Tri-Town School Union Substitute Teacher Handbook



Serving the Elementary Schools (PK-6) of Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield, Massachusetts

Revised: 11/30/2026

Tri-Town School Union

Serving the Towns of Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield
35 Village Road, Suite 400
Middleton, MA 01949
978-393-2055

Scott R. Morrison, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Brian Middleton-Cox, Ed.D.
Director of Human Resources

Dear Tri-Town Substitute,

On behalf of our full faculty and staff, we welcome you to our school community and we thank you for your service to our schools and our students. We are pleased to have you as part of our educational team in Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield. Substitute teachers provide a valuable service to the students within our schools.

This handbook has been developed as a guide for you as you work in our district. We hope it will answer your questions and provide you with resources to complete your job. Should you have further questions about substitute teaching, please contact our Human Resources office at 978-887-0771.

Substitute teachers provide a vital service to our students, faculty, and staff. It is our expectation that our substitute teachers do not just "cover" a class, however, the main role is to provide competent and effective education. Substitutes are responsible for upholding the mission statement of the district, implementing lesson plans provided by teachers, along with adhering to and enforcing the policies and rules of the schools and the district.

We welcome you to our district and we thank you for your service!

Sincerely,

Scott R. Morrison, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Brian Middleton-Cox, Ed.D.
Director of Human Resources

Tri-Town School Union Vision Statement

The Tri-Town School Union believes in nurturing a dynamic learning environment where creative thinkers and innovative problem-solvers develop the empathy, resilience, perseverance, self-management, and kindness needed to positively impact the world.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield Public Schools are an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

It is the policy of the Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield Public Schools not to discriminate on the basis of sex, race, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, homelessness, limited English proficiency, or disability in its educational programs, activities, or employment policies as required by Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendments, Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. These rights extend to both students and employees. Requests for information about these laws and/or grievance procedures should be directed to Dr. Scott R. Morrison, Superintendent of Schools, Tri-Town School Union, (978) 393-2055. The district does not segregate English learners (ELs) from their English-speaking peers, except where programmatically necessary, to implement an ELE program. ELs participate fully with their English-speaking peers and are provided support in non-core academic courses. The district provides access to the full range of academic opportunities and supports afforded non-ELs, such as special education services, Section 504 Accommodation Plans, Title I services, career and technical education, advances educational programs and the supports outlined in the district's curriculum accommodation plan.

Applicants are informed that school systems are required to obtain all available criminal offender record information (CORI and SAFIS Background Check per 603 CMR51.00) from the criminal history systems board (CHSB) of any current or prospective employee of the school department.

DISTRICT & SCHOOL INFORMATION

CENTRAL OFFICE
Tri-Town School Union
35 Village Road, Suite 400
Middleton, MA 01949
Phone: 978.393.2055 Fax: 978.887.8042
www.tritownschoolunion.com

Superintendent of Schools
Scott R. Morrison. Ed.D.
smorrison@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant- Antonette Valcourt
avalcourt@tritownschoolunion.com

Asst. Supt.of Student Support Services – Matthew LaCava, Ed.D.
Administers all special education programs, special education transportation, and 504s.

Email: mlacava@tritownschoolunion.com
Administrative Assistants: Melissa Panagos and Michelle Hughes
mpanagos@tritownschoolunion.com
mhughes@tritownschoolunion.com

Asst. Supt. of Operations and Finance - Steven Greenberg
sgreenberg@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant- Coleen Anderson
canderson@tritownschoolunion.com

Director of Human Resources - Brian Middleton-Cox, Ed.D.
bmiddleton-cox@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant- Coleen Anderson
canderson@tritownschoolunion.com

Director of Curriculum - Peggy McElhinney
pmcelhinney@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant: Mary Farley
mfarley@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant: Susan Prince
sprince@tritownschoolunion.com

Director of Educational Technology - Julie Kelley
jkelley@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant: Anne Duvall
aduvall@tritownschoolunion.com

Director of Facilities - Steve Clifford
sclifford@tritownschoolunion.com

Administrative Assistant: Laurie Gagnon
lgagnon@tritownschoolunion.com

BOXFORD



Harry Lee Cole School
(PreK-Grade 2)
26 Middleton Road
Boxford, Massachusetts 01921
Phone: (978) 887-2856
Mrs. Lisa Salisbury, Principal
lsalisbury@boxfordschools.org
Secretaries: Josephine Lee and Katie Dunn
Special Education Coordinator: Carolyn Salvo



Spofford Pond School
(Grades 3-6)
31 Spofford Rd.
Boxford, Massachusetts 01921
Phone: (978) 352-8616
Mrs. Amanda Sullivan, Principal
asullivan@boxfordschools.org
Ms. Laura Danforth, Asst. Principal
ldanforth@boxfordschools.org
Secretaries: Karen Hussey & Caroline Sommer
Special Education Coordinator: Mimi Lannquist

MIDDLETON



Fuller Meadow School
(Grades K-2)
143 South Main Street
Middleton, Massachusetts 01949
(978) 750-4756
Mr. Michael Drouin, Principal
mdrouin@middletonps.org
Secretary: Jennifer Elliott
Office Aide: Michelle Donachie
Special Education Coordinator: Shannon Walsh



