

# **STONEHAM CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL**

**GRADES 5–8**

**Student Handbook  
2025–2026**



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## DOCUMENT TRANSLATION

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Should you need assistance in translating important school documents such as the student handbook and special education Individual Education Plans, you may request that a translator be made available to you. In addition, such materials may be made available to you in your language of choice if you notify us of that need in a timely manner. Thank you.

Queridos Padres y Guardianes,

Si usted necesita ayuda en traducir documentos importantes de la escuela tales como este manual o el plan individual de educación especial, pueden solicitar un traductor que estará disponible para asistirlo. Además, si desea una copia de éste material en su idioma por favor notifiquenos con tiempo y se le hará disponible. Gracias.

Prezados pais e responsáveis,

Caso precisem de ajuda para traduzir documentos escolares importantes, como o manual do aluno e os Planos de Educação Individual de educação especial, vocês podem solicitar que um tradutor seja disponibilizado a vocês. Além disso, esses materiais podem ser disponibilizados a vocês no idioma de sua escolha se nos notificarem dessa necessidade em tempo hábil. Obrigado.

عزيزي الآباء والأولياء،

إذا كنت بحاجة إلى مساعدة في ترجمة مستندات مدرسية مهمة مثل دليل الطالب وخطط التعليم الفردي للتعليم الخاص، فيمكنك طلب توفير مترجم لك. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، قد يتم توفير هذه المواد لك باللغة التي تختارها إذا أخترتنا بهذه الحاجة في الوقت المناسب. شكرًا لك.

Cari Genitori e Tutori:

Se voi avete bisogno d'assistenza con la traduzione dei documenti importanti della scuola, come il manuale di scuola e il piano individuale dell'educazione speciale, potete richiedere che un traduttore sia disponibile a voi nella vostra lingua scelta se ci informate in anticipo di quella necessità. Grazie.

Chers parents et gardiens

Si vous avez besoin de l'assistance dans la traduction des documents scolaires importants comme le manuel scolaire et les Plans d'éducation Individuels d'Éducation spéciale, vous pouvez demander qu'un traducteur soit disponible pour vous. En plus, ce matériel sera disponible pour vous dans votre langue de choix si vous nous通知ez de ce besoin dans une manière opportune. Merci.

**УВАЖАЕМЫЕ РОДИТЕЛИ И ОПЕКУНЫ,**

**ЕСЛИ ВАМ ПОНАДОБИТСЯ ПОМОЩЬ В ПЕРЕВОДЕ ВАЖНЫХ ШКОЛЬНЫХ ДОКУМЕНТОВ, ТАКИХ КАК СПРАВОЧНИК УЧЕНИКА И ИНДИВИДУАЛЬНЫЕ ПЛАНЫ ОБУЧЕНИЯ ПО СПЕЦИАЛЬНОМУ ОБРАЗОВАНИЮ, ВЫ МОЖЕТЕ ПОПРОСИТЬ, ЧТОБЫ ВАМ ПРЕДОСТАВИЛИ ПЕРЕВОДЧИКА. КРОМЕ ТОГО, ТАКИЕ МАТЕРИАЛЫ МОГУТ БЫТЬ ПРЕДОСТАВЛЕНЫ ВАМ НА ВЫБРАННОМ ВАМИ ЯЗЫКЕ, ЕСЛИ ВЫ СВОЕВРЕМЕННО СООБЩИТЕ НАМ ОБ ЭТОЙ ПОТРЕБНОСТИ.**

**Спасибо.**

Chè Paran ak Gadyen,

Si w bezwen asistans pou tradui dokiman enpòtan lekòl yo tankou manyèl elèv la ak Plan Edikasyon Endividyèl edikasyon espesyal, ou ka mande pou mete yon tradiktè disponib pou ou. Anplis de sa, materyèl sa yo ka disponib pou ou nan lang ou chwazi a si ou fè nou konnen bezwen sa a alè. Mèsi.

**The above translations provided by Google Translate.**

## **CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL CORE VALUES**

**WE HAVE RESPECT FOR OURSELVES, FOR OTHERS,  
AND FOR OUR COMMUNITY.**

**WE ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR  
LEARNING AND FOR OUR BEHAVIOR.**

**WE ARE CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVERS  
AND COMPETENT DECISION MAKERS.**

*Let these values guide us in our home, in our school, and in our community.*

## **STONEHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Jaime Wallace- Chair

Megan Samborski- Vice Chair

Melanie Fiore

Cory Mashburn

Nicole Nial

## **ADMINISTRATION**

Dr. Kristin DeFrancisco, Superintendent

Dr. Kathryn Castonguay, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Sarah O'Leary, Director of Special Education

Mr. Thomas Sallee, Principal

Mrs. Nicole Clark, Assistant Principal

Dr. Michelle Zavez, STEM Supervisor

Mrs. Diana DePaolis, Humanities Supervisor

## **CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY**

Central Middle School provides a period of smooth transition from elementary school to high school. We recognize that each student is a unique individual with diverse needs, interests and talents. Our approach is to support their social, emotional, intellectual and physical growth through a comprehensive educational program. We believe in the value and importance of providing a student-centered environment that is structured, safe and inclusive; through which we cultivate a sense of well-being and confidence in each student.

Central Middle School is committed to helping students achieve their highest academic potential. Our engaging curriculum is designed to challenge students while supporting them with the tools and skills necessary for success. We encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and a love for learning. Our emphasis on academic disciplines and their related study skills provide students with learning experiences that reflect a concern for the relationships among the various content areas. Enrichment opportunities which supplement the curriculum and broaden the horizons of students are promoted to encourage learning as a life-long activity.

Central Middle School is dedicated to building strong character and responsible citizenship. We emphasize the importance of respect, integrity, empathy and responsibility in all aspects of a student's life. Through our various programs and activities, we encourage students to understand and accept their role as members of a community, make positive contributions through active citizenship, and develop a sense of personal and social responsibility. Our community and its members are a valued resource in meeting the objectives of our school.

## **CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL OBJECTIVES**

Students attending Central Middle School are afforded the opportunity to develop:

1. Academic competence with an emphasis on understanding the relationships among disciplines and their connection to the real world
2. Strong habits of mind that increase their capacity for competent decision making
3. Critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaboration skills
4. Interests in worthwhile leisure activities, other enriching experiences, and career possibilities which foster a desire to become life-long learners
5. Understanding of emotions and physical changes in themselves
6. Responsibility of good citizenship and participation in the democratic process
7. Respect and appreciation for the beliefs and values of others
8. Sense of belonging and identification within the school community
9. Acceptance of responsibility for learning and behavior
10. Respect and responsibility toward their community

## CONTACT INFORMATION

### Telephone Numbers

The phone number for Central Middle School is **781-279-3840**. Our secretaries can be reached by dialing the main number. If you need to speak to the Principal or Assistant Principal, the secretaries will direct your call or take a message. Other staff members may be reached at the following extensions or by email:

Mr. Thomas Sallee	Principal		<a href="mailto:tsallee@stonehamschools.org">tsallee@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Nicole Clark	Assistant Principal		<a href="mailto:nclark@stonehamschools.org">nclark@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Tara Lawler	Main Office Secretary		<a href="mailto:tlawler@stonehamschools.org">tlawler@stonehamschools.org</a>
Ms. Gina Guliano	Main Office Secretary		<a href="mailto:gkuliano@stonehamschools.org">gkuliano@stonehamschools.org</a>
Dr. Michelle Zavez	STEM Supervisor	x.2	<a href="mailto:mzavez@stonehamschools.org">mzavez@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs Diana DePaolis	Humanities Supervisor	x.2314	<a href="mailto:ddepaolis@stonehamschools.org">ddepaolis@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Elizabeth Mentor	Special Education Coordinator	x.2313	<a href="mailto:ementor@stonehamschools.org">ementor@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Tracy Stats	Special Education Coordinator	x.2	<a href="mailto:tstats@stonehamschools.org">tstats@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mr. Robert Shelmire	Guidance Counselor (A-K)	x.2229	<a href="mailto:rshelmire@stonehamschools.org">rshelmire@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Colleen Salamone	Guidance Counselor (L-Z)	x.2228	<a href="mailto:cmartin@stonehamschools.org">cmartin@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Kristy Vazquez	Adjustment Counselor	x.2230	<a href="mailto:kvazquez@stonehamschools.org">kvazquez@stonehamschools.org</a>
Ms. Morgan Reiser	Adjustment Counselor	x.2	<a href="mailto:mreiser@stonehamschools.org">mreiser@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mr. Steve Zessis	Adjustment Counselor	x.2173	<a href="mailto:szessis@stonehamschools.org">szessis@stonehamschools.org</a>
Ms. Heather Lamarre	School Nurse	x.2311	<a href="mailto:hlarre@stonehamschools.org">hlarre@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Kimberly Hadfield	School Nurse	x.2311	<a href="mailto:khadfield@stonehamschools.org">khadfield@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Alexandra Lafata	School Psychologist	x.2	<a href="mailto:alafata@stonehamschools.org">alafata@stonehamschools.org</a>
Mrs. Nicole Robinson	Adjustment Counselor	x.2	<a href="mailto:nrobinson@stonehamschools.org">nrobinson@stonehamschools.org</a>

### Absentee Line

To report your child's absence from school, please call the absentee line at: **(781) 279-3840 #1**

### School Website

For useful information, including contact information for all staff members, please visit the school website at:

[www.stonehamschools.org/schools/central-middle-school](http://www.stonehamschools.org/schools/central-middle-school)

## MIDDLE SCHOOL MODEL

The middle school model is an educational approach that emphasizes the use of heterogeneous (mixed ability) grouping of students within interdisciplinary teams. Our team model bridges the transition between elementary and high school by providing a group of core content teachers that have a shared responsibility for a designated group of students at each grade level. This structure prioritizes the unique needs of early adolescents by providing support in both academic growth and social development. The team concept further promotes a sense of community and collaborative learning while at the same time fostering student independence.

### Team Structure

In Grade 5 our teams consist of two content teachers, a Mathematics/Science teacher and an English Language Arts/Social Studies teacher. In grades 6-8 our teams consist of four content teachers, one each for Mathematics, Science, English Language Arts and Social Studies.

### Levels of Instruction

#### GRADE 5

Students in grade five are heterogeneously grouped in all classes. Heterogeneous groups include students of mixed abilities.

#### GRADES 6 and 7

Students in grades six and seven are placed into two groups for instruction in mathematics. One group consists of students who have demonstrated average or above average achievement in mathematics. The second group is composed of students who have demonstrated a need for reinforcement of previous grade level mathematics skills. Students are heterogeneously grouped in all other classes.

#### GRADE 8

In grade eight we offer three levels of instruction in mathematics. One group consists of students who have demonstrated average or above average achievement in mathematics. The second group is composed of students who have demonstrated a need for reinforcement of seventh grade mathematics skills. The third grouping includes students who have been recommended to learn intensive, accelerated algebra. Students are heterogeneously (mixed ability) grouped in all other classes.

## BELL SCHEDULES

Middle school is a time of transition and growth for students, and a consistent daily routine plays a key role in supporting their development. Our bell schedules are designed to provide structure, minimize disruptions during transitions, and ensure that each class period maximizes instructional time for all students.

