) at their child's school. Please make every effort to become an active participant in your child's education by joining the PAC. All parents are invited to attend monthly PAC meetings. Notices of these meetings will be included in the monthly newsletter.

PBIS: Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports

What are Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports?

The main focus of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is to provide a clear system for all expected behaviors at the Rockland Public Elementary Schools.
While many faculty and students may have assumptions of what is expected behavior, we cannot assume that everyone's beliefs are similar. Through PBIS, we will work to create and maintain a productive, safe environment in which ALL school community members have clear expectations and understandings of their role in the process.

Positive Approach to School-wide Discipline

Our school-wide systems of positive behavior support focus on taking a team-based approach and teaching appropriate behavior to all students in our elementary schools. We in Rockland have developed procedures to accomplish the following:

Behavioral Expectations are defined. A small number of clearly defined behavioral expectations are defined in positive, simple rules:

Be Respectful - Act Responsibly - Remember Safety - Kindness Always

Behavioral Expectations are taught. These behavioral expectations are taught to all students in the building and are taught in real contexts. Teaching appropriate behavior involves much more than simply telling students what behaviors they should avoid. Specific examples are:

- Respectful means treating people the way they would like to be treated. Being kind, honest and sincere.
- Responsible means being prepared for each day, doing your best at all times.
- Safe means this is our school and we need to take care of it and each other, and feel safe in our school environment.
- Kindness is a character trait that is encouraged. Being friendly and considerate is reinforced when appropriate.

Behavioral expectations are taught using the same teaching formats applied in the general curriculum. The rules are presented, the reasons are discussed, positive examples ("right way") are described and rehearsed, and negative examples ("wrong way") are described and modeled. Students are given the opportunity to practice the "right way" until they demonstrate fluency.

Appropriate Behaviors are Acknowledged. Once appropriate behaviors have been defined and taught, they need to be acknowledged on a regular basis. The elementary schools have designed a formal system that rewards positive behaviors.

- Phelps Elementary School has established a system of recognition for students who demonstrate expectations within the school setting.
- Esten Early Childhood Center will use PBS (Positive Behavior Support) as an early intervention to resolve problem behavior of children based on values to teach strategies to all children.

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOTAPE

To celebrate school spirit and to support the learning process, photographs and videotapes are used to display pictures/videos throughout the building and in/ on local cable, local newspaper articles, social media and school-related websites. If parents have a concern about their child appearing in any of these photographs or videotapes, they should notify the Rockland Public Schools in writing by completing the media refusal form at the end of this handbook. The media refusal form only needs to be completed if parents do not consent to their child being photographed or recorded. It is understood that **parents who do not return the media refusal form consent to photographic and video recording** of their students in school.

PUPIL SUPPORT SERVICES

Each school has a School Psychologist and Adjustment Counselor who provide support services for students experiencing school and family-related problems. In addition, the School Psychologist and Adjustment Counselor work with parents, teachers and other staff to provide solutions to student-related issues.

RECESS

Recess is held daily during the school year. Students should dress appropriate for the weather, as students will be outside if the temperature is above 25°. In the event of inclement weather, recess will be in the classroom under the supervision of the paraprofessionals. Rough play, including fighting and tackling, is unacceptable. Recess play equipment is provided. **No contact sports are allowed.**

REPORT CARDS

Preschool, PreK, and Kindergarten will issue a mid-year report card in February and a final end-of-year report in June. In kindergarten, a digital report card will be sent home via an email notification from our student data director, Melissa Humphrey. To access your child's report card go to: Aspen X2/Rockland
Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled in November and in March.

SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES

Nursing services are available during the school day. First aid is provided for injuries and sudden illnesses that occur during school hours. Any care beyond first aid will not be given at school and is the responsibility of the parent. Parents will be requested to provide transportation if necessary.

In instances when a parent is not at home during school hours, it is imperative that they designate a relative or friend to care for the student. We request that the emergency designee be no more than 10 minutes from school.

Vision and hearing screening is done in all grades during the school year. State law requires that all students be properly immunized.

Although daily attendance is desirable an ill child should never be sent to school.

Some reasons for recommending that a student not be in school are elevated temperature, nausea, and vomiting or unexplained rash. A child should remain home until symptom-free for 24 hours.

Please notify school officials in the event your child has any special health problems.

SMOKING

Smoking is not permitted on school grounds at any time, including in parked vehicles.

STUDENT INFORMATION (Grades 1-12)

During the first week of school, your child's teacher will be sending home a **Student Information and Verification Form.** This report will have the contact information that is currently on file. Please review the information, make sure the information is accurate, record any necessary changes, and send it back to school with your student as soon as possible. You will also receive an **Emergency Information Form** from the school nurse that should be completely filled out.

Please notify the school if you change your address or telephone number during the school year. It is very important that our records be kept up to date.

Please update the school on any custody changes or restraining orders. Custody issues need to be documented and updated for your child's safety. THIS *INFORMATION IS HELD IN STRICTEST CONFIDENCE.*

STUDENT USE OF THE TELEPHONE (Grades 1-12)

Students will be allowed to use the office telephone only in the event of an emergency. All plans and arrangements for after school activities should be made in advance. Students with cell phones should not use them to call home. All calls must go through the office.

Students will not be allowed to call home for lunch money or forgotten homework.

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

The Rockland Public Schools will impose suspensions and expulsions in accordance with Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾ of General Laws Chapter 71, and their implementing regulations, 603 CMR 53.00. The text of G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾ can be found in Appendix F. Suspension from school constitutes disciplinary time, which can be served in school or out of school.

The following definitions apply:

- **Short-Term Suspension:** the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, school privileges, school activities, and school transportation for ten (10) consecutive school days or less.

- **Long-Term Suspension:** the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, school privileges, school activities, and school transportation for more than ten (10) consecutive school days or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Requirements may be identified by the school's administration before the student is readmitted.
- **In-School Suspension:** removal of a student from regular classroom activities but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.
- **Emergency Suspension:** immediate exclusion of a student from school until a hearing with a school administrator can be held. Emergency suspensions shall not exceed two (2) days following the day of the emergency removal of the student.
- **Expulsion:** Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c.71 §§ 37H or 37H½ for: (a) possession of a dangerous weapon; (b) possession of a controlled substance; (c) assault on a member of the school staff; or (d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, that is followed by a principal's determination that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c.71 §§ 37H or 37H½.

The following actions may be a cause for suspension:

- Possession of a dangerous weapon.
- Leaving school grounds without permission.
- Destruction of school property or property belonging to a staff person or a student.
- Fighting.
- Insolence or disrespect for authority.
- Possession of a controlled substance.
- Assault of a staff member
- Any other conduct, which, in the judgment of the Principal, seriously interferes with the educational process.

During the time when the Administration suspends a student from school and the suspension concludes on a Friday, the suspension will expire at midnight of that evening. During the time that a student is suspended or expelled from school, the student is not permitted on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities without permission of the superintendent, school principal, or designee.

For students in grades Pre-K through three, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing the suspension before the suspension takes effect.

A student may be expelled under the following circumstances:

(1) A student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon including but not limited to a gun or knife; or a controlled substance, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin.
(2) A student who assaults a principal, vice principal, teacher, teacher's aide or other educational staff on school premises or at a school sponsored or school-related event, including athletic games.
(3) A student who has been convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to the felony or felony delinquency, if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

If a student who has been expelled or suspended from another district seeks to enroll in the Rockland Public Schools, the Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to admit the student or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan under G.L. c. 76, § 21.

Due Process

Students subject to suspension and/or expulsion are entitled to due process in accordance with Sections 37H, 37H ½, and 37H ¾ of General Laws Chapter 71, and their implementing regulations, 603 CMR 53.00.

In the case of an emergency suspension, a Principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

(a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal and provide written notice to the student and parent;

(b) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.