Howe-Manning School
(PreK and Grades 3-6)
26 Central Street
Middleton, Massachusetts 01949
(978) 739-2800
Mr. Jeffrey Bryson, Principal
jbryson@middletonps.org
Mr. Kevin Husson, Interim Asst. Principal
khusson@middletonps.org
Secretaries: Teri Ellis and Kerrie MacNeil
Special Education Coordinator: Susan Haley

TOPSFIELD



Steward School
(PreK-Grade 3)
261 Perkins Row
Topsfield, Massachusetts 01983
(978) 887-1538
FAX: 978-887-7462
Mrs. Carroll Willa, Principal
cwilla@topsfieldps.org
Secretary: Becky Holden
Office Aide: Meghan Randall
Special Education Coordinator: Jenny Churchill



Proctor School
(Grades 4-6)
60 Main Street
Topsfield, Massachusetts 01983
(978) 887-1530
FAX: 978-887-1531
Mr. Adrian Alford, Principal
aalford@topsfieldps.org
Secretary: Jennifer Hutt
Special Education Coordinator**:** Alison Macko

Compensation

- Effective **July 1, 2025 to the present**, our substitute pay is as follows:
- $105.00 per day without Bachelor's Degree ($52.50/half day)
- $115.00 per day with a Bachelor's Degree ($57.50/half day)
- $125.00 per day ($62.50/half day) for retired teachers (from our district) or a teacher with a current/valid Massachusetts teaching license

Report Time / End Time

All Schools – Report 15-20 minutes prior to start time

Depart 15-30 minutes after school

Middleton School Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
Topsfield School Hours: 8:45 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.
Boxford School Hours: 8:40 a.m. – 3:10 p.m.

Frontline Absence Management System

The Boxford, Middleton and Topsfield Public Schools utilizes an automated service to process substitute teaching assignments called Frontline. This system utilizes both the telephone and the internet to assist you in locating substitute teaching assignments in the district. To access the Frontline System, you will be provided, via letter from the Central Office, an ID and PIN number.

Where to Report

1. School Main Office –See School Secretary
2. Sign In/Complete Payroll Sheet
3. Obtain and wear school badge/ID
4. Ask secretary if there is any other specific information/teacher sub form

Emergency Closing, Delayed Opening or No School Announcements

See Television Network Channels/Websites:

WBZ – Channel 4

WCVB – Channel 5

WHDH – Channel 7 or 56

FOX – Channel 25

Evaluations

Formal evaluations of substitutes are not routinely done. A substitute teacher incident report may be submitted at any time by a principal or the principal's designee. When a substitute teacher's performance is reported to be **unsatisfactory**, the Principal or Director of Human Resources may arrange a conference with the substitute teacher to discuss his/her job performance.

A substitute may be removed from the approved substitute teacher list when administrators have negatively evaluated his/her performance or have requested that the substitute **NOT** return to their locations.

A substitute may be removed from the approved substitute teacher list for violation of the Substitute Teacher Agreement for an excessive number of refusals to accept teaching assignments, for not reporting for an accepted assignment, or for excessive number of cancellations.

NOTE: Substitute teachers are employed on a day-to-day basis. There is no contractual agreement for employment between a substitute and the School Department beyond the day's assignment for which he/she is called and for which he/she agrees to work.

A SUBSTITUTE WILL IMMEDIATELY BE REMOVED FROM THE DISTRICT'S AUTHORIZED SUBSTITUTE LIST FOR ANY INCIDENT INVOLVING INCOMPETENCY, IMMORALITY, INSUBORDINATION, GROSS MISCONDUCT, NEGLECT OF DUTY, PHYSICAL OR VERBAL ABUSE OF STUDENTS OR OTHERS, AND/OR FOR ACCUSATIONS RESULTING IN A CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION.

At-Will Employment Acknowledgment
This position with the Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield Public Schools is an at-will position not for a fixed term or definite period. Employment is entered into voluntarily, and both the employee and the District retain the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause, and with or without advance notice.

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of School Personnel
School personnel will:

- Direct the substitute to the classroom

- Provide a bell schedule (if necessary)
- Assist the substitute in locating the substitute folder, lesson plans, and supplies
- Notify the substitute of any special programs for the day
- Provide a school orientation if necessary
- Release the substitute when their services are no longer needed
- Help the substitute feel welcome
- Provide you with a “buddy” teacher name to check in with regarding questions during the day

The Regular Teacher’s Responsibilities

The regular teacher will place all materials in an accessible location. This includes:

- Detailed lesson plans
- Attendance sheets
- Current seating chart
- Lists of special arrangements for individual students (specific services such as IEPs 504 Plans, behavior plans, medical/allergies information, etc.)
- Hall passes (nurse, library, restroom)

The Substitute Teacher’s Responsibilities

Duties/Procedures

- Be knowledgeable regarding the contents of this handbook and keep it available for ready reference
- Arrive at the assigned school at least 20 minutes before classes begin
- Report to the main office for sign-in and instructions regarding classroom assignment, duty assignments, and length of assignment
- Keep an accurate record of classroom attendance
- Familiarize yourself with the school’s emergency procedures
- Accept additional responsibilities when asked by the principal or other school personnel
- Maintain professional dress and conduct
- Refer accidents or illnesses to the nurse or to the principal as appropriate
- Keep copies of all memos, etc. received and leave them with the substitute folder at the end of the day
- Check with a school secretary to determine if there is information that needs to go home with students that day
- Remain until the end of the established regular teacher day or dismissal time established by the principal
- Deposit in the office any money or property which is collected from the students for any purpose. A report listing the name and amount or item should be attached.
- Check out in the office with the school secretary at the end of the day
- Maintain a positive attitude