### SCMS Daily Schedule

TIME	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7:50	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
8:05	WIN - Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
8:57	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
9:48	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
10:39	Lunch	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4
11:09	Period 4			
11:29		Lunch	Period 5	Period 5
12:00	Period 5	Period 5		
12:21			Lunch	Period 6
12:52	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6	
1:13				Lunch
1:43	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7
2:35	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

## Activity Day Schedule

TIME	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
7:50	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom	Homeroom
8:05	ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY	ACTIVITY
9:00	WIN - Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
9:43	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
10:26	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
11:09	LUNCH	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4
11:39	Period 4			
11:52		LUNCH	Period 5	Period 5
12:22	Period 5	Period 5		
12:35			LUNCH	Period 6
1:05	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6	
1:18				LUNCH
1:48	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7
2:35	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL



## Early Release Schedule

TIME	GRADE 5	GRADE 6	GRADE 7	GRADE 8
7:50	HOMEROOM	HOMEROOM	HOMEROOM	HOMEROOM
8:05	WIN - Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
8:32	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
8:59	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3	Period 3
9:26	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4	Period 4
9:53	Lunch*	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5
10:20	Period 5	Lunch*	Period 6	Period 6
10:47	Period 6	Period 6	Lunch*	Period 7
11:14	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7	Lunch*
11:45	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL

## Two Hour Delay Schedule

TIME	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
9:50	HOMEROOM	HOMEROOM	HOMEROOM	HOMEROOM
10:05	WIN - Period 1	Period 1	Period 1	Period 1
10:40	Lunch*	Period 2	Period 2	Period 2
11:15	Period 2	Lunch*	Period 3	Period 3
11:50	Period 3	Period 3	Period 4	Period 4
12:20	Period 4	Period 4	Lunch*	Period 5
12:50	Period 5	Period 5	Period 5	Lunch*
1:25	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6	Period 6
2:00	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7	Period 7
2:35	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL	DISMISSAL

## GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT

Guidance services are available for every student at Central Middle School. Our counselors provide support for academic planning including helping interpret standardized test scores, understanding recommendations and choosing classes, as well as setting goals. They can also counsel students on personal issues related to school, such as managing stress or navigating social situations. In general, our counselors are here to listen and provide guidance on any of the problems middle school students may face. They work to ensure that every student feels supported and can succeed both academically and personally.

Students may make appointments to see their counselor by requesting an appointment with them at any time during the school day that is mutually agreed upon. An appointment can also be made before school and after school.

### Counselor Assignments

**Students in Grades 5-8 with a last name beginning with (A-K) are assigned to Mr. Robert Shelmire.**  
Mr Shelmire can be reached at 781-279-3840 x.2229 or by emailing him at [rshelmire@stonehamschools.org](mailto:rshelmire@stonehamschools.org)

**Students in Grades 5-8 with a last name beginning with (L-Z) are assigned to Ms. Colleen Martin.**  
Ms Martin can be reached at 781-279-3840 x.2228 or by emailing her at [cmartin@stonehamschools.org](mailto:cmartin@stonehamschools.org)

### 504 Accommodation Plan Management

Our guidance counselors are the individuals responsible for overseeing 504 Accommodation Plans in accordance with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This includes determining eligibility, plan development and implementation, monitoring and reviewing progress, working collaboratively with the student's team and ensuring compliance with legal requirements by maintaining all documentation.

### Private School Applications

Requests for private school applications should be made with your student's guidance counselor. Please allow 30 days to process any requests for private school applications to ensure all documents are completed before their deadline.

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

### Grade Reporting

Report cards are issued quarterly. The following dates indicate the last day of each quarter, with report cards being emailed to parents/caregivers approximately one week after the close of each marking period-

Quarter 1: October 31, 2025

Quarter 2/Semester 1: January 23, 2026

Quarter 3: April 3, 2026

Quarter 4/Semester 2: June 5, 2025 (tentatively)

Most courses are marked A, B, C, D or F, according to individual student achievement in each course, with an F designated as a failing grade. Additionally, the following grades are assigned to some courses:

P- Proficient

F- Failing to Meet Expectations

An "I" on a report card reflects an incomplete grade. Students are assigned this grade when they fail to complete graded assignments. Incomplete grades must be made up within two weeks of the closing date of the term, or the "I" could turn into a failing grade except in special cases approved by the principal.

Included on report cards are comments associated with each class that are intended to give a better understanding of the factors that contributed to a student's grade such as behavior and/or demonstrated effort. Absences may also be shown on each quarterly report as consistent attendance is critical towards academic achievement.

Transparency and two-way communication are invaluable tools that can enhance student learning. All students and parents/caregivers are encouraged to check PowerSchool regularly to maintain a general sense of academic progress. We encourage parents/caregivers to contact their student's teachers if they have questions or concerns about their student's academic performance. Teachers who have concerns about student achievement will reach out to parents/caregivers near the midpoint of each marking period.

## Promotion Guidelines

1. Expectations for promotion to the next grade level include the successful completion of English and two additional core subjects. Core subjects include English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science.
2. Any student who fails to meet promotion standards may be required to repeat the current grade level unless they successfully complete summer school requirements.
3. Any final decisions concerning promotion to the next grade level will be consistent with school committee policy and made collaboratively by parents, teachers/counselors & administration.

## Summer School

In order to be promoted to the next grade level, a student who has failed a core academic course for the year may make-up that course in summer school.

Decisions about which summer program offerings will be acceptable for credit towards grade level promotion will be made on an individual basis and consistent with school committee policy.

Permission to receive credit for any summer program must be obtained by the Middle School Principal prior to enrollment in any summer programming.

Only students who successfully complete summer school requirements with regard to attendance, work completion and demonstrated mastery of content will be re-considered for promotion to the next grade level.

## Homework

Homework is assigned as necessary to extend and reinforce learning outside of the classroom. As such, it is a shared responsibility among the student, teacher and families/caregivers. At Central Middle School we believe the purposes of homework include the following:

- to enhance student achievement;
- to help students become self-directed, responsible and independent learners; and
- to communicate with families about what is happening in the classroom.

Students who fail to complete assigned homework will be offered after school assistance to complete the assignment. When a student continually demonstrates an inability to complete homework assignments, the teacher may notify the student's parents in an effort to work

collaboratively towards identifying and implementing supports that will increase the student's capacity to complete assigned homework.

## HOMEWORK GUIDELINES

Homework is intended to build good study skills and work habits. It provides an opportunity for students to engage their time-management and executive functioning skills.

**Grade 5** – Assigned daily homework should not exceed a total of 20 minutes per day during the First Quarter of the school year. Teachers gradually increase their homework requirement to 30-45 minutes per day during Quarters Two through Four. Students in grade five are not assigned homework over the weekends.

**Grade 6** – Assigned daily homework should not exceed a total of 60-75 minutes per day, for all subjects combined.

**Grades 7 and 8** – Assigned daily homework should not exceed a total of 75-90 minutes per day, for all subjects combined.

It is recognized that not all students will take the same amount of time to do a given assignment. Teachers create homework assignments with an average rate of completion in mind and are committed to universally designing assignments that are appropriate for individual student abilities and needs.

At the beginning of each year, students are encouraged to find a “homework buddy” who shares the same classes. Thus, if obtaining assignments is desired during a period of absence, students can call their “homework buddy” to get assignments.

The office will assist in sending books home, but the responsibility for getting assignments rests with the students. In absences extending beyond one week, the office will assist in procuring assignments. Parents should notify the office when a student will be absent five days or more. Teachers need a twenty-four hour time period to prepare assignments.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES - HOMEWORK

1. To make every effort to understand completely the homework assigned and to know where to look to find daily, posted homework assignments.
2. To give their best effort by asking for more help when a particular subject is difficult to understand.
3. To plan their time appropriately so that all assignments can be completed without rushing.
4. To complete work fully and on time.

5. To make sure their Chromebook is charged both in order to complete nightly homework assignments and to ensure there is enough battery power to use their Chromebook throughout the next school day.

## GOOD STUDY HABITS

1. Create a study schedule. Determine specific times each day for homework completion and reviewing class material, and stick to it!
2. Organize study materials. Keeping things in order makes them easier to find and helps you complete work more efficiently. Using an agenda book or other means of tracking assignments is highly recommended.
3. Use active learning techniques that work for you, such as using flashcards or restating things in your own words, and remove distractions from your designated homework and study time.
4. Take regular breaks. Studying in focused intervals, for example 15-20 minutes, followed by a short break (2-3 minutes) helps maintain concentration and reduces fatigue.
5. Maintain healthy habits. Make getting enough sleep and physical activity a priority. Good physical health supports cognitive function.

## SUGGESTED PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To ensure that the student has a regular time and a quiet, comfortable, place in which to study that has adequate lighting.
2. To maintain a balance between a reasonable amount of time spent on homework, and an adequate amount of time for leisure and family activities.
3. To encourage the student to share their work with them, praise work well done, and encourage improvement in weak areas.
4. To encourage a positive attitude toward homework and model open communication with teachers.
5. To assist the student in doing homework, but not to complete the work for them.

## SUGGESTED TEACHER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. To ensure homework reinforces classroom instruction and aligns with curriculum standards, providing independent practice on concepts and skills.
2. To design assignments that encourage problem-solving and application of knowledge.
3. To provide clear instructions and expectations and to post assignments in an established manner so that students and parents/caregivers can locate them, should the need arise.
4. To incorporate a variety of universally designed tasks to cater to different learning styles.
5. To provide timely feedback by offering constructive feedback which allows students to understand their mistakes and learn from them, fostering continuous improvement.

## Extra Help

Students should seek extra help from their teachers if they do not understand an assignment, if the work is too difficult, or if they have been absent. Students should arrange a conference with their teacher before or after school or at a mutually convenient time during the school day, such as Activity Period.

A teacher will sometimes request that a student stays after school if it is apparent that the student is having difficulty with their work. This is not to be thought of as a punishment, but rather as the desire of the teacher to help the student make the necessary progress. The student is obligated to remain after school to receive help unless an important reason prevents them from doing so.

## Make-up Work

Students who are absent, for any reason, are required to make-up the work missed in each class. This work should take approximately the same time to complete as the time missed from each class. All make-up work must be submitted within a reasonable period of time and prior to the end of the marking period. A one day absence does not excuse a student from responsibility from all recitations on the day of their return. Grades may be withheld in cases where make-up work is not turned in to the teacher. If not resolved, this can lead to a failing grade for the quarter. It is the student's responsibility to obtain all make-up work from their teachers immediately upon return to school. Failure to obtain make-up work is an unacceptable excuse.

# STUDENT CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

## Student Behavioral Expectations

At Central Middle School we recognize that effective teaching and learning takes place in a school climate centered on respect and responsibility. We are dedicated to implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) in order to create a safe and supportive environment for all students. Through PBIS, we aim to foster positive relationships, promote academic success, and develop strong character traits in our students so that they are equipped to become productive members of their global community.

### PBIS VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is for all students at our middle school to feel valued, respected, and supported. We believe that by implementing PBIS, we can create a school culture where positive behavior is recognized and celebrated. Our goal is to empower students to make good choices and develop the skills they need to succeed in school and in life. We strive to create a community where students feel safe, supported, and inspired to reach their full potential.

### EXPLANATION

PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) is an evidence-based approach we can use to make our school a better place by improving school safety and promoting positive behaviors.

PBIS is based on the idea of setting clear expectations for behavior and teaching us what we should do in different situations. For example, we might already know that it's important to be respectful to our teachers and classmates, but we need to be taught what respect looks like in practice- such as the ability to follow directions the first time or to use kind words when we talk to each other. By knowing what's expected of us, we can then begin to work together to create a positive and safe learning environment by meeting those expectations.

Another big part of PBIS is the idea that when we are recognized for positive behavior, we are more likely to repeat that behavior in the future. To that end, we publicly acknowledge the positive interactions staff members observe daily by celebrating our Star Students each month. These awards are designed to help students recognize that their behavior is appreciated and encourages them to keep being the best versions of themselves.

### APPLICATION

Throughout the school Spartan Spirit matrices are posted. These matrices are roadmaps to help you understand what behaviors are expected in the various parts of the school. They should serve as visual reminders of what interacting respectfully and responsibly looks like in different situations. All staff members at CMS are familiar with the matrix and positively reinforce these expectations using this common language.