(3) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

A student being suspended after being found in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance, or for committing an assault on a member of the educational staff pursuant to G.L. Chapter 71, §37H shall be entitled to due process as shown below:

(1) The student shall receive written notice prior to suspension of the charges against him or her, and the student's right to a hearing.
(2) The student shall have the right to be represented at the hearing, and to present evidence and witnesses on his or her behalf.

A student being suspended upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a felony, upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint, or upon the conviction or adjudication or admission in court of guild with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency pursuant to G.L. Chapter 71 §37H½ shall be entitled to due process as shown below:

(1) The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student will also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent, provided that the suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.
(2) The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student will notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of suspens10n.
(3) The superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent/guardian or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student will have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and will have the right to counsel. The superintendent will render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision will be the final decision of the Rockland Public Schools with regard to the suspension.

A student being suspended for any other reason, pursuant to G.L. Chapter 71, §37H¾, shall be entitled to due process as shown below:

(1) Except for in-school suspension and emergency removals, prior oral and written notice of the change shall be provided to the student, and to the student's parent. The student shall be given the opportunity for a meeting/hearing with the principal

before the suspension takes effect. At that meeting/hearing, the principal will provide the student/parent with the bases for the considered discipline and an opportunity to provide information, including mitigating circumstances.

(2) If the primary language of the student's home is not English, the notice(s) shall be translated into the primary language spoken in the home.

(3) The principal shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting.

(4) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed. The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it. If the student is suspended, the principal shall notify the student and parent of the type and duration of the suspension and opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The notice shall be in writing.

(5) For a long-term suspension, the student shall have the following rights, in addition to the foregoing:

(a) In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;

(b) The right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;

(c) The right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and

(d) The right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;

(e) The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request; and

(f) The right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(6) The principal shall provide the parent, if present, the opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the

principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(7) Following meeting/hearing, the principal will provide a written decision.

(8) If the principal imposes a long-term suspension, the student and/or parent may appeal the decision to the Superintendent of Schools by filing written notice of the appeal within five calendar days of the effective date of the suspension.

(9) If a parent or student appeals to the Superintendent, the student) shall have the following rights:

(a) The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.

(b) The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

(c) The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(d) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension, as outlined above.

(e) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing. The suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

(f) The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final determination of the Rockland Public Schools.

A student expelled for after being found in possession of a dangerous weapon or a controlled substance, or for committing an assault on a member of the educational staff shall be entitled to due process as shown below:

(1) The student shall receive written notice prior to expulsion of the charges against him or her, and the student's right to a hearing.
(2) The student shall have the right to be represented at the hearing, and to present evidence and witnesses on his or her behalf.
(3) The student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion to appeal the decision to the superintendent of schools. The student shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the appeal hearing.

Prior to being expelled for conviction on a felony, adjudication or admission of guilt on a felony charge, a student shall be entitled to the following due process rights:

(1) The student will receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student will also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing, such as an appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.
(2) The student will have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student will notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of expulsion.
(3) The superintendent will hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent/guardian or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student will have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and will have the right to counsel. The superintendent will have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent will render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision will be the final decision of the Rockland Public Schools with regard to the expulsion.

Any student who has been expelled from Rockland Public Schools pursuant to this section shall have the right to appeal the decision of the principal to the superintendent in accordance with applicable law (see Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 71, Section 37H and 37H½).

Academic Progress and Educational Services During Suspension or Expulsion under G.L.c. 71, §§ 37, 37H ½, or 37H ¾

(1) 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 his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

(3) The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

(a) The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

TRANSPORTATION

Free busing will be provided to all students K- 4 who live further than two (2) miles from their school and to a student that receives state assistance All students who live within two (2) miles of their school will be charged unless they receive assistance. After school begins, it may be necessary to change some stops, but parents will be notified if a change affects their children. The behavior of students on school buses is a safety concern and rules for behavior will be enforced. **RIDING THE SCHOOL BUS IS A PRIVILEGE AND CONVENIENCE THAT MAY BE TERMINATED FOR IMPROPER CONDUCT**. Because our buses are full, children cannot use another bus to go to a friend's house. Only bus-eligible students may ride the bus and are only allowed to ride their assigned bus.

GENERAL RULES FOR STUDENTS RIDING SCHOOL BUSES

1. The driver is in full charge of the bus and students. Students **MUST** obey the driver promptly and willingly for the safety of all passengers.

2. Students **MUST** be at the bus stop and ready to board when the bus arrives.

3. A parent or other designated person authorized to receive the Kindergarten,

Grade 1 and Grade 2 students must be visible at the bus stop for drop-off. If the parent or other designated person is not present, the student will be returned to school. If this happens three times, the student will lose the privilege to ride the bus.

4. Students **MUST NOT** stand or play in the roadway while waiting for the bus.
5. Students **MUST** follow the bus driver's instructions and comply with the bus driver's request.
6. Students **MUST** remain seated while the bus is moving, or if delayed on the road.
7. Students may **NOT** operate the bus door or tamper with the Emergency Door.
8. No student shall at any time put his/her hands, head or arms out of the windows whether the bus is in motion or standing still.
9. Students **MUST NOT** damage or deface any part of the bus and should help in keeping the bus clean.
10. Students referred to the Principal for misbehavior on the bus MAY forfeit the right to ride on the school bus.
    a. First bus conduct slip - parent notified
    b. Second bus conduct slip - student suspended from the bus for 1 week
    c. Third bus conduct slip - student suspended from bus
11. Students with a knife or any item that could be used as a weapon may be suspended from the bus for a period of time to be determined by the Principal.
12. No eating or drinking on the bus.
13. No touching/poking/hitting/kicking.
14. No inappropriate language will be tolerated.

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION: CHARGING OF SCHOOL LUNCH AND/OR MILK

Rockland Public Schools is pleased to extend the courtesy of allowing a student to charge a lunch and/or milk.

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this regulation is to establish consistent meal account procedures throughout the district. Unpaid charges place a financial strain on the food service department. The goals of this policy are:

- To treat all students with dignity in the serving line regarding meal accounts.
- To support positive situations with district staff, district business policies, students and parent/guardian to the maximum extent possible.
- To establish age appropriate procedures.
- To encourage parent/guardian to assume the responsibility of meal payments and to promote self-responsibility of the student.
- To establish a consistent district policy regarding charges and collection of charges.

II. SCOPE OF RESPONSIBILITY:

The Food Service Department: The food service department will be responsible for maintaining charge records, notifying the school district of outstanding balances, and forwarding written and/or voice notification home to parents.

The School Department: The school department will be responsible for following through on any sanctions imposed on those owing money.

The Parent/Guardian: The parent/ guardian will be responsible for making immediate payment.

III. ADMINISTRATION:

1. All students will be allowed to charge a maximum of five dollars ($5.00)

    a. Charged meals will include only menu items part of the reimbursable meal. No snacks.
    b. After the $5.00 limit has been exceeded, the student will be given a designated menu alternative. Payment for menu alternatives will also be due. No snacks may be purchased until the bill has been paid.

2. These meals will be rung in the register as a "PAID" meal (in order for the district to receive federal reimbursement).

3. After the second offense (or after the nominal amount exceeds $5.00), the school district will be directed to send parent/guardian written or voice notification of debt.

4. In the middle of May, all charging will be cut off:

    a. Parents/Guardians will be sent a written request for "Payment In Full". (The deposit requests will be mailed home.)

    b. All charges not paid before the end of the school year will be carried forward in the next school year.
    c. Seniors must pay all charges before receiving their cap and gown (diploma)

5. No ala carte items may be charged.

6. Students transferring from the Rockland Public Schools to another district are responsible for the payment of any balances before the school records will be sent.

7. If a financial hardship is suspected anytime during the school year, families will be encouraged to apply for free/reduced meals.