Curriculum/Lesson Plans

- Follow lesson plans as closely as possible to ensure continuity in the instructional program. Make a note of any changes that must be made.
- Please see the principal if lesson plans are missing and/or if lesson plans do not engage the class for the entire lesson
- Complete the day’s work and organize the materials collected from the students in an orderly manner- leave the classroom neat and orderly
- Leave a summary of work done with each class along with a description of any unusual problems that may have arisen

Classroom Management

- Maintain an orderly classroom and follow the behavior management plan of the school

- Exercise good judgment in the maintenance of a positive learning environment
- It is the responsibility of the substitute to find out what each school's policies and procedures are for dealing with discipline problems before administering any form of discipline
- All serious discipline problems are to be referred to the school designee (principal in most cases)
- A note to the teacher is required at any time it is necessary to discipline a student or if the student has been a disruptive factor in the classroom that day
- Treat all students in a fair manner and refrain from making threats or statements to students that cannot be followed through
- Be responsive to parent contact should it occur, but leave parent conferences to the regular teacher or school principal
- **ALWAYS** ask for help if you are in doubt when handling any situation. The school will support you in solving problems
- Remember . . . "Transition" times may require extra attention and vigilance

Substitute Teacher Do Not's

- Avoid any language (verbal or non-verbal) or activity, which may be deemed inappropriate for a public school classroom
- Under no circumstances is a substitute teacher to administer corporal punishment or physical force in dealing with student discipline and or demonstrate affection in physical ways
- The striking of a student or use of improper language will result in being removed from the substitute list and may also result in referral to the appropriate authorities
- Be responsive to parent contact should it occur, but leave parent conferences to the regular teacher or school principal
- We request that you do not leave the building during planning periods or lunch period
- The classroom teacher's and school computers are not to be used unless permission is extended to you from the classroom teacher and/or other school authority
- Smoking is prohibited on school premises
- Cell phone use is prohibited during classroom time
- DO NOT discuss personal information about students and/or families within the common areas of school; and never talk about the confidential information you may come across within the context of your work
- Be sure you are never alone with a student

Resources

Substitute Hints & Suggestions

1. Arrive early, not just at the required time.

2. Know the teacher(s) who is next door. Introduce yourself so you can call on someone to answer your questions about schedules or materials for the class.
3. At each school, familiarize yourself with locations of fire extinguishers, emergency exit routes, "call buttons" to the office, etc.
4. Keep your sense of humor, it helps the climate of the classroom
5. When students need to go to the restroom or the library, send only one student at a time. When the first one returns a second one may go.
6. If there is no seating chart left by the teacher, quickly make one. It is much easier to maintain discipline when you can call a student by name.
7. If a student doesn't respond when you call him by name, you may suspect the students have switched seats. Let them know it is better to have the correct names so the wrong students don't get in trouble and written about to the regular teacher.
8. Do not let students start calling you by your first name. Do not become a buddy.
9. Try to get in the hall between classes. It is a good idea to stand in the doorway so you can keep one eye on the hallway traffic and one eye on the students coming into the classroom.
10. Walk around the room. Don't just sit behind the desk, especially during homework, class work, or during a test. The students will be less likely to talk or cheat when you are close by them.
11. Try to have the names of one or two students you can call on for assistance.
12. Never let a class leave early to go to the next class or for lunch, unless the teacher or the next door teacher says it is okay.
13. Make your expectations very clear at the beginning of the day.
14. Do not discuss the teacher's class with other people, especially out of school. You are a professional and shouldn't discuss individual students or problems. If you need to talk to someone about a problem, talk to the principal. (Keep your opinions about students or the teacher's classroom to yourself).
15. Follow the lesson plans the teacher has left. If there is extra time, incorporate your own ideas.
16. Have some emergency lesson plans in case the teacher's plans are either missing or inadequate.
17. Even though a few students can upset your plans, try to find out the names of the students who have been good or helpful and let the teacher know about them also.
18. Most students will acquiesce to your leadership, but there will be some that will question your plans or authority. It is better not to argue. Instead say, "I know this may not be the way Mr. Smith does it, but this is the plan for today.
19. Don't feel threatened or uncomfortable when administrators visit your classroom. They can be a great help in maintaining discipline.
20. If you are not sure how the teacher wants an assignment done, ask another teacher or develop your own plan. Be sure to leave a note for the permanent teacher explaining what you assigned.
21. Have a couple extra pens or pencils with you for those who have “forgotten" and would rather go to their lockers and the halls than be in class.
22. Do more than required. Your extra efforts will be noted and appreciated.
23. Don't make statements lightly - "Students remember!"

Sponge Activities

(can be adapted for any grade level)

A sponge activity is one that "soaks up" extra time. Students can complete the following activities independently, in groups, or as a whole class. Sponges can also be developed to introduce, enhance, or compliment the lesson for the day.