# SPARTAN SPIRIT MATRIX

	<b>Classrooms</b> 	<b>Cafeteria</b> 	<b>Hallways</b> 	<b>Bathrooms</b> 	<b>Stairways</b> 	<b>Assemblies</b> 
<b>Respect for Ourselves</b>	I am actively engaged in learning in my classes.	I maintain physical boundaries for myself.	I keep my belongings safe by locking them in my locker.	I use proper hygiene and remember to wash my hands.	I move slowly and safely.	I am an active listener and participant.
<b>Respect for Others</b>	I treat people kindly and am mindful of our differences.	I am aware of personal space and volume levels.	I am aware of personal space and volume levels.	I give other people privacy.	I keep my hands and feet to myself.	I give my attention to the presenter.
<b>Respect for Community</b>	I make sure my verbal & nonverbal contributions are positive.	I keep my area clean and cooperate with adult instructions.	I pick things up when I drop them on the floor.	I keep the facilities clean and in good working order.	I stay to my right and move in a single file to avoid "traffic jams".	I enter and exit quietly and orderly.
<b>Responsibility</b>	I bring and maintain everything I need to be successful.	I ask for permission to leave the cafe.	I face forward and stay to my right.	I use the closest bathroom and return to class quickly.	I am gracious and courteous during "traffic jams".	I sit where I am directed and follow adult instructions.
<b>Creative Problem Solving</b>	I am willing to take risks when faced with a challenge.	I am inclusive and thoughtful in my interactions.	I manage my time and materials well.	I remove myself from uncomfortable situations.	I avoid physical and verbal conflict during "traffic jams".	I help students or staff members in need of assistance.
<b>Competent Decision Making</b>	I manage my time and stay on task.	I make healthy choices.	I have a pass to be in the hallway during class time.	I stay off of electronic devices.	I take the most direct route to my destination.	I come prepared with any necessary materials.

## NATURAL CONSEQUENCES

A PBIS system designed around meeting clear expectations can not be complete without an adherence to the belief that there are equally clear consequences when those expectations are not met. At Central Middle School we believe the goal of discipline is to build character, guide social interactions and help students develop self control by implementing natural consequences when students do not meet expectations. It is our sincere hope that in issuing any consequences, they serve to inform our students on ways in which they can improve and make better decisions in the future.

## Disciplinary Practices

Students requiring disciplinary action will be referred to the Principal or Assistant Principal. The Administration at Central Middle School believes in an approach to discipline that incorporates both progressive disciplinary measures and restorative practices. This approach forms an integrated model for disciplining adolescents by emphasizing both accountability and personal growth. Progressive discipline involves a step-by-step approach where consequences for misbehavior become progressively more severe if the behavior persists, ensuring that students understand the impact of their actions and the importance of following rules. Restorative practices complement this by focusing on repairing harm and rebuilding relationships through open dialogue, mediation, and community involvement. Together, they foster a supportive environment where students learn from their mistakes, develop empathy, and actively contribute to a positive school culture.

## Detention

A detention session is assigned to students who do not meet expectations during any part of the school day (in classes, during transitions in the hallway, etc.). If students receive detention, they must report as directed by the staff member assigning the detention. Students are responsible for notifying their parents when they are assigned a detention, but staff members may also communicate home when detentions are assigned as well. Students may be asked to perform community service activities in and around the school building during detentions.

Detention is most effective at decreasing unacceptable behavior when it is immediate, enforced and meaningfully executed. It is for these reasons that we expect parents and caregivers to keep their requests for deferring detentions to a minimum. In cases where a student detention poses a significant burden to a parent or caregiver, they may provide a written or verbal explanation of the reason(s) their student is unable to attend a detention session.

If a student fails to return for an assigned detention, the student will be referred to Administration to serve an office detention and an additional detention may be assigned. Office detentions may

occur after school or during lunch, at the discretion of Administration. If a student continues to miss detention without a valid excuse, their parents will be notified by the Assistant Principal.

## Discipline Warranting Administrative Action

In instances of egregious behavior, students may be immediately referred to Administration for disciplinary action. Such behaviors may include, but are not limited to:

- Direct insubordination following a warning by a teacher, such insubordination shall include:
  - Refusal to obey a reasonable request
  - Talking back
  - Swearing or the use of otherwise inappropriate language
  - Refusal to complete classwork in class
- Threatening to use or resorting to violence
- Use or possession of any tobacco products or vaping products
  - Cigarettes, lighters, or any tobacco or vaping products will be confiscated and not returned
- Defacing school property
- Fighting and/or horseplay
- Truancy
- Disruption of the learning environment
- Being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or other illegal substances
- Stealing
- Any act which the teacher justifiably considers intolerable
- Possession of a weapon whether real or imitation
- Possession of drugs or alcohol
- Bullying, teasing, harassment\* (Please see bullying and teasing chart on page 26)
- Students are not allowed in the parking area during school hours or during school functions unless under the direction of a staff member.
- Note passing that contains concerning content
- Possession of items used for gambling or lottery purposes is prohibited.
- Public displays of affection

## Consideration of Suspension

Students with serious or continual infractions of school regulations may be considered for suspension. Such violations of school policy may include, but are not limited to:

- Possession of any tobacco products, vaping products or facsimile thereof within school buildings, the school facilities, on school grounds, or on school buses
- Gambling, including card playing, dice, betting, lotteries, etc.

- Possession of items that administration deem inappropriate for school
- Fighting in the school building or on the school grounds or to and from school
- Truancy from classes
- Vandalism, graffiti or “tagging”
- Disrespect shown towards other students, faculty members, and/or other employees
- Stealing
- Disruption of the learning environment
- Possession or consumption of alcohol in school, at any school function or at any Stoneham School District function
- In school, at any school function or at any Stoneham School District Function while intoxicated or under the influence of drugs
- Using, selling or in possession of drugs in school, on school grounds, at any school function or at any Stoneham School District function
- Repeated failure to report to a detention or the office when instructed by a teacher
- Activating a fire alarm pull station unjustifiably
- Using crude, vulgar, or obscene language/gesture on school grounds
- Improper behavior while on a field trip or while representing the school off campus
- Setting off firecrackers on school grounds
- Teasing, bullying, harassing or threatening fellow students
- Sexual Harassment
- Possession of a weapon, whether real or imitation
- Possession of a cigarette lighter or any other incendiary device
- Throwing food or other objects in the cafeteria
- Instigating, encouraging or being part of a group that encourages a fight
- Writing any threatening or offensive notes, lists, texts, or social media posts in school or relating to school
- Recording, videotaping, or photographing anyone during the school day or during school related events without permission.
- Significant infractions regarding cell phone usage.
- Planning a fight during school that is to take place after school hours or off school property.
- Planning the sale or distribution of illegal contraband during school hours.
- Creating a profile for staff members and/or students and developing false websites
- Lying to administrators or falsely reporting serious incidents
- Sending or receiving inappropriate text messages photos or voice messages
- Posting pictures and names of staff members on websites without permission
- Throwing snow or other objects deemed hazardous on school property
- Continued violation of the Dress Code
- Abusive language
- Refusing an Administrator’s request
- Disrupting school safety drills

- Disrupting school assemblies, enrichment programs or field trips
- Violation or refusal to comply with any health code requirements put forth by the state or school district

## Suspension Proceedings

In the event a student is accused of committing a suspendable offense, they are entitled to a hearing before the Principal and/or Assistant Principal, at which time the student will be given notice of the charges. The student will have an opportunity to explain what happened. Following an investigation, the Principal and/or Assistant Principal will determine the student's culpability. If warranted, they will be suspended out of school for up to ten days.

Immediate suspension of a student may be made by the Principal or the Assistant Principal for the general welfare of other students, the efficiency of the school, the safety of others in the school, the protection of school property or the orderly conduct of classes.

Students shall be afforded due process of law both preceding and following suspension in compliance with federal and state laws, regulations and court decisions. [See Student Discipline Regulations 603 CMR 53]

The parents of a suspended student may initiate an appeal and review of the action of a suspension to the Superintendent and, in certain cases, may carry an appeal to the School Committee at its next regular meeting.

In general, it should be remembered that whatever is a violation of the law outside of school is also a violation of school regulations.

While on disciplinary dismissal or suspension, a student loses all non-academic school privileges. They are barred from participation in all school activities, including athletic contests and social affairs. They may not re-enter the school or be present on school grounds until they have been re-admitted to school by the Principal or Assistant Principal.

It is the student's responsibility to make up missed work while on suspension.

## Serious Misconduct

Persistent misbehavior may result in significant disciplinary action including suspension and possible recommendation to the School Committee for expulsion.

## Special Education Disciplinary Guidelines

All students are expected to meet the expectations for behavior and discipline as set forth in this handbook; however, additional considerations are made in order to be compliant with special education regulations.

### INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of students receiving special education services.

The Stoneham Public Schools carefully monitors and documents all student suspensions. The district has a procedure to record the number and duration of suspensions from any part of the student's program, including suspensions from special transportation prescribed by the IEP. The following procedures are followed when a student receiving special education services is suspended:

1. Students receiving special education services and their parents receive advance written notice regarding the School's Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook.
2. Within the Student Handbook, procedural safeguards are included and explained.
3. When a student on an IEP has committed a disciplinary offense, the school principal or his or her designee notifies the Student Services Office immediately (before any disciplinary action is issued) and consults on discipline and special education regulations. After the consultation the school personnel complete the "Stoneham Public Schools Special Education Discipline Notification."
4. When it appears that the number of suspensions from this disciplinary offense will approach six to eight days or it appears that a pattern has developed regarding suspensions:
  - a. The Principal and Student Service Director review the legal and procedural requirements, as well as potential procedure for manifestation determination.
  - b. The Special Education Coordinator may reconvene the IEP Team to determine if an amendment to the IEP is necessary.
5. A copy of the letter of suspension is provided to the Student Services Office which in turn provides a copy to the Special Education Coordinator.
6. Both the school and the Office of Student Services monitor the number of total days of suspension for each student during the year.
7. When a student in special education may potentially be suspended for more than 10 days, Stoneham Public Schools follows the procedures outlined below.

The Student Services Office informs the Principal of the result of the Manifestation Determination in writing using the Stoneham Manifestation Determination form.

## MANIFESTATION DETERMINATION

### Suspensions beyond 10 days

The suspension of a student on an IEP for longer than 10 consecutive days or a series of suspensions that are shorter than 10 days, but constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement. Prior to a change in placement of a student with disabilities and within 10 days, a team consisting of essential members of the IEP Team (including parents and/or student) and other staff as appropriate, must convene to hold a Manifestation Determination. The Team must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, teacher observations, and any relevant information from the parents to determine whether the behavior was caused by or had a direct and substantial relationship to the disability or was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP. If the behavior was the direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP the LEA must take immediate steps to remedy those deficiencies.

As part of the Manifestation Determination specific questions are asked and answered by the IEP Team members (e.g. Does the student understand the impact and consequences of their behavior? Can the student control their behavior? Is the current placement appropriate?). At the end of the discussion a manifestation decision is made by the Team and the Stoneham Manifestation form is completed.

### Behavior that is NOT a Manifestation

If the IEP Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the student's disability, the student can be suspended or expelled consistent with Stoneham's policies and practices for suspending any student. However, the district must provide 1) services to enable the student, although in another setting, to continue to participate in the general education curriculum and to progress toward IEP goals; and 2) as appropriate provide functional behavior intervention services and modifications, to address the behavior so that it does not reoccur.