8. Balances remaining on Food Service accounts at the end of the school year or when a child moves from the district are not refundable. Parents should plan accordingly. The funds may be carried over to the next school year or to another family member.

ELEMENTARY HOMEWORK GUIDELINES GRADES 1-4

Homework in the Rockland Elementary Schools should be used as a tool to reinforce skills or concepts that have been introduced in class. It is of the utmost importance that both the home and the school create environments in which the learning process is a positive experience for each student and becomes a lifelong objective.

Reading is an ongoing assignment. We encourage children to read at least 15 minutes every night. It must be pointed out that projects, reading, studying for tests, etc., are considered to be homework.

Research shows that, handled properly, homework helps a child develop emotional and behavioral skills needed in the adult world. These skills foster the following attributes: *Responsibility, Independence, Perseverance, Time Management, Initiative, Self-Reliance, and Resourcefulness.*

We encourage parent involvement, but the final responsibility for completing assignments rests with the child.

1. Homework should be relevant and an extension of classroom learning activities.
2. Subject matter that is totally new to students should not be given as homework.
3. All written homework will be checked and evaluated by teachers. Math assignments will be corrected in class so that students can see their errors.
4. Parents should check that their children are completing homework assignments. Parents may help but should not correct the homework.
5. Homework assignments may be given over weekends, holidays or vacation periods.
6. Homework should not be given as punishment under any circumstances.

It is recommended that a specific time period and study area be established for homework.

SUGGESTED LENGTH AND FREQUENCY OF ASSIGNMENTS

Grades 1 & 2: Meaningful short assignments as necessary, but not to exceed fifteen to twenty minutes in length per night.

Grade 3: Meaningful assignments up to thirty-minute length per night.

Grade 4: Meaningful assignments up to forty-five minutes in length per night.

Approved by Rockland School Committee February 28,
1994 Updated on 6/30/2020

ATTENDANCE POLICY FOR GRADES 1 -8

One of the most common causes of poor student achievement is excessive absence from school. Absenteeism **must** be considered a serious matter for all students at any grade level, regardless of ability. Absences can only be approved when a child is ill or involved in an emergency necessitating his or her absence.

The laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts clearly explain the responsibility of the parent and school administrators regarding pupil attendance and what the school department must do to enforce the laws of student attendance. *Chapter 76, section 1, 2 of the General Laws of Education Relating to School Committees.*

1. ***Chapter 76, section 1 Regulation of School Attendance***

"The superintendent, or teachers in so far as authorized by him or by the school committee, may excuse cases of necessary absence for other causes not exceeding seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions in any period of six months."

2. ***Chapter 76, section 2 Duties of Parent; Penalty***

"Every person in control of a child described in section one shall cause him to attend school as therein required, and, if he fails so to do for seven day sessions or fourteen half day sessions within any period of six months, he shall, on complaint by a supervisor of attendance, be punished by a fine of not more than twenty dollars.

Therefore, any pupil returning to school after being absent one or more days **must** present a note from his/her parents or guardian giving the date and reason for the absence. Failure to present a note within five (5) school days of an absence may result in notification of the proper agencies. Any student who is on restricted physical activity must present a doctor's certificate stating the cause for such restrictions and the length of the restriction.

A student may be excused from physical activity for a limited amount of time after the parent has consulted with the school nurse.

Any absences from school in excess of fourteen (14) days are considered unexcused absences and can only be considered excused absences under the following circumstances:

1. Student returns to school with a certified medical note, e.g., from a physician or hospital stating a medical cause for absence.
2. Death in family.
3. Observance of a religious holiday.
4. Mandated court appearance.

Failure to comply with the fourteen (14) day rule may jeopardize a student's promotion. It will be the student's responsibility to make up any school work missed during an absence.

The school will, after the fifth (5th) unexcused absence, notify the parents in writing of absences.

Any student found to be truant from school will receive any consequences as outlined in the Student Handbook in regard to truancy, including parental notification. Any student found to be truant from school will have his/her name referred to the Rockland Public Schools' truant officer for further action, including possible court referral.

Approved by School Committee 8/18/97
Revised 10/30/06 & 6/30/2020

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL ENTRANCE AGE POLICY; KINDERGARTEN AND FIRST GRADE

Purpose
This policy establishes consistent age requirements for student entry into Kindergarten and First Grade to support appropriate academic, social, and developmental readiness.

Kindergarten Entry Requirements

- A child must be **five (5) years old on or before August 31** of the school year in which they are enrolling.
- Children who meet this age requirement are eligible to enroll in Kindergarten for that academic year.

First Grade Entry Requirements

- A child must be **six (6) years old on or before August 31** of the school year in which they are enrolling.
- **All children who are six (6) years old by September 1 must enroll in First Grade**, regardless of prior Kindergarten attendance, unless otherwise determined through an approved exception process.

Mandatory Placement Rule

- Students who meet the First Grade age requirement (six years old by September 1st) will **not be placed in Kindergarten**.
- This ensures age-appropriate peer grouping and alignment with academic standards.

Exceptions and Appeals

- Exceptions to this policy may be considered under limited circumstances, such as:
    - Documented developmental delays
    - Medical or psychological considerations
    - Prior educational history (e.g., out-of-state or international enrollment differences)

- All exception requests must be submitted in writing and reviewed by school administration. Supporting documentation may be required.

Documentation Requirements

- Proof of age (e.g., birth certificate, passport) must be provided at the time of enrollment.
- Additional records (health, prior schooling) may be required for First Grade placement.

Implementation

- This policy applies to all students enrolling in the school system beginning with the designated academic year.
- School administrators are responsible for ensuring compliance and reviewing exception requests.

Review Cycle

- This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure alignment with state regulations and educational best practices.

Approved by Rockland School Meeting on May 11, 2026

RETENTION POLICY FOR GRADES 1 - 8

1. A student must attend at least 85% of the enrolled days within each grading period in order to receive passing report card grades. Any excused absences will be considered per the Attendance Policy.

2. No student may be retained without a review by the Child Study Team*. The parent will be informed of the child's status prior to the Child Study Team meeting, but preferably not later than the second week in February.

3. At the close of the school year, a student who was previously discussed at a Child Study Team meeting may be retained or promoted.

4. It will be the responsibility of the building Principal to request, no later than February 15th, a preliminary list of at-risk students who are being considered for retention.

5. The Child Study Team will make a recommendation regarding the promotional status of a student to the building Principal.

6. (Middle School) Any student who fails more than one academic subject in a school year may be retained at grade level. Promotion to the next grade level may be accomplished if the following criteria are met.

7. (Middle School) If the student has not failed more than two (2) academic subjects and has not received a final grade below 60, the student would be required to attend a summer school program for remediation. Successful completion of the summer school for each course enrolled would result in the student's promotion to the next grade. Courses in Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science will be offered in the Rockland Summer School Program for Middle School students.

8. (Middle School) Any student who failed three (3) or more academic subjects will be retained at grade level at the recommendation of the Child Study Team. The educational program of the student will be determined by the Child Study Team.

9. Any student considered for non-promotion who is promoted will be considered a student at-risk and will be monitored by the Child Study Team.

10. The building Principal will have the final authority regarding the retention of students in his/her building.

11. Parents or guardians of students may appeal the decision of grade level retention to the building Principal **within five (5) school days of being informed.**

12. If not satisfied with the decision of the building Principal, **the parent may appeal to the Superintendent within two (2) school days of the Principal's decision.**

13. If not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent, **the parent may appeal to the School Committee within two (2) days of the Superintendent's decision.**

14. **If the parent does not appeal or attend a scheduled meeting, their rights will be deemed waived.**

15. If a student is retained in grade, that student will not be assigned to the same teacher or team for the following school year.

*The Child Study Team shall consist of the parents, building Principal, guidance and adjustment counselors, school psychologist, teachers of the student, any agencies working with the student.