1. How many different languages can you name?
2. Scramble five spelling/vocabulary words from today's lesson, trade with someone and unscramble them.
3. Make a list of the 10 largest animals you can think of.
4. List as many breakfast cereals as you can.
5. Name all the breeds of dogs you know
6. List as many types of flowers as you can.
7. Name as many restaurants as you can.
8. Write down all of the different places you find sand.
9. List as many U.S. presidents as you can.
10. List as many states and their capitals as you can.
11. Name as many holidays as you can think of.
12. Write down all of the different flavors of ice cream you can.
13. Name as many countries of the world that you can think of.
14. List all of the types of transportation you can think of.
15. Name as many teachers at school as you can.
16. Write down as many cartoon characters as you can.
17. Name all of the states that have the letter "E" in them.
18. Name all of the different types of musical instruments as you can.
19. List everything that is in your locker right now.
20. If someone gave you $1000.00 what 5 things would you buy?
21. Write down a manufactured product for each letter of the alphabet.
22. List as many different models of cars as you can.
23. How many baseball teams can you name?
24. Name the different sections of the newspaper.
25. You have 5 children. Makeup their names.

Sponge Activities
(Primary grades)

Beginning of the school day sponges
1. Be ready to tell one playground rule.
2. Be ready to tell me the name of a student in our class whose name begins with "1" or "M" etc.
3. Be ready to draw something that is only drawn with circles.
4. Be ready to tell a good health habit.
5. Pick a color, write it on the board. Have the children draw something that is that color.
6. I went to a sporting goods store and I bought each child names an item.
7. What number comes between 31-33, 45-47, etc.?
8. Have a word written on the board, have the children write down rhyming words.
9. Hangman, using the names of the children in the class
10. Simon Says

Dismissal Sponges

1. "I spy" - who can find room that begins with *"M",*
2. Number the rows or tables numbers by holding up the # for each table.
3. Those children who have all may line up.
4. Those with freckles, missing teeth/etc. may line up now.
5. Say the days of the week or months
6. Reward activity: We have had a good day! Who helped it be a good day for everyone? John - you remembered to wash your hands, please line up. Ellen - you showed us how to be quiet, you may line up. Dawn, you walked nicely all the way to the playground, it is your turn to line up.
7. Use flash cards, first correct answer earns a dismissal
8. To review the four basic shapes, have children name objects of that shape from around the room.
9. Dismiss by color of eyes, hair, clothing, birthdays, etc.
10. What will we remember for tomorrow?

Student Motivation Ideas & Low Cost Rewards

1. Certificates - Can be given to exceptional students at the end of the day or as prizes for classroom
2. Activities.
3. Pencils and Paper Clips - These colorful basics can be used for many rewards or prizes. These are good items to have for team awards or classroom treats at the end of the day.
4. Stickers - Can be given throughout the day to reward good schoolwork or reinforce good behavior, such as lining up quietly or taking turns. These are a favorite of younger students.
5. Tickets - Students can earn tickets throughout the day for being on-task, cooperating, or following They can be turned in at the end of the day for a drawing, or for older student the top three or four ticket holders can win a prize.
6. Extra Recess Time - Allow an extra five minutes of recess. Be sure to check with the Principal and neighboring teachers before hand to make sure this will not interfere with any other schedule the school has.
7. Story Time - As a reward at the end of the day a story can be read. Write the title of a book on the blackboard. A letter is erased each time the students are off task or behaving inappropriately. At the end of the day if any of the letters remain they get to hear the story. Second hand bookstores are great places to look for inexpensive books or use the library to borrow from.
8. Guessing Jar - Fill a large jar with any small items, beans, pennies. marbles, M&M·s. etc. Reward students through the day with slips of paper they can write their name and guess on. At the end of the day reveal the number of items in the jar and award a prize to the student who guessed correctly.
9. Talk Time - Older student enjoy moving to another seat and being allowed the opportunity to visit.
10. This reward can be given at the end of the class period if students have stayed on task and well behaved.
11. To insure on orderly classroom you will need to explain that this extra time will be taken back if the noise level rises and they may only change seats one time.

Ways To Say Good Job!

You've got it made.	You must have been practicing.
That's right!	You're really improving!
Good Work!	That's good!
Great!	Exactly right
Good for you!	That's it!
Now you have it.	I knew you could do it!
Wow!	Couldn't have done it better myself.
Good thinking.	Terrific!
Perfect!	Wonderful!
Keep it up!	Fine!
Fantastic!	Tremendous!
That's clever.	Sensational!
That's coming along nicely.	That's really nice.
That's neat work.	Good thinking.
Super!	I'm impressed!
I've never seen anyone do it better.	It looks like you put a lot of work into this.
Now that's what I call a fine job.	Congratulations, you got it right!
Now you've figured it out!	You've got that mastered.
Beautiful!	One more time and you'll have it.
You haven't missed a thing!	You're getting better and better.
Nice going.	Nothing can stop you now!
You did that very well.	That looks like it is going to be great.
You certainly did well today.	Outstanding!

Substitute "Grab Bag" Items

The following is a list of items you might want to keep in a handy tote bag or box that you can grab on your way out the door when you get those last minute calls to substitute.