### Behavior that IS a Manifestation

If the IEP Team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the student's disability, then the district will take the following steps with parental consent: 1) Revise the IEP if deemed appropriate; 2) Change the student's placement if deemed appropriate by the IEP team; 3) Conduct an FBA and develop/revise the Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) if it has not already done so; 4) Unless the student has been placed in an Interim Alternative Educational Setting (see below) the student returns to the the original placement unless the district and parents agree otherwise or a hearing officer orders a new placement. The student does NOT serve more than the 10 days of suspension.

## WRITTEN NOTICE

Not later than the date of the decision to take disciplinary action, the school district notifies the parents of that decision and provides them with the written notice of procedural safeguards. If the parent chooses to appeal or the school district requests a hearing because it believes that maintaining the student's current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others, the student remains in the disciplinary placement, if any, until the decision of the hearing officer or the end of the time period for the disciplinary action, whichever comes first, unless the parent and the school district agree otherwise.

## INTERIM ALTERNATIVE EDUCATIONAL SETTING (IAES)

Regardless of the results of the Manifestation Determination, the district may decide to place the student in an interim alternative educational setting determined by the Team for a period of up to 45 days: 1) on its own authority if the behavior involves weapons or illegal drugs or another controlled substance or the infliction of serious bodily injury on another person while at school or a school function or, considered case by case, unique circumstances; or 2) on the authority of a hearing officer if the officer orders the alternative placement after the district provides evidence that the student is "substantially likely" to injure themselves or others. The placement of a student in an interim alternative education setting enables the student to have access to the general curriculum, to continue to receive special education support as outlined on the student's IEP, and to provide support services to address the problematic behavior.

## Bullying/Teasing

Bullying is another name for harassment. It can be direct or indirect, and have serious emotional and/or physical effects on its victims. The bullying behavior chart included in this handbook describes behaviors that will NOT be tolerated here at Central Middle School. Bullying and teasing are unacceptable in our school environment as they violate both Central Middle School's Core Values as well as the provisions of MGL Chapter 71, Section 37O. All students are encouraged to report any form of harassment to school personnel, as it is the school's top priority to protect all individual students. Please reference the Stoneham School District Bullying Plan located on the school website for further information.

Acts of cyberbullying are also prohibited. Cyberbullying is defined as 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, social media messages and/or posts and Internet postings.

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

<b>Physical</b> Harm to another's body or property		<b>Emotional</b> Harm to another's self-worth		<b>Social</b> Harm to another's groups acceptance		
	Verbal/ Written	Nonverbal	Verbal/ Written	Nonverbal	Verbal/ Written	Nonverbal
<b>L E V E L 1</b>	Taunting, expressing physical superiority	Making threatening gestures, defacing property, pushing/shoving. taking small items from others.	Insulting remarks, calling names, teasing about possessions, clothes, saying someone has germs or is unclean.	Giving dirty looks, holding one's nose or other insulting gestures	Gossiping. Starting/spreading rumors. Teasing publicly about clothes, looks etc.	Passively not including others in the group. Playing mean tricks
<b>L E V E L 2</b>	Threatening physical harm. Blaming targeted student	Damaging property. Stealing. Initiating fights, Scratching. Tripping or causing a fall. Assaulting	Insulting family. Harassing with phone calls. Insulting intelligence, athletic ability, etc.	Defacing school work. Falsifying schoolwork. Defacing personal property, clothing etc.	Insulting race, gender. Increasing gossip/rumors . Undermining other relationships	Making someone look foolish. Excluding from the group
<b>L E V E L 3</b>	Making repeated and/or graphic threats. Practicing extortion. Making threats to assure silence "If you tell, I will..."	Destroying property. Setting fires. Biting. Physical cruelty. Making repeated violent, threatening gestures, Assaulting with a weapon	Frightening with phone calls. Challenging in public	Ostracizing. Destroying personal property or clothing	Threatening total group exclusion	Arranging public humiliation. Total group rejection/ ostracizing

## Cheating/Plagiarism

Cheating refers to the giving or receiving of information in anything evaluated as the student's own work. Teachers have been instructed in such cases to send the student to the office and to record an "F" for that item of work with the opportunity to make-up the assignment for partial credit. The Assistant Principal may also assign detentions at their discretion, as the situation warrants. The classroom teacher will inform parents of the incident. If a student is caught copying another student's work with the second student's consent, the same policy will be followed for both students.

If any student is found to commit cheating/plagiarism on more than one occasion, then an "F" will be recorded by the teacher for a grade and there will be no opportunity for the student to make-up the assignment. The Assistant Principal will assign detentions for repeated offenses and will contact the parent about the incidents.

## Drugs, Alcohol and Illegal Substances

Students who attend school or school events under the influence of drugs or alcohol will face serious action, including an immediate conference with parents, arrangements for appropriate counseling, and when necessary, suspension. When a student brings a problem concerning the misuse of drugs or alcohol to any staff member, it will be kept confidential and help will be provided. However, possession of illegal drugs in school must result, by law, in referral for action by local police officials. Attending school events under the influence of alcohol or drugs will result in loss of all social privileges as well as the actions mentioned above.

## MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

The following statement is made and agreed to by the Stoneham School Department as part of the procedures outlined in the Governor's Alliance against Drugs program.

We agree to coordinate our efforts to prevent student alcohol and drug abuse and will handle each case in accordance with established school and police department procedures. Students engaged in the sale of drugs will be referred to police for legal action.

All evidence will be turned over to the police according to established procedures. The School Department will deal with students caught abusing drugs according to the rules outlined in the student handbook. School officials will continue to use the resources of the Police Department for suggestions on how to deal with certain situations and/or individuals.

We acknowledge jointly that this type of informal liaison has been in place for several years.

It is understood that consultations with the Police Department will not always produce an arrest even where possession and/or sale is suspected. However, school personnel must be aware that a student's communication is not "privileged" communication; and a teacher may be subpoenaed should a case go to trial.

In the case of an arrestable offense, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The student will be brought to the Principal's office.
2. The student will be interviewed by the Principal or designee and told the nature of the offense.
3. Parents will be contacted and asked to come to school to meet with authorities (school, police, or both)
4. The Police Department will be contacted and appropriate police procedure will be put in place.
5. A full report will be sent to the Superintendent of Schools and the Chief of Police by the Principal.

All schools will continue to report trespassers to the Police Department in order to ensure the safety of all students.

This memorandum solidifies the informal working relationship that has existed between the Stoneham Public Schools and the Stoneham Police Department for a number of years.

## **Hate Speech**

Stoneham Public Schools strives to prevent harassment and discrimination based upon a student's race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. Slurs of any kind will not be tolerated.

The Northeastern Center for the Study of Sport in Society defines the term "slur" as follows-

*Slur: A pejorative word or phrase, slur, or derogatory term is a word or grammatical form expressing a negative or a disrespectful connotation, a low opinion, or a lack of respect toward someone or something. It is also used to express criticism, hostility, or disregard*

*Ethnic Slur: A term designed to insult others on the basis of race, ethnicity, or nationality.*

If it is determined that a student is using slurs, the possible consequences could range from a parent conference to suspension.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is defined as an unwelcome sexual advance, sexually motivated physical conduct or other verbal or physical conduct, or communication of a sexual nature. This behavior will not be tolerated.

Incidents of sexual harassment may include:

- Verbal harassment, such as derogatory comments, jokes, slurs, or
- Remarks/questions of a sexual nature
- Physical harassment, such as unnecessary or offensive touching.

If it is determined that a student has sexually harassed another student or staff member, the possible consequences could range from parent conference to suspension.

## Bomb Threats

Please be aware that a bomb hoax is a felony, punishable by imprisonment of up to twenty years in state prison (Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 269, Section 14). Such a sentence also removes from the convicted individual the right to be a state or federal employee in all cases where evidence - electronic or other - exists. The school and local police will not hesitate to bring forward any such charges. Apathy toward emergency drills and disruption of classes are among the most serious threats to the safety and education of students.

## Pulling a Fire Alarm

The Stoneham Fire Department does not accept or excuse "accidentally" activating a fire alarm. Anyone who activates the fire alarm unjustifiably can expect action to be taken by the Fire Department as well as school administration. Apathy toward fire drills and disruption of classes are among the most serious threats to the safety and education of students.

## Harassing Communications, "Cranking"

Please be aware that it is a crime under both federal and state laws for anyone to make/send obscene or harassing phone calls or electronic communications. If students or parents/caregivers receive a communication from anyone representing themselves as a school employee that they do not believe to be genuine, they may contact school administration to verify the authenticity of the communication.

## School Buses

Students who access school bus transportation are subject to school rules while riding the bus. Riding on a school bus is a privilege which may be suspended whenever a student's behavior on the bus is unacceptable. Severe or continuous misbehavior may result in permanent suspension of bus privileges.

Students who access bus transportation should remember that they are under the school's jurisdiction from the time they leave home in the morning until they arrive home in the afternoon. Thus, conduct at bus stops as well as on the bus is subject to school rules.

### SCHOOL BUS BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

The following rules apply to those students who take the bus to/from school as well as for any field trips or activities where students are transported by Stoneham Public Schools (ie. school bus or Sparty Van).

1. No student may do anything which will disturb or distract the driver from the safe operation of the vehicle.
2. Smoking or use of any tobacco products is forbidden at all times.
3. There must be no horseplay or roughhousing of any sort.
4. Any injuries sustained on the bus, however slight, should be reported to the driver immediately.
5. Students must not open any windows, or doors, on the bus without the driver's permission.
6. There can be no "saving" or reserving of seats on the buses.

### SCHOOL BUS SAFE RIDING PRACTICES AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

In accordance with Chapter 878 of the acts of 1975 General Laws of Massachusetts, each student transported in a school bus will receive classroom instruction in safe riding practices, and participate at least twice each year in "on-bus" emergency evacuation drills.

## SCHOOL PROCEDURES

### Backpacks

Backpacks, book bags, etc. are not allowed to be carried from class to class. Students are encouraged to use a backpack to transport belongings to and from school; however, backpacks will remain in lockers or cubbies during the school day. Team teachers will establish a locker schedule that will allow students to access their books & materials at various times throughout the day.

### Cell Phones and Electronic Devices

The use of cell phones and other electronic devices including earbuds, headphones, etc. are prohibited unless they are medically necessary and/or permission is received from the building Principal. Smart watches may be worn, provided they are being used as a watch and not as a communication device. Texting and making calls during the school day are prohibited, including communicating with parents/caregivers. Students needing to contact parents for urgent reasons may do so by accessing the phone in the main office. **All cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and locked in lockers.**

Misuse of any electronic device may result in the following progressive disciplinary action:

- First offense- student may retrieve their cell phone/device from the staff member who confiscated the item at the end of the school day.
- Second offense- student may retrieve their cell phone/device from the Assistant Principal at the end of the school day.
- Third offense- the student's parent/caregiver may retrieve the cell phone/device from the Assistant Principal at the end of the school day.
- Continued violations will result in increasingly severe consequences.

This policy extends to any school activity including after school clubs and field trips.

### Dress Code

We, as a school community, believe that education is a serious and important business. It is our responsibility to see that nothing disturbs the educational process. Historically, the dress of our students has added a positive attitude and businesslike atmosphere to the total school environment.

We recognize that there is room for individual differences in dress within the necessary limitations prescribed by academic surroundings and good taste.