Approved by School Committee 8/18/97
Updated on8/15/2023

HARASSMENT POLICY

I. INTRODUCTION

It is the goal of the Rockland Public Schools to provide equal employment opportunities for all employees, to prevent any unlawful discrimination or harassment of any individual working at or attending our schools, and to provide a mechanism by which individuals can bring any concerns about discrimination or harassment to our attention.

We expect all individuals to treat each other with dignity and respect. We are committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment in which staff and students are all treated with respect. The Rockland Public Schools will not condone or tolerate any discrimination, or different treatment, of or among staff or students based upon characteristics which include but are not limited to:

Age
Disability
Sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity) Race
National Origin
Creed
Color

Not only does the Rockland Public Schools prohibit discriminatory treatment of its staff and students by supervisors and administrators, we also will not tolerate discriminatory treatment among staff or among students, including harassment.

II. HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

Harassment, including sexual harassment, in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden and violates Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1972, G.L. c.151B, and c.278§3A of the Acts of 1996. The Rockland Public Schools will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to our attention. Retaliation is strictly forbidden, and if any individual is found to have retaliated against any individual or filing a complaint and/or cooperating in the investigation of any complaint, such action shall be grounds for separate discipline.

Harassment includes verbal or physical conduct which may or does offend, denigrate, or belittle any individual because of, or due to, any of the characteristics described above. Such conduct includes pictures, jokes, comments, innuendoes, graffiti, or any other behavior which creates an environment which is offensive and impairs the ability of the employees to work, and students to learn.

Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated. Such investigation may include discussions with involved parties, identification and questioning of witnesses, and other appropriate actions. If it is determined that harassment has occurred, administrative action will be taken to ensure that it is not repeated. This action may include, among others, counseling, training, apology, warnings, transfers, probation, suspension, expulsion, and discharge.

III. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this:

> "sexual harassment" means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:
>
> a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions;
> -or-
> b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work environment.

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

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

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

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

All employees and students should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation

against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization.

IV. COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

If any of our employees or students believes that he or she has been subject to sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally.

If you would like to file a complaint, you may do so by contacting any administrator or the Superintendent's office (781) 878-3893. The Superintendent's office and administrators are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

V. SEXUAL HARASSMENT INVESTIGATION

When we receive the complaint, we 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. Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. When we have completed our investigation, we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate we will also impose disciplinary action. Disciplinary action could include a range of consequences from verbal or written reprimand to suspension or termination.

VI. DISCIPLINARY ACTION

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies.

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC")
   1 Congress Street - 10th Floor
   Boston, MA 02114
   (617) 565-3200
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination ("MCAD")
   Boston Office:
   One Ashburton Place - Room 601
   Boston, MA 02108
   (617) 727-3990

Approved by Rockland School Committee December 9, 1996 Updated on 8/15/2023

CRIMINAL HARASSMENT

Chapter 64 of the Acts of 2000 added a new law, namely section 43A of Chapter 265 of the General Laws, which makes it a crime, subject to fine and imprisonment, for an individual to engage in certain conduct which is referred to as "criminal harassment," that is conduct of a willful and malicious nature "which seriously alarms" a person and which causes "substantial emotional distress." Section 43A of Chapter 265 provides that such conduct includes, among other things, "acts conducted by mail or by use of telephonic or telecommunication device including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications or facsimile communications."

PROHIBITION OF THE PRACTICE OF HAZING

The Rockland School Committee is subject to the provisions of Section 17, 18, and 19 of Chapter 269 of the General Laws, the provisions of which read in their entirety as follows:

Section 17

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

Section 18

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

Section 19

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of postsecondary 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, than an institution's compliance with this section's requirements than 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's 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 postsecondary 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 postsecondary 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 and such institution which fails to make such reports.

Approved by Rockland School Committee April 10, 2006, Updatd 8/15/2023.

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICE ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

Rockland Public Schools believe technology, when used in a responsible, efficient, ethical, and legal manner offers valuable, diverse, and unique resources to administrative staff, teachers, students, and guests that promote educational excellence. Rockland Public Schools is committed to helping students and staff use technology as an effective educational and administrative tool and to meet state and national educational standards. It is understood that students, staff, and guests will use technology in a mature and professional manner in accordance with the district's acceptable use policy.

Technology and electronic communication device (ECD) users (administration, staff, faculty, students, and guests) are responsible for appropriate·behavior and acceptable use when accessing technology in the schools. General school rules for conduct and communication apply to Internet and network use or the use of any ECD. This includes, but is not limited to computers, scanners, still and video cameras, cell phones, document cameras, SmartBoards, LCD projectors, PDAs, iPads, iPods, Kindles, and all other electronic devices. The use of technology shall be considered a privilege, not a right of each individual. Failure of a user to follow acceptable use standards may result in termination of technology privileges, appropriate disciplinary action as stated in school policies, and possible notification of law enforcement. The Rockland Public School District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted within or through the school system.

Internet, email, and phone use within the district should be used solely for educational purposes, although RPS recognizes that limited personal use, by administrative and faculty staff members, is authorized so long as it does not interfere with the employee's duties or the policies of the Rockland Public Schools. It is important to recognize that traditional instructional resources and library materials can be screened with reasonable selection criteria. Technology that links to any public file server provides access to material that may not be considered educationally sound in the context of the school setting. Rockland Public Schools has taken precautions to restrict access to unacceptable information in accordance with CIPA rules by employing the use of a firewall/filter which is automatically and continuously updated to provide protection against current threats. However, it is important to understand that no solution is 100% perfect, and at times educational sites may be inadvertently blocked and conversely, inappropriate sites may be accessible. Students will be provided with guidance and instruction in the appropriate use of technology resources including the Internet so that responsible choices can be made in the event that such a breach occurs. RPS will make no guarantee relating to the reliability of the data connection and therefore will not be held liable for any data loss or data corruption resulting while using the RPS network.

Students must obtain permission from a staff member each and every time they use technology equipment. Student use of technology will be permitted upon written verification that the student and parent/guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age) have read the Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy. The principal or designee will maintain signature records and will be responsible for enforcing the Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy. Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to make amendments to the terms and conditions of this policy without notice.

Technology Terms and Conditions

1. **User Personal Safety includes, but is not limited to:**
    - Users will not post personal information about themselves or others. Personal information includes, but is not limited to the following: name, address, profiles, telephone, date of birth, pictures, etc.
    - Users will never arrange for meetings with anyone they have met online without the knowledge of the school and the permission of a parent/guardian.
    - Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or administrator any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.
    - Users will not harass another person or engage in personal attacks, including those prejudicial or discriminatory in nature following the guidelines of the anti

bullying policy.

2. **Respecting Technology Equipment:**
    - Users will exercise caution when handling technology devices.
    - Users will follow guidelines for proper usage of equipment.
    - Users will not use another person's computer resources without authorization.
    - Users will not knowingly destroy any Electronic Communication Device technology equipment including but not limited to keyboards, mice, and peripherals.

3. **RPS System Security:**
    - Users should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from gaining access to their account(s). (Example: private strong passwords) All users are responsible for their individual account(s).
    - If an individual suspects a possible security breach, the user will immediately contact their teacher, the building principal, or the technology coordinator.
    - Users will not disseminate passwords, codes, telephone numbers, account numbers, grades, or other individuals' documents to unauthorized persons.
    - The Rockland Public Schools' network and related technologies are the property of the school department and its storage systems, subject to inspection by the administration at any time. Users should not have a privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on the district network including all ECDs or on web-based systems that Rockland Public Schools has contracted with to provide storage or services (G Suite for Education/offsite backup facility).
    - Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to monitor, or spot check, any Internet or ECD activities occurring on school equipment or accounts.