1. Pens - two black, two blue, and two red
2. Pencils (already sharpened)
3. A set of Markers and/or Highlighters
4. A roll of transparent tape
5. Scissors
6. Paper Clips
7. A Stapler with staples
8. Post-it notes
9. A small sewing kit (or a needle with a spool of dark and light thread and safety pins)
10. Coffee mug (tea, hot chocolate or instant soup packets)
11. Filler activities to use in case the lesson plan ends early
12. A favorite book, joke book, puppet or similar item to use if needed
13. Dice or number cube for games (if needed)
14. A whistle (in case you need to cover a P.E. class or playground duty)
15. Name tags
16. Treats (stickers, certificates, tickets, or other items that you can use for rewards for good behavior)

Glossary of Terms

Substitute teachers frequently serve students with learning characteristics/challenges of varying degrees. Below are brief descriptions of some of the disability categories and characteristics the students may display.

Intellectual Disabilities (ID): Students have overall lower intellectual abilities. They often learn at a slower rate and need more concrete examples.

Speech Impaired/Language Impaired (LI): Students may exhibit disorders of stuttering, speech sound production, or disfluency. They may have difficulty using words correctly or in understanding the communications of others.

Visually Impaired (VI): Students are unable to see objects and images at normal distances, making special assistance necessary.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing (D/HH): Students are unable to hear sounds at normal volume from normal distances, making special assistance necessary.

Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD): Students are performing academically below their same age/grade peers due to difficulties affecting their ability to listen, speak, read, write speech or perform mathematics.

Emotional/Behavioral Disabilities (E/BD): Students are performing below their abilities due to emotional/behavioral/social interaction challenges.

Orthopedic Impairments (OI): Students have difficulties that affect motor movement, making special assistance necessary.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD): Students may display an uneven developmental profile, such as inconsistencies in language skills, social interaction, and they may display repetitive and/or stereotypical patterns of behavior.

Policies

All Tri-Town School Union policies are posted publicly online at www.tritownschoolunion.com.

Confidentiality in Education

What is the definition of confidentiality?
Confidentiality is the obligation not to disclose willingly any personal information obtained by any means about another person. Confidentiality is based on four (4) basic principles:

1. Respect for an individual's right to privacy.
2. Respect for human relationships in which personal information is shared.
3. Appreciation of the importance of confidentiality to both individuals and society.
4. Expectations that those who pledge to safeguard confidential information will do so.

Are there laws requiring confidentiality in schools?
Yes.
Confidentiality is guaranteed to all students through the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (1974). This law applies to all schools in the United States that receive federal funding, and covers students from age 3 to any person enrolled in college. This law is reinforced by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1991), which protects parents and their children with disabilities ages 3-21.

Who is responsible for ensuring the confidentiality of student records and information?
Any employee of a Public School District has the responsibility to ensure the trust and protection of confidentiality, from bus driver to superintendent.

Exactly what information is confidential?
Information including, but not limited to: test scores, personal problems of both students and co-workers, counseling data, student records, student progress, student scheduling, disciplinary actions etc.; should not be shared. In short, information that you learn about a co-worker, child, or other child's family as a result of working in the school is confidential.

Can personal information ever be shared with anyone?
Information may be shared with co-workers who directly affect the advancement of the education of the child or with agencies concerned with the child's welfare. This would also include supervising staff and administration. Information should be shared in private spaces where it is unlikely staff will be overheard by other children or adults. Teachers have the professional responsibility to act in the best interest of the student when making decisions to divulge confidential information.

When in doubt, an employee should:
- Remember that confidentiality resides with the student
- Advise the administration
- Know the pertinent laws and expectations
- Be accountable for all decisions regarding the student
- Above all, act professionally

CORI Forms

Each year new regulations and laws enacted that affect the operation of schools and school districts. In addition, there are important amendments made to current regulations. On November 27, 2002, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted Chapter 385 of the Acts of 2002, An Act Further Protecting Children. This statute requires that all schools conduct Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI) record checks on all current and prospective employees, volunteers, school transportation providers, and any others who may have direct and unmonitored contact with

children.

Fingerprinting

In January 2013, Governor Patrick signed into law Chapter 459 of the Acts of 2012 “An Act Relative to Background Checks.” All employees for public schools must complete a National Background Check by way of fingerprint.

You will receive information on where to go to obtain your fingerprints when you are completing your employment paperwork for payroll purposes (which includes completing a CORI form) at the Superintendent’s Office.

Please note that your employment is contingent upon receiving favorable results from the National Background Check (fingerprinting) as well as a CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information).

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

The Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination against, students, parents, employees or the general public on the basis of sex. The Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield Public Schools is also committed to maintaining a school environment free of harassment based on sex, including harassment based on gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy or pregnancy status. The Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield Public Schools’ policy of nondiscrimination extends to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield Public Schools or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of sex.

How to Report Sexual Harassment: Individuals are encouraged to report allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator(s) identified below or the Principal. Any report of sexual harassment, as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be responded to promptly in accordance with the District’s Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures, available at: https://bit.ly/3nri4mN. Reports of discriminatory harassment not constituting sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, will be initially addressed through the District’s Title IX Harassment Grievance Procedure and may, if dismissed under that procedure, be investigated in accordance with the District’s Civil Rights Grievance Procedures, available at: https://bit.ly/36M8dls.