1. Our premise has been that the school is the student's place of business and, therefore, dress is expected to be in good taste, appropriate for academic work, and consistent with safety standards.
2. If the administration determines a student's dress causes them to be a distraction to the educational process of the school, they will be sent to the office and will not be admitted to class until more appropriately attired. Students will not be allowed to attend classes until a parent is called and a change of clothing is brought to the school.
3. Only footwear conducive to a businesslike manner will be acceptable. Shoe laces are to be tied at all times. Flip-flops, slides and slippers are not acceptable footwear.
4. Beach attire, pajamas, tank tops, shirts that expose the midriff, spaghetti straps, halter tops and sunglasses (without a doctor's note) are not considered appropriate for the classroom. Shorts, skirts, (or skorts), and dresses must exceed the length of the fingertips when arms are relaxed down by the student's side. Be mindful that clothing should cover the body and not distract from the learning process. For this reason, stockings such as fishnets and transparent clothing that reveal undergarments are unacceptable. Also, tee shirts/items which promote drugs, alcohol or tobacco, or tee shirts/items with crude or offensive language are inappropriate attire for school. Logos must be age- appropriate. For example, attire (including jewelry, pocketbooks, and bags) with the "Playboy Bunny" and "Hooters" logos are not age-appropriate.
5. Pants must be worn so as not to expose under clothing such as boxer shorts.
6. Students are not allowed to wear hats or hoods in school.
7. Outerwear jackets should not be worn during the school day.

## Drugs and Alcohol

Central Middle School has been designated as a Drug Free Zone. The School Administration, in cooperation with the Stoneham Police Department, stands firm in our belief that all schools should remain drug free. We have been entrusted with the responsibility of providing a safe and drug free environment for all of our students.

## Food and Beverages

Water bottles are the only food and beverage item allowed to travel with a student during the school day. Other food and beverages are allowed in the cafeteria only. Further information regarding food in classrooms can be found in Stoneham School Committee Policy 6-23.1

## Lockers

Student lockers are school property and remain at all times under the control of the school. School authorities, for any reason, may conduct periodic general inspections of lockers at any time without notice, without student consent, and without a search warrant. Such locker searches may be in conjunction with canine searches of the building that would be done in cooperation with the Stoneham Police Department. If a canine search of any locker results in drugs or alcohol being confiscated, the student to whom the locker is assigned will be brought to the office to explain the presence of such contraband. Rules concerning the possession of contraband would be enforced by the School Administration. All contraband would be turned over to the Stoneham Police for possible legal action.

### LOCKER SECURITY

Each student at Central Middle School is assigned a locker. Students will be provided a combination lock to secure their belongings. Students are expected to assume full responsibility for the security of their lockers by using the school issued lock. There will be a five dollar charge for any locks that are damaged or lost.

***Remember: Individual lockers are school property and are subject to search and entry by school administrators if there is reasonable suspicion to conduct a search.***

The following practices with respect to lockers should be strictly followed:

- Keep the combination to your locker secret.
- Never store money or valuables in your locker.
- All backpacks must be in the same width and depth as your locker. Empty out your backpack each day so that your locker closes. Keep your locker neat and clean, so that it will not become jammed or stuck.
- Students may only use one locker. The sharing of lockers or storing of items in friends' lockers will not be allowed.
- At no time is a student allowed in any other student's locker. We expect students to respect the property and privacy of others.
- Do not leave your lock open at any time! The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Each student is also assigned a gym locker and a school combination lock for which they are responsible. Gym locks and lockers are subject to the same policies outlined above.

## Physical Education Requirement

All students must participate in physical education. It is urged that the student visit their family doctor for a complete physical examination before entering school. If any limitation is to be placed on participation in physical education, a doctor's note, including limitations and time frame, must be presented to the school nurse in order for the student to be excused from physical education. The statement will be made part of the student's record. If participation is limited in physical education classes, students will still be expected to attend gym classes. Students may participate by completing written assignments prepared and graded by their physical education teachers. A note from a parent or guardian must be presented to the health office if, for some reason, a student can not participate in a single physical education class. That class should be made up within a reasonable amount of time.

In order to maintain the safety of our students during physical education classes, students are expected to wear supportive sneakers with laces and clothing that allows for a full range of movement. Further, clothing should not have lots of zippers, pockets, or other ornamentation which may pose an unnecessary risk of injuries to students engaged in physical activities.

Students are expected to store their belongings in the lockers in the locker rooms. Each student is given an individual combination padlock for their gym locker, which should be kept on their locker and locked at all times.

## Search Protocol

Warrant and probable cause requirements of the Fourth Amendment that generally apply to police-initiated searches do not apply to searches conducted by school personnel (even when assisted by the police). School authorities only need reasonable grounds for suspecting that a search will reveal evidence of a violation of law or school rules. Canine units would only be used upon the request of the School Department.

School administrators may search students and student possessions, including, but not limited to backpacks and pocketbooks, if possession of contraband is suspected. Such searches may be made during the school day or at any school sponsored functions.

## Social Media

The Administrative team, faculty and School Council recognize the draw of social media for emerging adolescents, but see the daily challenges and issues created by it. Therefore, we do not recommend that middle school students use online social media sites, such as SnapChat, TikTok, Instagram and others. We advise parents to monitor their student's online activities and have regular

discussions with them about their interactions and experiences. If students receive or view any messages or sites that make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe, we recommend that you turn the device off and do not allow them to return to those sites, and/or block relevant pages/users. If your child receives any messages that are threatening in any way, please seek guidance from local law enforcement officials. If a communication poses a specific threat during the school day or on school property, you should notify a school administrator as soon as possible.

## **Tardiness**

Students are dismissed to homerooms from either the cafeteria or the gymnasium at 7:50 AM. Any student not present and accounted for in their homeroom at 8:00AM when the homeroom bell rings is considered tardy.

For unexcused tardies students will receive a grace period of three (3) occurrences quarterly before being issued a consequence. Upon the fourth instance of tardiness in any quarterly marking period, students who are tardy will receive a lunch detention for each subsequent instance of tardiness. Tardies can be excused by a doctor's note or an extreme family situation that is acknowledged by administrators.

## **Toys and Disruptive Items**

The use of water pistols, toys, laser pointers, noisy/disruptive fidget items and other items inappropriate for school are not allowed. Such items will be confiscated by the teacher or other staff member and given to the Assistant Principal. A parent/caregiver may retrieve any item within the next five school days, after such time the item will be discarded. It is the student's responsibility to inform their parents/caregivers if they wish to have an item returned.

## **Video Surveillance**

The corridors, stairwells, cafeteria and other areas inside and outside of the building are monitored by video surveillance cameras.

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS & CAREGIVERS

### Attendance Requirement

School attendance is required by law (MGL, c.76 § 1) until an individual reaches age sixteen. It is the policy of Stoneham Public Schools that absence is allowed only by reason of illness/medical necessity, bereavement, or major religious observance. Other than these stated reasons, a student may be considered truant. A medical note is required in order to excuse a student for reasons of illness or other medical necessity. Other absences may be deemed excusable at the discretion of the Principal.

December, February and April vacations are included in the school calendar. Family vacations while school is in session are strongly discouraged and will not be excused absences. Should a student miss school because of a vacation, make-up work will be assigned upon their return and must be completed in a reasonable amount of time upon their return in order to receive credit.

To review the Stoneham Public Schools Attendance Policy in its entirety, please visit the [District Policy](#) section of this handbook.

**If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please contact the main office prior to the absence. Parents should call the school at (781) 279-3840 to report a student's absence by leaving a voicemail with the student's name, grade, reason for absence and date of absence.**

### FAMILY OUTREACH AND INTERVENTION

Consistent school attendance is essential to academic success. As such, the Central Middle School Administration is committed to ensuring all students can attend school regularly and on time. If the Administration's attempts at family outreach and intervention are unsuccessful, further action may be warranted.

A truancy CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) may be filed if a student exhibits chronic absenteeism. MGL c. 76 § 1 defines excessive absences as seven (7) or more absences in a six month period. Additionally, a truancy CRA may be filed for habitual tardiness. Please be advised that four (4) tardies is equal to one (1) absence. The Administration in conjunction with Stoneham Public Schools Supervisor of Attendance continually monitor and identify students who may need interventions from the Department of Children and Families, the Juvenile Court System or other outside providers. Further, if students demonstrate chronic tardiness and/or absenteeism, they may not be permitted to attend any social events and/or extra-curricular activities.

## Dismissing Students

In order to ensure regular attendance for all classes, dismissing students is to be discouraged unless absolutely necessary. Appointments that cannot happen outside of school hours should be kept to a minimum. The following guidelines are applicable when dismissing students from school-

- When a student needs to be dismissed from school, written notice of such should be provided.
  - Dismissal notes should be delivered to the school secretary and must contain the following information: student's first name, last name, homeroom, time of dismissal, reason for dismissal and parent signature.
- Students may only be released to adults that are expressly stated as having this permission on Student Emergency Contact forms. Please review and update this information as necessary at the beginning of each school year.
  - Adults dismissing students will enter the main office to meet the student.
- Dismissing students after 2:00 PM poses challenges due to the proximity to the end of the school day. We kindly request that you do not dismiss your child after 2:00 PM.
- Please be advised that a student dismissed before 11:00 AM is considered absent for the day unless the student returns to school prior to the end of the school day.

## Change of Address

Please notify the office if you change your address **within** the Town of Stoneham. You are required to submit a new proof of residency and occupancy to the school office. We can not change your address without the proper paperwork.

## Withdrawals and Transfers

The procedure for withdrawal from the school or transferring is as follows:

1. Secure an authorized withdrawal or transfer note from your parent or guardian at least one week before you plan to withdraw or transfer.
2. Obtain appropriate forms from the principal's office before school on your last day.
3. Have the forms filled out by teachers, return all school books and property, and make sure all fees are paid.
4. Take completed forms to the principal's office for final clearance.

## Health Services

The mission of the health service department is to provide comprehensive school health services to Stoneham Public School students. We promote the health and well being of our students so that they can remain in the classroom and be ready to learn. We collaborate with parents/guardians and staff to provide an improvement in our student's physical, social and emotional health. Each school in the Stoneham Public Schools has a full time registered nurse(s). It is the responsibility of the caregiver to inform the school nurse of any health condition that may impact their child while at school. It is the responsibility of the school nurse, working with parents/guardians, teachers, and other staff, to develop individualized health care plans for any student who has a significant health care need.

### PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS OF STUDENTS

Physical examinations are required within one year prior to entrance to school or within 30 days after school entry and at intervals of either three or four years thereafter, such as during kindergarten, 4th grade, 7th grade and 10th grade. A student transferred from another school system shall be examined as an entering student. Health records transferred from the student's previous school may be used to determine compliance with this requirement.

### IMMUNIZATIONS OF STUDENTS

Students entering school for the first time, whether at kindergarten or through transfer from another school system, will be required to present an immunization certificate or record that indicates they have been immunized according to state requirements for school entry (MGL c.76, §15). The only exception to these requirements will be made on receipt of a written statement from a doctor that immunization is contraindicated due to a medical condition; or, the student's caregiver provides a written statement that immunization is contrary to the religious beliefs of the caregiver or student. Following the recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, students who are not in compliance with the immunization requirements for school entry, will be excluded from school until the appropriate documentation is received.

### EMERGENCY FORMS

An emergency form is sent home the first week of school. Please provide the school with multiple emergency contacts. Emergency information must be accurate and up to date for student safety. Caregivers must keep the school nurse informed of any changes to the emergency form. Changes can include alternate emergency contact people, phone numbers, street addresses, medications, new allergies or medical conditions.

### ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO STUDENTS

Students may not carry medicine (prescription or otherwise) with them during the school day. The following guidelines apply to the distribution of medication-

- A written permission form signed by the PCP and parent/caregiver is required for medications to be given at school.

- All medication orders must be renewed at the beginning of each academic school year.
- Medications must be in a pharmacy or manufacturer-labeled container.
  - Please ask the pharmacy to provide a separate bottle for school with no more than a 30 day supply. Parents/caregivers must bring the medication to the school nurse.
- We must have written permission to dispense any medication to students such as ibuprofen, acetaminophen, etc.