4. **Illegal Activities (includes but not limited to):**
    - Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the RPS system(s) or to go beyond their authorized access.
    - Users will not deliberately attempt to disrupt the performance of any computer system or destroy data via a virus or any other means.
    - Users will not use the RPS system to engage in any illegal act.
    - Vandalism of any kind will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software and system restoration and cancellation of ECD privileges.

5. **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement:**
    - Users will respect the rights of all copyright owners, recognizing that infringement occurs when a person reproduces a work that is protected by copyright. Students should check with teachers and support staff regarding laws.
    - Users will not plagiarize; therefore, they should cite all quotes, references, and sources. Acknowledging the source of copyrighted material does not substitute for obtaining reproduction rights.
    - Users may reproduce copyrighted works within the limits of fair use and using proper citation. Fair use is explained at: http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html
    - Users of Rockland Public Schools ECDs will not install pirated software. All users should be aware that disseminating illegally obtained software (pirated) is a federal offense that is punishable by imprisonment, fine or both.

6. **Technology Etiquette:**
    - *Technology Etiquette includes,* but is not limited to the following:
        - Be polite! Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
        - Exercise caution when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications, a joke or statement may be misunderstood.
        - Show consideration and respect for others at all times.
        - Be respectful of the rights of other network users and do not violate their privacy.
        - Be aware of the intent and function of an individual or group before sending a message.
        - Deliberately posing as a user other than yourself is prohibited.
        - At the conclusion of a user's session, the user will log off the system he/she is using.

- *Inappropriate Language includes,* but is not limited to:
    - Posting of public and private messages on web pages, PDAs, cell phones, and other devices.
    - Users will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, offensive, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
    - Users will not participate in hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other harmful or inappropriate behaviors.

- *Respect for Privacy includes,* but is not limited to:
    - Users will not forward or post a message that was sent to them privately without the consent of the person who sent it.
    - Users will not post private information about another person.
    - Users will not interfere with other users ECD work or files.

7. **Inappropriate Access to Material includes, but is not limited to:**
    - Users will not use district technology to access material that:
        - is profane or obscene (pornography),
        - advocates illegal or violent activities, or
        - advocates discrimination towards other individuals or groups.
    - If a user inadvertently accesses inappropriate material, he/she should immediately notify his/her teacher or administrator, thereby avoiding an allegation of intentional violation of the *Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy.*
    - Users will not deliberately attempt to override or circumvent the firewall or encourage others to do so.

8. **Respecting Resource Limits:**
    - Users will use technology specifically for educational or career development activities.
    - Users will not download large files or software programs without the authorization of the systems administrator. Software, particularly if it is offered as "free", comes with undetectable spyware and advertising that can disable a computer or an entire system.
    - Users will not post chain letters or engage in "spamming" (sending unnecessary messages to a large number of people).
    - Users will not create a website using district technology. Exception: A website created under the direct supervision of a teacher as part of a school-related project.
    - Users may not use the network for personal and commercial purposes, such as, but not limited to, offering or purchasing goods and/or services for personal use.

- Users will not alter in any way the configuration of a computer or network without permission of authorized staff.
- Users will not intentionally waste resources, such as paper, ink cartridges, storage space, batteries, etc.
- Users acknowledge that data will be retained only until August of their graduation year and it is their responsibility for transferring data off any Rockland Public Schools system.

9. **Unacceptable Use**

   Unacceptable use can be defined as but not limited to:

   - Furthering personal causes such as political, religious or commercial views
   - Disseminating threatening or harassing messages
   - Disseminating sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate material
   - Attempting to gain unauthorized access to computers, servers, Google Apps for Education accounts, voicemails or other ECDs
   - Purposely infecting the network or computers with spyware, malware or viruses
   - Gaining access by using another's credentials
   - Using the Internet to access bandwidth grabbing programs unless authorized to do so
   - Violating copyright laws (anything from the Internet should be regarded as copyright protected
   - Downloading or uploading any data or material not specifically related to your job function
   - Users will not download, store, create or forward any information/data that is inflammatory, or defamatory to any race,
     creed, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or political beliefs of any individual or group
   - Users will not download any unauthorized software, file or program
   - Users will not download, store, create or forward any information regarding explosives or weapons unless as information for a specific class assignment.

10. **Appropriate/ Inappropriate Use of Educational Technology:**

    - Users will not use any district technology to play games that have been downloaded onto a technology device, or that are played on the Internet. Assigned, teacher-approved interactive tools, which are directly related to the curriculum, are permitted.
    - Users will not use the Internet or other technology media to access chat rooms or any type of instant messaging.
    - Users will not access personal accounts including, but not limited to email, music, banking, shopping, and other personal accounts.

- Users will not access the Internet or other technology media for financial or commercial gain. Ex. gambling, eBay
- Users' activities, projects, or materials developed with technology and ECDs of the Rockland Public Schools must reflect our educational standards and policies. This includes, but is not limited to web page designs, PowerPoint presentations, radio broadcasts, etc.
- Users will not impersonate other individuals, real or fictional.

Social Networking Sites:

- As a teaching professional your reputation can be affected. Be aware that as teachers, in the public eye you are held to a higher standard and you should use caution with text and photos that you may display.
- Access to social networking sites is prohibited through the Rockland Public Schools network/system and ECDs unless under the direction of a teacher or staff member.

G Suite for Education:

- G Suite for Education accounts are currently provided to all staff, faculty members, and students in Pre-K through grade 12. Email is enabled for students in grades Pre-K through 12. Email that originates from or is received by a school owned computer or its contracted hosting company, in our case G Suite for Education, is the property of the Rockland Public Schools and can be used for or against during a legal proceeding. The same holds true for voicemails stored on RPS phones and systems.
- All users of the Rockland Public Schools email system should know that when writing or responding via email, please remember that the Secretary of State's Office has determined that email is a public record. All email communications sent or received by persons using the.Rockland Public Schools network are subject to disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law(M.G.L. Chapter 66, Section 10) and the Federal Freedom of Information Act.
- All student Google accounts are the property of the Rockland Public Schools.
- Student accounts will be deleted by August 1st of their graduation year and the student is solely responsible for transferring any data in their account to a personal, non-RPS account.
- The sole purpose of the student assigned Google account is for students to communicate and collaborate with school staff and fellow students.
- The use of the district's Google account is a privilege.
- The use of RPS Google accounts by students will align with the student handbook's code of conduct and the code will be used for discipline purposes. Students who use RPS assigned Google accounts will exhibit maturity and common sense.
- Students are responsible for messages sent from their accounts. Students should exercise extreme caution with their passwords and never let a fellow student use their account.
- No student shall use their RPS Google account to operate a personal business.
- The Rockland Public School district reserves the right to terminate either temporarily or permanently a Google account if used inappropriately.
- Students will not identify their home telephone numbers, home addresses, or any

personal information in any email correspondence.

- No assumption of privacy should be assumed with a RPS assigned Google account. RPS administrative and technology staff reserves the right to go into a user's mailbox to find lost messages, to conduct lawful investigations, or to comply with investigations of wrongful acts. RPS will cooperate fully with any law enforcement investigation. Illegal activities on the system will be referred to law enforcement authorities for appropriate legal action.
- Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to change email providers without prior notice.
- Following the usage of a Rockland Public School ECD, the user will log off so as to prevent another user from using his/her account.
- Since RPS assigned Google accounts can be accessed outside the boundaries of our schools (web-based accounts) students are required to maintain the same behavior that is expected of them while in school.

Removable Media:

- Removable media can be defined as but not limited to: CD, DVD, USB devices, camera flash media cards, hard drives physically removed from their laptop, or computer-based machines.
- RPS has the right to pre-scan any removable media that an individual wants to bring into the RPS network, for viruses and other unwanted malware and spyware. Extreme caution is to be exercised by any individual who uses removable media with regards to the safe handling and security of the removable device and its contents. No confidential data is to be transported using removable media.