Upon receipt of a report of sexual harassment, the Title IX Coordinator will: (1) promptly and confidentially contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures; (2) inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint; (3) consider the complainant’s wishes with respect to supportive measures; (4) if

the school district does not provide the complainant with supportive measures, document the reasons why such response was reasonable; and (5) explain to the complainant the process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint.

Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be directed to the District's Title IX Coordinator and/or the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights.

The District's Title IX Coordinator is:

Brian Middleton-Cox, Ed.D.
Director of Human Resources
Tri-Town School Union
35 Village Road, Suite 400
Middleton, MA 01949
978-393-2055
Email: bmiddleton-cox@tritownschoolunion.com

TRI-TOWN SCHOOL UNION
(Topsfield, Boxford & Middleton Elementary Schools)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE
SUBSTITUTE TEACHER HANDBOOK

I understand that via the Tri-Town School Union website (http://www.tritownschoolunion.com), I have access to the Substitute Teacher Handbook. I understand it is my responsibility to read the Substitute Teacher Handbook and become familiar with its contents.

I understand that nothing contained in the Substitute Teacher Handbook will constitute any employment contract with the Topsfield, Boxford or Public Schools. Nothing contained in the Substitute Teacher Handbook is intended to interfere with any rights or benefits protected by law.

I understand that I am responsible for complying with the policies, rules and procedures set forth in the Substitute Teacher Handbook, as amended and supplemented by the Topsfield, Boxford or Public Schools.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION SUBSTITUTE ACCESS
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

I understand that all Topsfield, Boxford & Public Schools electronic and telephonic communication systems (e.g., email, voice mail, telephones, computers, fax machines, etc.) and all information transmitted by, received from, or stored in those systems are the property of Topsfield, Boxford & Public Schools. I also understand that these systems are to be used primarily for job-related purposes. Although limited personal use of these systems is authorized, provided it does not interfere with the substitute's work or the business of the Topsfield, Boxford & Public Schools, I acknowledge that I have no expectation of privacy in connection with the use of these systems or with the transmission, receipt, or storage of information on these systems.

I agree not to use a code, access a file, or retrieve any stored communication on these systems unless authorized by the Topsfield, Boxford & Public Schools. I acknowledge and consent to the Topsfield, Boxford & Public Schools monitoring my use of these systems at any time at its discretion. Such monitoring may include printing and reading all e-mail entering, leaving, or stored in Topsfield, Boxford & Public Schools' systems.

Substitute Signature Print Name Date

Please return this page to the Superintendent's Office.

Tri-Town School Union
Serving the Elementary Schools of Boxford, Middleton, and Topsfield

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

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APPENDIX A: BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

I. LEADERSHIP

A. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the Tri-Town School Union has developed a plan in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. Consultation included, notice and a public comment period before the plan was adopted by the school committee. The Tri-Town School Union included a needs assessments, working groups, task forces, and public meetings. The plan identified the ways that each of the various constituencies are involved.

B. Assessing needs and resources: The plan enhances capacity to prevent and respond to issues of bullying within the context of our other healthy school climate initiatives. As part of the planning process, school leaders, with input from families and staff, assessed the adequacy of current programs; reviewed current policies and procedures; reviewed available data on bullying and behavioral incidents; and assessed available resources including curricula, training programs, and behavioral health services.

- At least once every four years beginning with 2018/19 school year, the district will assess school climate and the prevalence, nature, and severity of bullying in our schools and amend and edit the current policy as needed . In addition the district will annually report bullying incident data to the

Department.

C. Planning and oversight:

The Principal/designee are responsible for the following tasks:

1) receiving reports on bullying;
2) collecting and analyzing building- and/or school-wide data on bullying to assess the present problem and to measure improved outcomes;
3) creating a process for recording and tracking incident reports, and for accessing information related to targets and aggressors;
4) planning for the ongoing professional development that is required by the law;
5) planning supports that respond to the needs of targets and aggressors;
6) choosing and implementing the curricula that the school or district will use;
7) developing new or revising current policies and protocols under the plan, including an Internet safety policy, and designating key staff to be in charge of implementation of them;
8) amending student and staff handbooks and codes of conduct to, among other things, make clear that bullying of students by school staff or other students will not be tolerated;
9) leading the parent or family engagement efforts and drafting parent information materials;
10) reviewing and updating the Plan each year, or more frequently.

D. Priority statements: The following are the Tri-Town School Union priority statements:

The district expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a civil manner and with respect for differences.

The district is committed to providing all students with a safe learning environment that is free from bullying and cyberbullying. This commitment is an integral part of our comprehensive efforts to promote learning, and to prevent and eliminate all forms of bullying and other harmful and disruptive behavior that can impede the learning process.

We recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become targets of bullying, harassment, or teasing based on actual or perceived characteristics, including race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic, status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, or sensory, disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. The district will identify specific steps it will take to create a safe, supportive environment for vulnerable populations in the school community, and provide all students with the skills, knowledge, and strategies to prevent or respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

The district may establish separate discrimination or harassment policies that include these or other categories of students. Nothing in this section shall alter our obligation to remediate any discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state or federal law

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

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan is a comprehensive approach to addressing bullying and cyberbullying, and the school or district is committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies, and the community to prevent issues of violence. In consultation with these constituencies, we have

established this Plan for preventing, intervening, and responding to incidents of bullying, cyberbullying, and retaliation. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan except when a reported bullying incident involves the principal or the assistant principal as the alleged aggressor. In such cases, the Superintendent or designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged target. If the Superintendent is the alleged aggressor, the School Committee, or its designee shall be responsible for investigating the report, and other steps necessary to implement the plan, including addressing the safety of the alleged victim.

II. TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Annual staff training on the plan: Annual training for all school staff on the plan will include staff duties under the plan, an overview of the steps that the principal or designee will follow upon receipt of a report of bullying or retaliation, and an overview of the bullying prevention curricula to be offered at all grades throughout the school or district. Staff members hired after the start of the school year are required to participate in school-based training during the school year in which they are hired.

B. Ongoing professional development: There will be an ongoing professional development plan to establish a common understanding of tools necessary for staff to create a school climate that promotes safety, civil communication, and respect for differences. Professional development will build the skills of staff members to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying. As required by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the content of schoolwide and district wide professional development will be informed by research and will include information on:

(i) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies to prevent bullying;
(ii) developmentally (or age-) appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents;
(iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among an aggressor, target, and witnesses to the bullying;
(iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment;
(v) information on the incidence and nature of cyberbullying; and
(vi) Internet safety issues as they relate to cyberbullying.

Professional development also address ways to prevent and respond to bullying or retaliation for students with disabilities that must be considered when developing students' Individualized Education Programs (IEPs). This will include a particular focus on the needs of students with autism or students whose disability affects social skills development.

C. Written notice to staff: The district will provide all staff with an annual written notice of the plan by publishing information about it, including sections related to staff duties and bullying of students by school staff, in the school or district employee handbook and the code of conduct.

III. ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND SERVICES

A. Identifying resources: Our plan include the school's or district's process for identifying its capacity to provide counseling and other services for targets, student aggressors, and their families. This includes a review of current staffing and programs that support the creation of positive school environments by focusing on early interventions and intensive services. This mapping of resources allows the district to develop recommendations and action steps to fill resource and service gaps. This may include adopting new curricula, reorganizing staff, establishing safety planning teams, and identifying other agencies that can provide services.

B. Counseling and other services: Our plan identifies the availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources within the school and district and identifies linkages with community based organizations, including Community Service Agencies (CSAs) for Medicaid eligible students. In addition, the plan identifies staff and service providers who provide the resources and necessary supports to restore a sense of safety for the victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection. For students who have been targets of bullying or retaliation, we provide social skills programs to prevent bullying, and offering education and/or intervention services for students exhibiting bullying behaviors.

C. Students with disabilities: As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3, as amended by Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010, when the IEP Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment, or teasing because of his/her disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

D. Referral to outside services: The district has established a referral protocol for referring students and families to outside services. Referrals comply with relevant laws and policies and are evaluated to assess their relevance to the plan, and revised as needed.

IV. ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The current priorities and approaches used, in the Tri-Town School Union, address the non-cognitive competencies based on the foundation of the following 4 quadrants.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is the belief in one's ability to succeed in achieving an outcome or reaching a goal. High self-efficacy reflects confidence in the ability to exert control over one's own motivation, behavior, and environment and allows students to become advocates for their own needs and supports. Decades of research show that self-efficacy is a valid predictor of students' motivation and learning. Students with high levels of self-efficacy participate more in class, persist longer, and have fewer adverse emotional reactions when encountering difficulties than students with lower self-efficacy. High self-efficacy can also motivate students to use specific learning strategies and to engage in self-directed learning.

Self-Management

Self-management, which is also referred to as "self-control" or "self-regulation," is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations. This includes managing stress, delaying gratification, motivating oneself, and setting and working toward personal and academic goals. Students with strong self-management skills arrive to class prepared, pay attention, follow directions, allow others to speak without interruption, and work independently with focus. Self-control in children has been linked to a wide range of adult outcomes ranging from high school and college completion to physical health and financial stability.

Growth Mindset

Growth mindset is the belief that one's abilities can grow with effort. Students with a growth mindset believe that they can develop their skills through effort, practice, and perseverance. These students embrace challenges, see mistakes as opportunities to learn, and persist in the face of setbacks. Multiple longitudinal studies have shown that growth mindset is linked to increased motivation, better grades, and higher test scores. Students with a growth mindset work harder and spend more time on a subject instead of giving up when things get difficult. Teachers report that students who receive an intervention to develop growth mindset demonstrate greater effort and interest in the classroom.

Social Awareness

Social awareness is the ability to take the perspective of and empathize with others from diverse backgrounds and cultures, to understand social and ethical norms for behavior, and to recognize family, school, and community resources and supports. Studies show that students who demonstrate strong social awareness are able to engage in constructive communication with their peers and resolve conflicts when they arise. A recent longitudinal study demonstrated that, even after controlling for socioeconomic status and early academic ability, higher social competence in kindergarten led to higher odds of graduating from high school and college.