## HEALTH RECORDS

All students entering the school system must provide the school with immunization records, or copies, which meet the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. Proof of a comprehensive physical examination within the past six months is required. It is the responsibility of the caregiver to provide current immunization records and a copy of the most recent physical exam. The health record is considered a temporary record and it is the practice of the Stoneham Public Schools that if a student transfers to another school district, the paper record, and any pertinent electronic record, will be transferred directly to the receiving nurse. The original health record may also be given to the caregiver at the time of transfer. An electronic copy of the immunization record will be kept. Health records are maintained separately from student educational records and there is no access to the records by anyone other than the school nurse.

## HEALTH SCREENINGS

Regular state mandated screenings are conducted in the following grades:

- Postural - Grades 5-8
- Vision -Grades 5, 7
- Hearing- Grade 6
- BMI- Grade 7
- SBIRT- Grades 7

If a referral is necessary, the school nurse will inform the caregiver in writing. It is the responsibility of the caregiver to schedule the appropriate referral and to provide follow-up information to the school nurse. Parents/guardians are encouraged to contact the school nurse for assistance.

Parents/guardians may opt their children out of any screening with written notification to the school nurse

## STUDENT ILLNESS OR INJURY

- A doctor's note is required of all students who may need the temporary assistance of crutches, wheelchairs, etc. during the school day.
- When a student returns to school after a prolonged absence (ten days or more), they must report to the nurse's office first and receive an admittance form.
- In case of an emergency during the school day, school personnel may call 911, alert parents, and work together with first responders as directed.

## Visitors

All visitors to Central Middle School are subject to any policy guidelines as outlined in Stoneham Public Schools District Safety Regulations.

The school policy is to accept only those visitors who have legitimate business to attend to at the school. Parents are always welcome. Parents and visitors must register at the front office. Please be advised, you will be required to submit your license to be run through our RAPTOR system. A visitor badge will be given and **MUST** be worn while you are in the building. Please check out in the front office before leaving the building.

Before and after school, teachers are frequently engaged in extra-help or make-up sessions with students. We suggest that parents schedule appointments with teachers in advance if they wish to meet with a teacher.

Visitors are expected to leave promptly when their business is completed.

## Food Services

The Food Service Department in Stoneham uses NutriKids, a point of sale or electronic meal ID system. All students will be assigned a unique four-digit PIN number that will be used to track all cafeteria purchases. This number should remain confidential and should not be shared with other students. Prepayments in the form of cash and check will be accepted at any time or students can continue to pay each day. All cash and check payments must be used along with your child's assigned PIN number.

You may also use the online payment feature to make online deposits into your child's account by going to [www.myschoolbucks.com](http://www.myschoolbucks.com). There is a transaction fee of \$1.95 to use this feature. You will need your child's unique ID number to set up your child's online account. This unique ID number is **NOT** the same as your child's PIN number.

### BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Breakfast is available for students daily at no cost in our cafeteria. We offer a selection of continental breakfast items. All food must be consumed in the cafeteria.

### LUNCH PROGRAM

For the 2024-2025 school year, all students receive lunch at no cost. Students may purchase additional food items (i.e. extra slices of pizza, ice cream, bottled water, etc.) using either cash or preloaded funds from their MySchoolBucks account.

**The Food Service Department can be reached at 781.279.3804 x 333  
if you have any additional questions.**

## GENERAL INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

### Accident Procedures

Whenever any student is injured in school or on school grounds, that student should immediately go to the nearest teacher or to the office and report the injury. If an injured student is unable to report an accident, the first student to learn of the accident should notify the nearest teacher or the office. Never attempt to move someone who has been injured.

### Announcements and Posters

All notices of club meetings, athletic and social events, general information for the day and specific instructions are announced over the P.A. System. It is expected that students are quiet in homeroom to enable all students to listen carefully to daily announcements.

All posters displayed must advertise school-sponsored events and must be approved by the administration. Posters may only be attached to surfaces that will not be damaged by masking tape. Permanent adhesive, tape, or thumbtacks are not allowed to attach posters to painted walls or varnished surfaces. It is understood that all signs posted will be taken down after a reasonable length of time.

### Bicycles and Non-motorized Scooters

Students may ride bicycles and non-motorized scooters to school. These items must be stored in the racks provided at the rear of the building and **should be locked** when not in use. Students are expected to follow reasonable safety precautions and wear helmets as they travel to and from school. The privilege of bringing a bicycle to school may be withdrawn for unsafe operation.

### Trending Means of Transportation

Skateboards and rollerblades are not allowed to be used on school property due to safety concerns. They must be secured in lockers during the school day.

Hoverboards are not allowed to be used on school property due to the increased risk of injury.

Electronic bikes and scooters are not allowed to be used on school property. These present a significant safety concern due to the intensity of fire should they ignite, as well extinguishment challenges. Stoneham Fire department recommends that storage of electric bikes, scooters, and

lithium ion battery mobile devices should be stored outside away from egress pathways at a minimum distance of 15-25 feet. Such devices may also not be stored in egress pathways.

Any means of transportation deemed unsafe by administration will not be allowed on school property.

## **Care of Textbooks and Library Books**

Make sure that you and your teacher agree on the condition of the textbook before signing the book slip. All textbooks shall be covered to prevent soiling. Books must not be defaced, damaged, or jammed with paper (which can damage bindings). Library books must be returned within the specified time. Full payment must be made for any lost book or any book defaced beyond repair. It is the responsibility of students to provide restitution for any books so treated.

## **End of Year Obligations**

Before a student is officially dismissed for the year, they must have satisfied all of their obligations. All textbooks and library books must be returned in satisfactory condition. If a book is lost or damaged, the student must pay for it. Locks for hallway and gym lockers are also considered obligations which must be fulfilled prior to the last day of school.

## **Fire Drill Expectations**

Regulations for leaving the building when the fire alarm sounds are posted on the wall in each classroom. During a fire drill, no running or talking is permitted to allow for a safe and orderly exit. All students are directed to exit the building via the nearest, safest exit point. Upon exiting the building, students must report to their designated homeroom location and wait quietly for their homeroom teacher to take attendance. When traveling to their homeroom location, students should be utilizing the crosswalks in the parking lot to ensure safety while crossing.

Most damage to people from fires is from smoke inhalation, so in an actual emergency fire situation, students should be prepared to crawl beneath the smoke or at least bend low, if necessary.

## **Homeroom Expectations**

Students in grades 5-8 begin each day in their homeroom. Students are considered tardy if they are not present in their homeroom by 8:00AM. Morning announcements begin promptly at 8:00AM with a greeting followed by a moment of silence, which is required by all public schools, and the pledge of allegiance. Students are expected to remain quiet and listen actively to the remainder of

the morning announcements. While the primary purpose of homeroom is to take daily attendance and to both share and collect relevant information, it is also a time for students to center themselves to start the day.

## **Lost and Found**

Any articles which are found in school or in the vicinity of the school grounds should be turned into the office immediately. Students may check for lost items in the office either before or after school hours. At the end of each school year, unclaimed articles will be given to a charitable institution or discarded.

Students are responsible for their personal property. Do not leave money in your classroom or locker.

## **Health Office Visits**

Students should have a pass from a teacher before coming to the nurse's office. If a student is ill, they should come to the nurse or the secretary who will call their parents. **Students should not call parents on cell phones to ask to be dismissed.** Students are not allowed to go to the nurse's office in between classes or without permission. Any student who visits the nurse's office in between classes or without a pass will be considered truant from class.

## **Participation in School Events**

Students absent from school will not be allowed to participate in, or attend, any school activity on the day of such absence.

## **Substitute Expectations**

Our school is fortunate in having capable people to help us whenever our regular teachers are ill or are attending conferences. A substitute teacher is an important visitor whose impressions of our school will be carried into the community. Students are expected to be polite, helpful and considerate to guest teachers.

## **Telephone Usage**

The office phone is available for students to use, with permission. Such calls are to be made during times that are minimally disruptive to student learning. Students who telephone home requesting a parent to deliver something to the office are expected to check the office for the article during

passing periods and not have to be called from the classroom to retrieve items. Students will not be called to the office to receive a phone call as we do not interrupt class work without substantial reason.

## **Library/Media Center Expectations**

The Media Center is available for students to check-out or return books during Activity Periods and on some mornings. Students wishing to use the library should receive permission from their classroom teacher or another staff member to obtain a pass. No students will be allowed in the Media Center without a pass.

## **Cafeteria Expectations**

All students will be assigned a unique four-digit PIN number that will be used to track all cafeteria purchases. This number should remain confidential and should not be shared with other students. Students are not allowed to use another student's PIN to make purchases.

During lunch, students are expected to keep their area clean, to talk quietly, to accept the direction of the adults in the cafeteria, and to stay in seats until dismissed. Lunch should be a pleasant time for all students, but it is not a recess period. Excessive noise, throwing objects and moving from table to table will not be tolerated. Consequences for not meeting cafeteria expectations will range from a seating change to suspension of cafeteria privileges.

## **Hallway Passes**

Whenever a student is out of the classroom, they must carry a pass stating a destination, time and date, with the signature of a teacher, administrator or staff member.

If a student wishes to see a teacher, the student must arrange for a pass in advance. The student must carry and deliver this pass to the teacher they requested to see. The pass must then be signed by this teacher and returned to the teacher who first issued the pass.

## **Special Activities**

### **GRADE 8 RECOGNITION NIGHT**

This is a very special evening for 8th graders. It is held at the end of the school year and honors a variety of successful accomplishments demonstrated by 8th grade students in the course of their academic career at Central Middle School. Eighth grade students who are to be retained will not be permitted to participate in either Recognition Night or the Moving On Dance. In addition, students

who have multiple discipline referrals could lose their privilege to attend these year-end activities including the eighth grade field trip. Further, poor attendance including excessive tardies and absences could result in loss of privileges.

### **FIELD DAY**

This is an annual tradition which consists of teams competing against one another within their grade in a series of activities. These may include softball, obstacle course, volleyball and other events. All contests are coeducational. Students who have multiple discipline referrals or a significant incident requiring discipline could lose their privilege to attend Field Day. Also, poor attendance including excessive tardies and absences could result in the loss of this privilege.

### **INTRAMURALS**

Announcements will be made about the offerings in intramurals each season. Students who have multiple discipline referrals could lose their privilege to attend intramurals. Also, poor attendance including excessive tardies and absences could result in the loss of this privilege.

### **SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS**

During the school year, teachers may schedule educational field trips for their classes. Before a student is allowed to go on a field trip, they must turn in a permission slip signed by a parent before the scheduled field trip.

Students who are ineligible, as determined by the supervisors of the field trip, or choose not to go on the field trip, are expected to attend school on the day of the trip. Students who have demonstrated an inability to meet the normal demands of the school day with regard to responsible and appropriate behavior may be prohibited from attending. Additionally, poor attendance including excessive tardies and absences could result in the loss of this privilege.

The alternative of enlisting one of the students parents as their personal supervisor may be considered.

### **SCHOOL ASSEMBLIES**

Assemblies are a regularly scheduled part of the curriculum and are designed to be educational as well as entertaining experiences. They provide one of the few opportunities in school to learn formal audience behavior.

Regardless of the type of program, courtesy demands that the student body be respectful and appreciative. In live entertainment, unlike radio, the television or the movies, performers are very conscious of their audience. Talking, whispering, stamping of feet and boozing violate the rights of the performers and other members of the audience, and therefore, are unacceptable behavior.

## DISTRICT POLICIES

The following section contains several pertinent District Policies. For a complete listing of all Stoneham Public School Policies, please visit this [link](#).