Chromebook, Laptops, and iPads:

- Defined as small portable computers: Even when removed from the premises they are considered the property of the Rockland Public Schools and all policies and good faith efforts as previously outlined apply to using them away from the classroom.

11. **District Limitation of Liability:**
    - The Rockland Public Schools makes no expressed or implied guarantees that the activities or services provided by district technology or ECDs will be error-free or without defect. The RPS district will not be responsible for any damages to users including, but not limited to loss of data, interruptions of service, personal or psychological damages, or financial losses. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of content obtained through our network or stored on our systems. Finally, the district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations incurred from the use of our ECDs or any components of our technology system.

Approved by Rockland School Committee: June 8, 2020 Revised on 8/15/2023

ROCKLAND SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY: PARENTAL NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Rockland School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses of curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual education or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If the planned curriculum changes during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

(1) exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/ guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.

(2) inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable. Parents/ guardians may arrange with the principal to review the materials at the school, and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of Schools.

A parent/ guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written report to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in dispute.

The Superintendent of Schools will distribute a copy of this policy to each principal by September 1 of each year.

Approved by Rockland School Committee June 23, 1997 Revised on 4/27/2020

BOMB THREATS POLICY

Reports of bombs or explosives in the school building are a nuisance, costly, and cause loss of valuable school time. Despite the fact that most such threats are hoaxes, such reports cannot be ignored. The welfare and safety of students and staff requires planned and prompt action whenever reports are received.

The administration has in its possession and is prepared to implement regulations and procedures related to bomb reports that protect the students and staff from harm; that stipulates prevention or reduced frequency of false threats; that promotes and supports effective and cooperative efforts of other governmental agencies in the apprehension of those responsible for threats.

The staff and students are to be aware of the procedure expected in situations requiring the emergency evacuations of the school building. Further, the staff and students are to be made aware of the regulations concerning making up of time missed because of such emergency evacuation.

The School Committee expects everyone to be aware of the serious legal violations associated with hoax bomb reports, and the intent of the Committee to seek full police investigations and convictions under the law.

The administration is authorized and directed to develop and implement, with the help of appropriate public agencies and staff, emergency evacuation procedures, hoax prevention activities, and time make-up practices. Students, parents, and staff will be made aware of regulations and procedures established.

For purposes of clarification, the term "bomb threat" shall mean a condition of threat judged to be so by the principal or his designee after careful and systematic evaluation of the school environment together with analysis of messages received that relate to possible threats of bombing at the school.

Approved by Rockland School Committee June 10, 2001. Revised on 4/27/2020

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING PLAN

Position Statement

Rockland Public Schools will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities. We will promptly investigate all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target's sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

We recognize 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, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics.

Definitions

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

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

"Cyber bullying" means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature 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.

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

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

Parental Cooperation

The prevention of bullying in our schools must be a joint effort involving both school staff and parents/guardians. The role of the parent of the target and or aggressor in understanding the bullying situation and working with their child and the schools is crucial to the student's development of appropriate social skills.

Investigation Process

Reporting bullying or retaliation: Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.

Use of an incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the school administration and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

At the beginning of each school year, the school or district will provide the school community, including administrators, staff, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

Reporting bv Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the school administration when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the school administration does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

For isolated incidents of peer aggression, staff will use the school's incident form. The school administration will monitor all incident forms to determine if there is repeated behavior. If repetition is determined, then the Bullying Incident Reporting Form will be used.

Reporting by Student, Parents or Guardians, and Others

The school or district expects students, parents or guardians, and others who witness or become aware of an instance of bullying or retaliation involving a student to report it to the school administration. Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Students, parents or guardians, and others may request assistance from a staff member to complete a written report. Students will be provided practical, safe, private and age-appropriate ways to report and discuss

an incident of bullying with a staff member, or with the school administration.

Responding to a Report of Bullying

Prior to fully investigating, the school administration will ensure the safety of the alleged target and/or protect the target from possible further incidents. The school administration will also ensure that all parties understand the definition and prohibition of retaliation.

Investigation

The school administration will use the Bullying Investigation Form as a template for the investigation process.

Interviews may be conducted by the school administration, other staff members as determined by the principal and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the school administration will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The school administration will maintain a written record of the investigation.

A copy of the completed Bullying Investigation Form will be sent to the Superintendent's office.

Determinations

The school administration will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the administration will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The school administration will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Notifications

The school administration will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the school administration cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. In the case of Cyberbullying, the parents of any student mentioned in/on the bullying medium (text, social networking page, etc) will be notified.

Notice to Another School or District

If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behavior

The teaching of appropriate social skills is a key part of preventing future bullying incidents. The school may:

- Offer individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curriculum;
- Provide relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implement a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- Meet with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- Adopt behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- Make a referral for evaluation

Discipline

Discipline will be administered according to the school's handbook. All discipline must be balanced with the requirement to teach appropriate behavior.

If the school administration decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the school administration, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior.

Sanctions may include:

- Detention
- Loss of privileges to participate in school activities
- Suspension

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Professional Development

The district will provide professional development to its staff that includes the following components:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
- Information regarding complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, victim and witnesses to the bullying
- Research finds on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyber bullying
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber bullying

Curriculum

The district will develop or purchase age appropriate curriculum to be incorporated into the district's academic offerings.

Instruction will take place at the class level in elementary schools and will be coordinated by the adjustment counselors and/or school psychologists.

At the Middle and High Schools, the curriculum will be taught by the health teachers. This will be supplemented by individual or group activities supervised by the guidance departments and social workers.

General Teaching Approaches That Support Bullying Prevention Efforts

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students
- Modeling, teaching and rewarding pro-social, healthy and respectful behaviors
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development
- Using the Internet safely
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strengh

Appendix A

Definitions

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from MG.L. c. 71 § 370, as noted below. Schools or districts may add specific language to these definitions to clarify them, but may not alter their meaning or scope. Plans may also include additional definitions that are aligned with local policies and procedures.

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

Bullying as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use of one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- Causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property
- Places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

Cyber Bullying is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71 § 370 for the legal definition of cyber bullying.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, 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 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 is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Online Bullying Forms

Appendix B

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the report: _____
   (Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)
2. Check whether you are the: ___Target of the Behavior ___Reporter (not the target)
3. Check whether you are a:
   ___ Student ___ Administrator
   ___ Parent ___ Other (specify) _____
   ___ Staff member (specify role)_____

Your contact information/telephone number:_____

4. If student, state your school: _____ Grade: ___
5. If staff member, state your school or work site: _____
6. Information about the Incident:

   Name of Target (of behavior): _____

   Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

   Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

   Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

   Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

7. Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

   Name: _____ ___ Student ___ Staff ___ Other _____

   Name: _____ ___ Student ___ Staff ___Other _____

   Name: _____ ___ Student ___ Staff ___Other _____

8. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). Please use additional space on back if necessary.

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

9. Signature of Person Filing this Report: _____ Date: _____
(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously)

10. Form given to: _____ Position: _____Date: _____

Appendix C

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INVESTIGATION REPORT

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Investigation Report
(Revised 2025)

Investigation

1.

Investigator(s)	Position(s)

2. Interviews:
Interview aggressor

Interviewed Aggressor	Name	Date

Interviewed Target	Name	Date

Interviewed Witnesses	Name(s)	Date

3. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor? Yes No

If yes, have incidents involved the target or target group previously? Yes No

Any previous incidents with findings of Bullying Retaliation? Yes No

Summary of Investigation:

Conclusions From the Investigation:

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation Yes No

Bullying Incident documented as:	Retaliation Discipline Referral Only

2. Contacts:

Target's Parent/Guardian Name	Date:

Aggressor's Parent Guardian Name	Date:

District Equity Coordinator(DEC) Law Enforcement/SRO Name	Date:

3. Action Taken

Loss of Privileges, Detention, STEP referral,l Suspension, Community Service Education, Other

4. Describe Safety Planning:

Follow-up with Target:

Follow-up with Target for Initial meeting	Date Completed:

Follow-up with Aggressor for Initial meeting	Date Completed:

Report forwarded to Principal	Date:

Report forwarded to the Superintendent	Date:

Report Writer Name and Signature	Date:

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form
(Revised 2025)

1. Name of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:

2. Check whether you are the:

The target of the Behavior	
Report of the Behavior (Not the Target)	

3. Check whether you are a:

The target of the Behavior	
Staff Member(Role)	
Parent	
Administrator	
Other (specify)	

Your contact information/telephone number:

Email	Telephone Number

4. If student:

The RPS School You Attend:	Your Grade:

5. If staff member, state your school or work site:

6. Information about the Incident:

Name of Target	
Name of Aggressor	
Date(s) of Incident(s)	
Time When Incident(s) Occurred	
Location Of Incident(s)	

7. Witnesses:

Name	Specify Role: Student/Staff/Other

8. Describe the details of the incident:

(including names of people involved and what occurred and what each person did and said, including specific words)

9. Signature of Person Filling this Report: Date:

10. Form Given to:

Name	Position	Date

Appendix D

PARENTAL CONSENT AND RELEASE FROM LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

I/We, the undersigned father, mother, guardian (circle legal relationship to student, e.g., "parent," "guardian ") of _____ (insert name of student) ("my child"), a minor, do hereby consent to child's participation in voluntary athletic or extra-curricular programs of the Rockland Public Schools.

I/We also agree to forever RELEASE the Town of Rockland, a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and/or the Rockland Public Schools, the School Committee, and all their employees, officers, agents, board members, volunteers, and any and all individuals and organizations assisting or participating in voluntary athletic, volunteer assistance, or recreation programs of the Town of Rockland or Rockland Public Schools ("the Releasees") from any and all claims, actions, rights of action and causes of action, damages, costs, loss of services, expenses, compensation, and attorneys' fees that may have arisen in the past, or may arise in the future, directly or indirectly, from known and unknown personal injuries to me or my child or property damage resulting from my or my child's participation in the said Town of Rockland and/or Rockland Public School's voluntary athletic or extra-curricular programs which I/we may now or hereafter have as the individual or as the parent(s) or guardian(s) of said minor child and which said minor child has or hereafter may acquire, either before or after reaching majority.

I/We also promise, to INDEMNIFY, REIMBURSE, DEFEND, and HOLD HARMLESS the Releasees against any and all legal claims and proceedings of any description that may have been asserted in the past, or may be asserted in the future, directly or indirectly, including damages, costs and attorneys' fees, arising from personal injuries to me or my child or property damage resulting from me or my child's participation in the Town of Rockland and/or Rockland Public Schools' voluntary athletic, or extra curricular programs or administration of first aid.

I/We further affirm that I/we have read this Parental Consent, Release from Liability and Indemnity Agreement, and that I/we understand the contents of this Agreement. I/We understand that my or my child's participation in these programs is voluntary and that my child and I/we are free to choose not to participate in said programs. By signing this Agreement, I/we further affirm that I/we have decided to allow me or my child to participate in the Town of Rockland and/or Rockland Public Schools' athletic or extra curricular programs with full knowledge that the Releasees will not be liable to anyone for personal injuries and property damage my child or I/we may suffer in voluntary Town of Rockland and/or Rockland Public School athletic, volunteer assistance, or recreation programs.

Signed: _____

Parent/Guardian of Student Participant

Approved by Rockland School Committee May 2003, Updated 2023.

Appendix E

SYNOPSIS OF FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND DISTRICT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

SYNOPSIS OF LAWS:

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 Coordinator: Dr. Alan H. Cron

Statute prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. This statute ensures that individuals are not excluded from participation in programs or activities receiving federal funds (or the benefits of) on account of their membership in one of these protected categories (42 USC §2000D). This statute has been interpreted to prohibit the denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

Title IX of the Education Amendment of1972 Coordinator: Mrs. Jane Hackett

Title IX of the Education Amendment of 1972 provides that no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of sex **in** any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX requires that schools adopt and publish a policy against sex discrimination and have grievance· procedures through which students can complain of alleged sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. State law requires Massachusetts employers to have a policy against sexual harassment. (M.G.L. Ch. 151B,
§3A)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of1973 Coordinator: Dr. Alan H. Cron

Section 504 provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of his/her disability be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The regulations implementing Section 504 require that public schools provide a free appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person who is in the recipient's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap. (34 CFR 104.33)

Americans with Disabilities 1990 Coordinator: Dr. Linda Maniglia

The regulations implementing the ADA provide that: "A public entity that employs 50 or more persons shall designate at least one employee to coordinator its efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under this part, including any investigation of any complaint communicated to it alleging its noncompliance with this part or alleging any actions that would be prohibited by this part. The public entity must make available to all interested individuals the name, office address, and telephone number of the employee or employees designated pursuant to this paragraph." (34 CFR 35.107(a)

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES LAWS:

Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1·974 **Coordinator: Dr. Alan H. Cron**

This federal statute prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunities to an individual based on certain protected classifications including national origin. It specifically prohibits denying equal educational opportunities by failing to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs. (20 USC §1203(-f))

Mass. General Laws Ch. 76, §5 **Coordinator: Mrs. Jane Hacket**
(also known as Chapter 622)

This state law provides 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, sexual orientation, or gender identity."

Title I of the Elem. & Secondary Education Act of 1965 **Dr. Alan H. Cron**

Title I is designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards. Staff should know that special education students are not deemed ineligible for Title I services simply because they receive special education services. Also, school districts must ensure that Title I funds are not being misused (e.g. referring a limited English proficient student to a Title I program in order to meet the student's language needs rather than providing an ESL program/class).

SPECIAL EDUCATION:

Chapter 688 (transition planning) **Coordinator: Dr. Linda Maniglia**

School districts file a Chapter 688 referral for students with severe disabilities who will need continued services and support after their eligibility for special education ceases. School districts must make Chapter 688 referi:als at least 2 years before the student is expected to graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. This allows time to determine the student's eligibility for adult services and for agencies to include the anticipated cost of services for the student in its budget request that it submits to the state legislature each year.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as prescribed in this handbook. State and federal special education laws prescribe additional requirements concerning the discipline of students with special needs.

Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten (10) school days in any school year, this constitutes a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law. These include, but are not limited to:

The student's Team will convene to determine whether the student's misconduct that led to the change in placement was a manifestation of his/her disability. If the misconduct was a manifestation, the school will conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan, provided that the school did not already conduct such an assessment before the behavior that resulted in the discipline. If such an assessment was already conducted, the behavior intervention plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary. Additionally, if the behavior was a manifestation, the student will return to the placement from which he/she was removed, unless the school and the parent agree otherwise.

If the behavior was not a manifestation, the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the extent they would be applied to a student not eligible for special education, except that a student eligible for special education who is removed from his/her current educational placement is entitled to continue receiving educational services to enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP.

In special circumstances, the school may move students to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior that led to the removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. These special circumstances are when:

A student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or location educational agency, knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or, has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

Section *504* of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statue which prohibits a qualified individual with a disability from being excluded from the participation in, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance because Qf his/her disability. 29 U.S.C. &794 and its implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. 104 et seq. School personnel may not suspend a student on a *504* plan for more than ten (10) school days without first conducting a manifestation determination.

POLICY ON THE TREATMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AS PER SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

It is the policy of the Rockland Public Schools not to discriminate against any otherwise qualified individual with disability, solely by reason of his/her disability, in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, any program or activity sponsored by this school district.