### Civil Rights and Safety Policy

It is the policy of Stoneham Public Schools to provide a safe and secure learning environment for all its students without distinction based on race, religion, ethnicity, disability, gender or sexual orientation. Discrimination, sexual and bias-motivated harassment, and violations of civil rights disrupt the educational process and will not be tolerated. It shall be a violation of this policy for any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel to engage in sexual or bias-related harassment or violate the civil rights of any pupil, teacher, administrator or other school personnel. Conduct amounting to hate crime is a particularly serious infraction that will result in referral to law enforcement agencies.

The school will act to investigate all complaints, formal or informal, verbal or written, of sexual or bias-related harassment or violations of civil rights and take appropriate action against any pupil, teacher, administrator, or other school personnel who is found to have violated this policy.

Stoneham Public Schools is committed to prevention, remediation, and accurate reporting of bias incidents and civil rights violations, to the end that all students can enjoy the advantages of a safe and tolerant learning environment where individual differences are respected. The school undertakes to engage in activities and programming such as training of all school personnel, intended to foster respect for diversity, civil rights, and non-violence in school settings. The principal is available to receive reports and complaints of civil rights violations from students, faculty and staff.

### CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS

Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits on the basis of disability in the areas of educational programming.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits in educational programs on the basis of sex.

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: Prohibits discrimination, exclusion from participation, and denial of benefits based on disability.

MGL, Ch. 76, Section 5 of the Massachusetts General Laws: Prohibits discrimination in all public schools on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, national origin, religion and sexual orientation.

**Stoneham Public Schools – – Title VI, Title IX and Section 504 Coordinators:**  
**Director of Student Services- Mrs Sarah O'Leary, 781-279-3850**

## **Curriculum Content Accommodation**

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

## **Attendance Policy**

### **POLICY 9-16**

Recent research recognizes that addressing chronic absenteeism is one of the most important priorities in an equitable approach to attendance, as chronic absenteeism for any reason can have a negative impact on student learning and academic and social emotional outcomes.

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing 10 percent or more of the school year in any given period. All absences are included as it relates to chronic absenteeism, regardless of whether the absence is excused or unexcused. **For a full school year, a student who misses 18 school days, or about two days per month, will be considered chronically absent.**

#### **Excused Absences Include:**

- An illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. If the illness or hospitalization results in an absence, a note from a health care provider documenting the health problem or hospitalization should be attached to the parent/caregiver note.
- A death in the immediate family (parent/caregiver, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin).
- Suspension: Students should be marked as suspended. In cases of suspension, the school will provide an opportunity for the student to maintain academic standing in school by being provided a list of assignments and such other services which might enable the student to use the time out of school productively.

- Court appearances: Students should present evidence of the requirement of the court appearance.
- Medical or psychological tests during the school day: The parent/caregiver must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school.
- Visits to special education schools in some cases for students with disabilities.
- Other situations: From time to time, situations over which the school, parent/caregiver, and student have little or no control may cause absences (for example, transportation that does not operate during inclement weather). These absences are excusable. The school principal may determine that the students impacted shall be marked with an excused absence.
- Other extraordinary situations, such as a family emergency, as approved by the school principal.
- Cultural holidays and religious holy days that require observation: To accommodate students' cultural and religious observances on days when schools are in session, such absences will be marked excused, with the reason code "Religious Holiday" upon submitting a valid note signed by a parent or guardian.

#### **Unexcused Absences:**

Absences that do not meet the above criteria will be considered unexcused.

#### **Missed Work:**

In all instances of student absence, students must be given the opportunity to equitably recover any missed work or learning loss during a marking period.

#### **Extended Absences Due to Temporary Relocation:**

When a student moves out of Stoneham for an extended period, the parent/guardian must notify the school of the move and the expected return date. If the re-location is for a period of no more than two weeks, the student will be unenrolled from our school district. The student can be re-enrolled when the student and family resume residence in Stoneham. The parent/guardian must provide proof of residency and occupancy in order to re-enroll.

#### **Annual School Absence Protocol and Notification**

The Stoneham School Committee requires that each school establish a student absence protocol and notification system. Principals shall send, at the beginning of each school year, notifications to the parent/guardian of each student regarding the school's protocol.

## Technology Acceptable Use

### Policies 8-0-1 and 9-0-1

The Stoneham Public School system provides technology, internet and network access to students, parents and staff to support educational excellence and enhance our curriculum. Use of school computers and online access is a privilege provided to students and staff.

Information sent and received using the Stoneham Public Schools network, and all hardware/software provided or installed by the Stoneham Public Schools, is considered the property of the Stoneham Public Schools and is subject to review at the discretion of school administration. A user is deemed to access and use the school department network through any electronic activity conducted on the system using any device (whether or not such device is school-provided) regardless of the user's physical location.

Users have no right to privacy while using the network. The school department monitors users' online activities and reserves the right to access, review, copy, store or delete electronic communications or files. This includes any items stored on school-provided devices, such as files, e-mails, cookies and internet history. The school department reserves the right to disclose any electronic activity, including electronic communications, to law enforcement officials or third parties, as appropriate and consistent with applicable law. The school department will fully cooperate with local, state (including DESE), or federal officials in any lawful investigation concerning or relating to any illegal activities conducted through the department's network.

In the event that a review shows improper use, appropriate action will be taken with the individual(s) in accordance with school disciplinary policy, copyright law and/or federal and state law. Improper use includes but is not limited to:

- Causing damage to computer technology equipment
- Altering computers or network equipment configurations
- Loading personal non-school purchased software onto a computer
- Hacking into other's folders or work files on a password protected server
- Using printer material for non-school business
- Use of computers and internet unrelated to intended educational use
- Downloading files for personal use, unrelated to proper educational use
- Use of school technology for personal gain or commercial use
- Use of computers for spam, advertising or political use
- Non-educational chat room or instant messaging use
- Use of an online computer to transmit, receive or display pornography; racially offensive or harassing messages; profanity; sexually explicit material; or threatening, defamatory, or other improper, socially unacceptable files
- Downloading or transmitting materials in violation of State, Federal and Copyright law

In accordance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), the department blocks or filters content over the network that the department considers inappropriate for minors. This includes pornography, obscene material, and other material that may be harmful to minors. The department may also block or filter other content deemed to be inappropriate, lacking educational or work-related content, or pose a threat to the network. The department may, in its discretion, disable such filtering for certain users for bona-fide research or other lawful or business purposes. Users shall not use any website application or methods to bypass this filtering of the network.

The department will work to protect the safety and security of minors when using electronic mail, chat rooms, and other forms of direct electronic communications. Students should not reveal personal information about themselves or other students and should promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employee any message or other activity they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable. Parents should also monitor their children's use of the internet when the school network is accessed from home or a non-school location.

Periodically, the Stoneham Public Schools will make determinations of whether new uses of technology remain consistent with this acceptable use practice.

The district shall educate all students about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking websites and in chat rooms and about cyberbullying awareness and response.

Adopted: March 9, 2006

Revised: July 2012

Revised: August 29, 2013

## Student Internet User Access Guidelines

1. All use of the Internet is restricted to specific, approved curriculum projects, and must be in support of education and research and consistent with the purposes of Stoneham Public Schools.
2. Users shall not intentionally seek information on, obtain copies of, or modify files, other data, or passwords belonging to other users, or misrepresent other users on the network.
3. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors are prohibited on the Internet.
4. Malicious use of the Internet to develop programs that harass other users or infiltrate a computer or computing system and/or damage the software components of a computer or computing system is prohibited.
5. Use of the Internet to access or process pornographic material, inappropriate text files, or files dangerous to the integrity of the local area network is prohibited.
6. Internet accounts are to be used only by the authorized owner of the account for the authorized purpose.
7. Any use of the Internet for commercial or for-profit purposes is prohibited.
8. Use of the Internet for personal and private business is prohibited.
9. Any use of the Internet for product advertisement or political lobbying is prohibited.
10. The illegal installation of copyrighted software for use on Stoneham Public School computers is prohibited.
11. Making copies of copyrighted software is prohibited.
12. Use of the Internet for the purchase and or sale of any physical item or service is prohibited.
13. Access to the Internet will only be allowed via School District Accounts, unless special permission is given.
14. Access to Internet or on-line service passwords is restricted.
15. The Stoneham Public Schools reserve the right to make determinations on whether specific uses of the network are consistent with these guidelines.
16. These user guidelines will be incorporated into the school discipline code.
17. No web page may be created at any school Internet access location without the specific written approval of the appropriate school authority.

# Digital Recording/Videotaping/Photography Policy

## Introduction

Stoneham Public Schools Spartan EDTV (Channel 10 Comcast, Channel 13 RCN) are the school district's educational access channels, which are used as teaching and learning tools, as well as a means of informing the entire Stoneham community of what is happening in the schools.

## Policy

All recording, videotaping and photographing, including digital photography, by any means, including but not limited to cell phone, involving students will be related to classroom and/or extra curricular activities and other instructional support services. No video recording or photographing, including digital photography, will be used for commercial purposes and no student will be included without the written consent of the parent/ guardian. Parents will be required to sign a release form on an annual basis. Exceptions to this policy are large public events, such as athletic events, Carnival Ball, graduation, etc.

All routine classroom video recording and photographing, including digital photography, of student activities produced by students or school personnel may not occur, or be reproduced, or made available outside of the school for any purpose without express prior authorization of the building principal. Parents will be notified in advance whenever non-routine projects involving video recording and photographing, including digital photography, of students is planned.

## PARENTAL RELEASE FORM

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_

PRIOR TO ALLOWING YOUR CHILD TO BE RECORDED, VIDEOTAPED OR PHOTOGRAPHED IN ANY PUBLIC SCHOOL ACTIVITIES, THIS FORM MUST BE SIGNED AND RETURNED.

I give my permission for my child to be included in school related recording, videotaping and photographing, including digital photography, of school activities. All recording/videotaping/photography will be related to classroom and/or extracurricular programs, activities and other school functions. Video programs may be edited and broadcast to the community on cable television on Stoneham's Educational Access Channels 10 & 13.

I understand that all videotaping and/or photographing, including digital photography, done by the school system will be utilized for educational enrichment, or community information purposes, and will not be commercially aired or distributed. I understand that no confidential, registry, or student records information about my child will be released in recorded, video or photographic form.

It is also understood teachers and other school personnel may edit and prepare video productions using school and/or personal video and computer equipment, at school and at home.

- I acknowledge that I have read this Recording/Videotape/ Photography Authorization document and agree to its terms.
- I acknowledge that I have read this Recording/Videotape/Photography Authorization document and do not agree to allow my student to be recorded, videotaped or photographed.

Parent or Guardian:

NAME (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Sexual Harassment Policy**

### **Statement of Purpose**

The Stoneham Public School System is committed to fostering and maintaining a learning environment that is free of all forms of abuse and harassment. Sexual harassment is discriminatory and unlawful. Complaints of sexual harassment within the Stoneham Public School community will be taken seriously and promptly investigated. The school community includes students, the School Committee, administrators, faculty, tutors, substitute staff, clerical staff, educational assistants, custodians, cafeteria workers, vendors, contractors and volunteers when they work in the school. Sexual harassment may occur between adult and adult, adult and student, and student and student. The purpose of this policy is to prevent sexual harassment and to offer students and employees who believe they have been sexually harassed a means by which to end it.

### **Statement of Responsibility**

Sexual harassment is against the law. It is the responsibility of all members of the Stoneham Public School community to ensure that our schools are free from sexual harassment. The responsibility arises from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 151C, which make sexual harassment in the schools a form of unlawful sexual discrimination.

To serve as Title IX Coordinator to enforce this policy the Superintendent has appointed:

#### **Special Education Director**

**Mrs Sarah O'Leary**  
**781-279-3850**  
[soleary@stonehamschools.org](mailto:soleary@stonehamschools.org)

Consistent with state law, this policy also applies to harassment based on sexual orientation.

If the sexual harassment involves a minor child, it can also be considered a criminal offense under the laws relating to child abuse. (Staff is reminded of their duty to report suspected abuse to the proper authorities in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 119, Section 51A.)

## **Investigation and Complaint Resolution**

### **STONEHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS SCHOOL COMMITTEE POLICY 8-9**

The Stoneham Public Schools will promptly review every complaint, take necessary action to eliminate the conduct and work to ensure the safety of the complainant and any/all witnesses.

The Stoneham Public Schools shall promptly initiate an investigation into allegations of sexual and discriminatory harassment including sexual assault and misconduct while observing all relevant state and federal laws and regulations and school system policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements. During the investigation and prior to a final determination, the Title IX Coordinator and/or appropriate administrator will take appropriate interim measures to protect the complainant. During an investigation the complainant and accused may present witnesses and other evidence. Victims of sexual/discriminatory harassment, and /or sexual assault will not be required to mediate allegations of harassment with their alleged perpetrators without appropriate involvement by the District, and further, any mediation process can be terminated by the victim at any time. Both the complainant and the accused individuals shall be notified by the School District of the outcome of any investigation.

The Title IX Coordinator in consultation with the School's Complaint Manager/and or Superintendent will coordinate the investigation. Typical steps in an investigation include separate interviews with those involved, putting statements from each party in writing, identifying and questioning witnesses, and other appropriate actions. The District will conduct the investigation with as much confidentiality and privacy for the parties as possible without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation. The District will caution all participants in the investigation to limit discussions to those staff directly involved in the investigation and to treat the matter as confidential as practicable. Individuals are expected to cooperate fully in any investigation. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination/expulsion.

The District will endeavor to complete the investigation within thirty (30) school days of receiving the complaint, unless the nature of the investigation or exigent circumstances dictate otherwise, in which case the investigation will be completed as promptly as practicable. Also, if the respondent is subject to a collective bargaining agreement that sets forth a specific time line for notice and/or investigation of a complaint, such time line will be followed. During Title IX investigations, the District will use the preponderance of the evidence standard in determining whether or not District Policies have been violated in relation to sexual violence, and discriminatory and sexual harassment complaints.

Upon completion of the investigation, the Compliance Officer will issue a written report to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will issue a decision within ten (10) school days of receiving the Compliance Officer's report. If the complainant or the accused is not satisfied with the Superintendent's decision, an appeal may be filed with the Superintendent by either the complainant and/or the accused or by their guardian(s) within five (5) calendar days of receiving the decision. Within thirty (30) days of receiving the record, the Superintendent will render a final decision in writing.

If the District determines that the Policy Prohibiting Discriminatory Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Misconduct has been violated, the District will take appropriate action promptly to stop the offending conduct and ensure that it is not repeated. Depending on the severity of the incident(s),

such corrective action may include counseling, training, a verbal or written warning, suspension, or termination/expulsion. Following substantiated instances of discriminatory and sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct and violence, the District will take reasonable steps to address the effects of the conduct including but not limited to supporting victims' access to the District's programs, services and activities.

In certain cases, harassment of a student, and in particular, sexual harassment of a student, may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts laws. Verbal sexual harassment of any child by anyone, including school district employees/volunteers, is recognized as a form of child abuse and a warning sign of actual physical or sexual abuse. Such abuse must be reported immediately to the Department of Social Services in accordance with the requirements of M.G.L. c 19, s. 51A. A matter reported under this section shall be screened to determine whether an investigation is pursuant to the Child Abuse and Neglect Policy, the Sexual Harassment Policy, or both. The Stoneham Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse.

**VII. PENALTIES** Persons who engage in discriminatory, sexual harassment, sexual misconduct and assault including retaliation may be subject to suspension, termination/expulsion or other sanctions, subject to applicable school system policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements.

An individual determined to have violated the District's policies related to discriminatory/sexual harassment, and/or sexual misconduct may be subject to the following sanctions or a combination thereof:

#### **All Students**

- a. Mediation involving a third party; remedial training
- b. Reprimand either verbal or written
- c. Suspension in-house or out of school
- d. Expulsion

#### **All Staff**

- a. Mediation involving a third party; remedial training
- b. Reprimand either verbal or written
- c. Suspension with or without pay
- d. Dismissal

## Physical Restraint of Students

Stoneham Public Schools ensures the safety of all students by providing a safe environment conducive to learning and an expectation that this environment will be maintained by Stoneham Public School staff. Further, students of the Stoneham Public Schools are protected by law (603CMR 46.02) from unreasonable use of physical restraint.

Physical restraint may only be used when non-physical interventions would not be effective and the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring themselves or another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the Stoneham Public School District may use reasonable force needed to protect students or other persons or themselves from injury.

As defined in 603CMR 46.02, restraint is defined as:

1. Physical restraint: The use of bodily force to limit a student's freedom of movement.
2. Extended restraint: A physical restraint in duration of which is longer than twenty (20) minutes.
3. Physical escort: Touching or holding a student without the use of force for the purpose of directing the student.

## STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS

### Student Privacy Rights

In January, 1975, the State Board of Education adopted regulations pertaining to student records. The development of these regulations, which have the force of law, was mandated by state laws enacted in 1972 and 1974.

The regulations apply to all public elementary and secondary schools. They are designed to ensure parent's and student's rights of confidentiality, inspection, amendment, and destruction of student records, and to assist school authorities in their responsibilities for the maintenance of student records.

The regulations apply to all information kept by a school committee on a student in a manner such that they may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into two sections: the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, and grade level completed. The transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty years after the student leaves the system.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extracurricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors and other persons, as well as other similar information. The temporary record is destroyed five years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of the major parent and student rights regarding their student records, as provided by the regulations pertaining to student records.

### STUDENT RECORDS

A parent, or a student who has reached the ninth grade or is at least 14 years old, has the right to inspect all portions of their record, upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student no later than two weeks after the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay.

The parent and student have the right to receive copies of any part of the record, although a reasonable fee will be charged for the cost of duplicating the materials.

The parent and student may request to have parts of the record interpreted by a qualified professional of the school, or may invite anyone else of their choosing to inspect or interpret the record with them.

Student records are forwarded to a student's new school when the student moves or transfers. In addition, nurses should forward health records directly to the nurse in the new school.

Parents may request a copy of state regulations on student records from the school office.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS**

With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations other than the parent or student and school personnel working directly with the student are allowed to have access to information in the student record without the specific, informed, written consent of the parent or student.

## **AMENDMENT OF RECORDS**

The parent or student has the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written materials to the student record. In addition, the parent and student have the right to request that information in the record be amended or deleted. The parent and student have a right to a conference with the school principal to make their objections known. Within a week after the conference, the principal must render a decision in writing. If the parent and student are not satisfied with the decision, the regulations contain provisions through which the decision may be appealed to higher authorities in the school system.

## **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS**

The regulations require that certain parts of the student record such as the temporary record, be destroyed a certain period of time after the student leaves the school system. School authorities are also allowed to destroy misleading outdated or irrelevant information in the record from time to time while the student is enrolled in the school system. Before any such information may be destroyed, the parent and student must be notified, and have an opportunity to receive a copy of any of the information before its destruction.

The above is only a summary of some of the more important provisions of the regulations pertaining to student records that relate to student and parent rights. If more detailed information is desired, a copy of the regulations may be reviewed at your school office.

## **Title IX And Chapter 622**

An important piece of legislation affecting the public schools was signed in August, 1972 as Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, p.192-318. The law prohibits sex discrimination in educational programs or activities which receive federal financial aid and applies to virtually all public school systems in the country. The law reads as follows: *"No person shall on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance...."*

The law makes it clear that all aspects of public school education must be fully open and available to members of both sexes. The School Committee has established policies (nos. 4001, 5351, And 5001) to demonstrate the importance of this law.

## **MGL Chapter 269, Sections 17–19**

### **AN ACT PROHIBITING THE PRACTICE OF HAZING**

#### **Section 17: DEFINITION**

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

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

#### **SECTION 18: FAILURE TO REPORT HAZING**

Section 18. Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

#### **SECTION 19: COPY OF SECS. 17 TO 19; ISSUANCE TO STUDENTS AND STUDENT GROUPS, TEAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS; REPORT**

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

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

## **MGL Chapter 71, Section 2A**

### **PROHIBITING THE USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS**

Chapter 71 of the Acts of 1993, Section 2A of Massachusetts Law prohibits the use by any individual of any tobacco products within school buildings, the school facilities, on school grounds or on school buses. The Stoneham Public Schools interprets this to mean anywhere on school property, inside or out, including "in vehicles" on school property.

Please be aware that effective on this posting, the administrative staff of the Stoneham Public Schools will enforce this law and policy with students and staff in the manner outlined in the student handbooks and staff calendar and manual, including the offer to arrange voluntary participation in programs for individuals who wish to stop using tobacco. Other individuals who are in violation of this law and policy will be asked to cease tobacco use and will be subject to removal from school grounds and/or referral to the police.

## **MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H**

### **1993 EDUCATIONAL REFORM DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The following section is a result of the Education Reform Act that was passed by the State Legislature and signed into law by the Governor on June 18, 1993. These regulations are thus enacted for every public school in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

- 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, at their discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).
- d. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent.
- e. When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section and applies for admission to another school for acceptance, the superintendent of the sending school shall notify the superintendent of the receiving school of the reason for the pupil's expulsion.

### **FELONY COMPLAINT OR CONVICTION OF STUDENT (MGL: Ch71, S. 37H1/2)**

1. Upon issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon issuance of a felony delinquency complaint, the principal may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by the principal if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.
2. Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such felony or felony delinquency, the principal may expel such student if the

principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

In both sections 1 and 2, a student and parents have the right of appeal to the Superintendent of Schools.

### **SECTION 37h3/4: SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION ON GROUNDS OTHER THAN THOSE SET FORTH IN SECS. 37h OR 37h1/2**

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 37H.5.

(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 primary 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.

## **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act**

### **PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN NOT DETERMINED ELIGIBLE FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION AND RELATED SERVICES**

#### **34 CFR § 300.534**

(A) General. A child who has not been determined to be eligible for Special Education and related services under this part and who has engaged in behavior that violated a Code of Student Conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for in this part if the public agency had knowledge (as determined in accordance with paragraph (B) of this section that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

(B) Basis of knowledge, a public agency must be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred-

- (1) The parent of the child expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the appropriate Educational Agency, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of Special Education and related services.
- (2) The parent of the child requested an evaluation of the child pursuant to §§300.300 through 300.311; or
- (3) The teacher of the child, or other personnel of the LEA, expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child directly to the Director of Special Education of the agency

(C) Exception. A public agency would not be deemed to have knowledge under paragraph (B) of this section if-

- (1) The parent of the child-
  - (i) Has not allowed an evaluation of the child pursuant to §§300.300 THROUGH 300.311; or
  - (ii) Has refused services under this part; or
- (2) The child has been evaluated in accordance with §§300.300 through 300.311 and determined to not be a child with a disability under this part.

(D) Conditions that apply if no basis of knowledge.

- (1) If a public agency does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability (in accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section) prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to the disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engage in comparable behaviors consistent with paragraph (d)(2) of this section.
- (2) If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures under §300.530, the evaluation must be conducted in an expedited manner.
  - (i) Until the evaluation is completed, the child remains in the educational placement determined by school authorities, which can include suspension or expulsion without educational services.
  - (ii) If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the agency and information provided by the parents, the agency must provide special education and related services in accordance with this part, including the requirements of §§300.530 through 300.536 and section 612(a)(1)(A) of the Act.