Inquiries regarding compliance with this policy should be directed to the Section 504 Coordinator of the Rockland Public Schools, Superintendent's Office, 99 Church Street, Rockland, Massachusetts 02370. Telephone: 781-878-3893.

Approved by Rockland School Committee May 11, 1998

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA FOR ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the school principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in 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); a person serving on the School Board; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks.

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her 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 enro11. (NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District 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, S.W. Washington,
D.C. 20202-4605

HOMELESS STUDENTS: ENROLLMENT RIGHTS AND SERVICES POLICY

To the extent practical and as required by law, the Rockland Public Schools will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs.

Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;

7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The Superintendent shall designate Dr. Linda Maniglia to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families.

To the extent feasible, homeless students vVill continue to be enrolled in their school of origin while they remain homeless, or until the end of the academic year **in** which they obtain permanent housing. Instead of remaining in the school of origin, parents or guardians of homeless students may request enrollment in the school in the attendance area in which the student is actually living, or other schools. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families resident in the district.

If there is an enrollment dispute, the student shall be immediately enrolled in the school in which enrollment is sought, pending resolution of the dispute. The parent or guardian shall be informed of the district's decision and their appeal rights in writing. The district's liaison will carry out dispute resolution as provided by state rule. Unaccompanied youth will also be enrolled pending resolution of the dispute.

Approved by Rockland School Committee February 23, 2004

C.O.R.I. AND C.H.R.I.

The Rockland Elementary Schools comply with all applicable laws and policies concerning criminal record information (C.O.R.I.) and Criminal History Record Information (C.H.R.I.).

EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY POLICY

Society is profoundly affected by the level of honesty of its citizens; therefore, maintaining the educational integrity of both students and staff is an important goal of the Rockland Public Schools. Cheating in any form is dishonest and erodes the trust among parents, students, and teachers. It is a serious breach of ethics and values and vVill not be tolerated.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, crib notes, copying homework, computer piracy, and looking at another person's test. Ultimately, however, teachers will set the tone of what is expected and what vVill not be tolerated in their classrooms. If cheating does occur, it will be dealt with swiftly and confidentially. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, parents and administrators may be involved as determined by the teacher. Consequences may range from receiving a zero on a test, paper, or project, to receiving a zero for a full marking term or even being suspended from school.

Maintaining the highest ethical standards in teaching and learning in the Rockland Public Schools requires the understanding and cooperative efforts of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. By committing ourselves to the values of honesty and good character and working together in the best interests of our children and their future, we will ensure the highest standards of educational integrity for the Rockland Public Schools.
Approved by the Rockland School Committee November 23, 1992

Appendix F

SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION UNDER SECTIONS 37H, 37H1/2, AND 37H 3/4 OF CHAPTER 71 OF THE GENERAL LAWS

The Rockland School Committee is subject to the provisions of Sections 37 H, 37 H ½, and 37H ¾ of Chapter 71 of the General Laws.

THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 37H OF CHAPTER 71 OF THE GENERAL LAWS

The relevant provisions of Section 37 H of Chapter 71 read as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On

an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

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

THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 37H½ OF CHAPTER 71 OF THE GENERAL LAWS

G.L. c. 37H ½ states as follows:

Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

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

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

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

of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

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

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

THE PROVISIONS OF SECTION 37H¾ OF CHAPTER 71 OF THE GENERAL LAWS

G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾ states as follows:

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

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

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

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

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

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

Appendix G

Bulldog Pledge

As Rockland Bulldogs we always bark. Be respectful of ourselves and those around us. Act responsibility by doing what we should. Remember safety at all times, and always show kindness to ourselves and others.



Schoolwide Behavioral Expectations Routines and Settings

Rules and Expectations	Classroom	Hallways	Bathroom	Cafeteria	Playground /Blacktop	Bus	Assembly
Be Responsible	Be ready to work Do your best work Stay on task Finish your work	Walk directly to your destination Keep hands and feet and belongings to yourself	Remember your purpose Wash and dry hands Throw away trash	Eat your own lunch Leave no trace/clean up your area Sit facing forward	Bring weather appropriate clothing Leave no trace Take care of equipment	Be ready and be on time Keep track of your belongings Be kind to others	Find your spot quickly Stay in your space
Be Respectful	Use kind words Listen and follow directions Respect others' belongings and personal space Use appropriate voice levels	Travel with a 0 voice level Use a silent greeting Stay in your line	Voice level 1 Give people privacy Keep walls and floor clean	Enter and leave with a 0 voice Use a level 2 at the table Raise your hand to ask for help Say please and thank you	Follow adult directions Share equipment Take turns and play cooperatively Be KIND	Use a level 1 voice Listen to the bus driver Use appropriate language	Enter with a level 0 voice Listen and follow directions Use a silent greeting Clap at the right time Use a level 3 voice to cheer Use a level 0 voice during performance Face the

							performance
Be Safe	Keep hands and feet to self Wait your turn Stay in your space	Eyes forward Hands off walls Follow traffic flow	Walk to stalls Flush Wash Hands Report problems to teacher	Walk at all times Stay in your space Keep hands, feet and belongings to yourself	Line up with a 0 voice Stay within boundaries Keep hands and feet to self	Stay in your seat and face forward Keep hands, feet and belongings to yourself Keep aisle clear	Keep hands and feet to yourself Stay with your group

Appendix G

Chromebook Loan Agreement Signature Page

Grades Pre-K - 12

The student and parent/guardian must read the attached Chromebook Loan Agreement and sign this page in order to receive a Chromebook.

Parent/Guardian Agreement: I have read and understand the *Chromebook Loan Agreement* (attached to this document) and agree to the terms and conditions contained within.

Student Name (print clearly): _____

School: _____ Grade: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (print clearly): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Student Agreement: I have read and understand the *Chromebook Loan Agreement* (attached to this document) and the online *Rockland Public School Chromebook Care and Use Policy Guide* and agree to abide by the terms and conditions contained in both documents. I also agree to the following specific expectations **(please initial each line):**

- I will use and transport my Chromebook with care. _____
- I will bring my Chromebook to school each day, fully charged. _____
- I will keep my Chromebook in good working condition, making every effort to avoid unnecessary damage and will report any damage or loss immediately. _____
- I will use my Chromebook responsibly and productively while in school as well as outside of school. _____
- I agree to abide by the terms and conditions contained within the online *Rockland Public Schools Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy.* _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____ Grade: _____

Please complete and return this form to your child's classroom teacher.

……

The Rockland Elementary Schools require that all parents/guardians of students of the Rockland Public Schools sign the statement below acknowledging receipt of this Handbook and return it to your child's school.

As a parent/guardian of a student within the Rockland Public Schools, I acknowledge receipt of the 2023-2024 Student/Parent Handbook.

If you would like a paper copy of this handbook, please contact your school secretary.

_____ _____

(Student's Name) (Date)

_____ _____

(Parent/Guardian Signature) (School)

••••••

MEDIA REFUSAL FORM

***** Only return this form if you DO NOT allow your child to be photographed or recorded. *****

From time to time, students are photographed and/or videotaped in the classroom or at various functions during the school year for local cable and newspaper use and for publication, including in pamphlets, displays, websites, and social media. Some photographs may be used for publicity or to model different aspects of the education
program.
If you do **not** wish to have your child photographed or video recorded, please complete this form and have your child return it to his or her teacher.
Unless and until this form is completed and returned, it is understood that a student may be photographed and recorded at school and that the Rockland Public Schools may
use or authorize other organizations to use those photographs and/or videos for any publications, exhibitions, displays, or web pages, without reservation or compensation for the 2025-2026 school year.
Please check the applicable box:

☐ I do not want my child to be photographed to use in any school related publicity. This will include the end of the year student video shared at the kindergarten promotion ceremony and with all families at the end of the school year.

School: _____

Student: _____ Grade: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____