A. Specific bullying prevention approaches: Bullying prevention instruction will be informed by current research which, among other things, emphasizes the following approaches:

•using scripts and role plays to develop skills;

•empowering students to take action by knowing what to do when they witness other students or school staff engaged in acts of bullying or retaliation, including seeking adult assistance;
•helping students understand the dynamics of bullying and cyberbullying, including the underlying power imbalance;
•emphasizing cybersafety, including safe and appropriate use of electronic communication technologies;
•enhancing students' skills for engaging in healthy relationships and respectful communications; and
•engaging students in a safe, supportive school environment that is respectful of diversity and difference.
Initiatives will teach students about the student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

B. General teaching approaches that support bullying prevention efforts: The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:
- setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines;
- creating safe school and classroom environments for all students, including for students with disabilities, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender students, and homeless students;
- using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline;
- using positive behavioral supports;
- encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students;
- modeling, teaching, and rewarding pro-social, healthy, and respectful behaviors;
- using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving, conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development;
- using the Internet safely; and
- supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND RETALIATION

A. Reporting bullying or retaliation: Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or assistant principal is the alleged aggressor or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor, any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. The school or district will make a variety of reporting resources available to the school community including, but not limited to, an Incident Reporting Form,[1] the school's voicemail, the school's mailing and email addresses.

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

At the beginning of each school year, the district will provide the school community, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, paraprofessionals, students, and parents or guardians, with written notice of its policies for reporting acts of bullying and retaliation. A description of the reporting procedures and resources, including the name and contact information of the principal or designee, and the superintendent or designee when the principal or the assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, will be incorporated in student and staff handbooks, on the school or district website, and in information about the Plan that is made available to parents or guardians.

[1] See Appendix A for Incident Reporting Form.

1. Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the principal or designee, or to the superintendent or designee when the principal or the assistant principal is the alleged aggressor, or to the school committee or designee when the superintendent is the alleged aggressor when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report as provided does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

2. Reporting by Students, Parents or Guardians, and Others

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

B. Responding to a report of bullying or retaliation – Allegations of Bullying by a Student:

1. Safety

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

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has reported bullying or retaliation, a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation, a student who provides information during an investigation, or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

2. Obligations to Notify Others

a. Notice to parents or guardians**:** Upon determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the student aggressor of this, and of the procedures for responding to it. There may be circumstances in which the principal or designee contacts parents or guardians prior to any investigation. Notice will be consistent with state regulations at 603 CMR 49.00.

b. Notice to Another School or District: If the reported incident involves students from more than one school district, charter school, non-public school, approved private special education day or residential school, or collaborative school, the principal or designee

first informed of the incident will promptly notify by telephone the principal or designee of the other school(s) of the incident so that each school may take appropriate action. All communications will be in accordance with state and federal privacy laws and regulations, and 603 CMR 49.00.

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

In making this determination, the principal will, consistent with the plan and with applicable school or district policies and procedures, consult with the school resource officer, if any, and other individuals the principal or designee deems appropriate.

C. Investigation: The principal or designee will investigate promptly all reports of bullying or retaliation and, in doing so, will consider all available information known, including the nature of the allegation(s) and the ages of the students involved.

During the investigation the principal or designee will, among other things, interview students, staff, witnesses, parents or guardians, and others as necessary. The principal or designee (or whoever is conducting the investigation) will remind the alleged student aggressor, target, and witnesses of the importance of the investigation, their obligation to be truthful and that retaliation against someone who reports bullying or provides information during a bullying investigation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

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

Procedures for investigating reports of bullying and retaliation will be consistent with school or district policies and procedures for investigations. If necessary, the principal or designee will consult with legal counsel about the investigation.

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

Depending upon the circumstances, the principal or designee may choose to consult with the students' teacher(s) and/or school counselor, and the target's or student aggressor's parents or guardians, to identify any underlying social or emotional issue(s) that may have contributed to the bullying behavior and to assess the level of need for additional social skills development.

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the principal or

designee cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations.

The principal or designee shall inform the parent or guardian of the target about the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's problem resolution system and the process for accessing that system, regardless of the outcome of the bullying determination.

E. Responses to Bullying:

1. Teaching Appropriate Behavior Through Skills-building

Upon the principal or designee determining that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the law requires that the school or district use a range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O (d) (v). Skill-building approaches that the principal or designee may consider include:

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

2. Taking Disciplinary Action

If the principal or designee decides that disciplinary action is appropriate, the disciplinary action will be determined on the basis of facts found by the principal or designee, including the nature of the conduct, the age of the student(s) involved, **and the need to balance accountability with the teaching of appropriate behavior.** Discipline will be consistent with the plan and with the district's code of conduct.

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

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

3. Promoting Safety for the Target and Others

The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the target's sense of safety and that of others as well. One strategy that the principal or designee may use is to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

Within a reasonable period of time following the determination and the ordering of remedial and/or disciplinary action, the principal or designee will contact the target to determine whether there has been a recurrence of the

prohibited conduct and whether additional supportive measures are needed. If so, the principal or designee will work with appropriate school staff to implement them immediately.

F. Responding to a Report of Bullying by School Staff:

Any adult-to-student or adult-to-adult bullying incident should be reported to a school administrator when experienced or witnessed. The administrator shall follow all due process requirements, conduct an immediate and thorough investigation, and take action with sanctions if appropriate. The administrator shall keep detailed notes and records of the entire process and file a written report, with all investigatory notes and documents, with the Superintendent within five (5) working days of the reported incident. In each case, whenever possible, written, dated and signed statements should be taken from all parties involved. These statements should be included with the report. In addition, the aggressor should be requested to sign the report, to verify that he/she has read and received a copy of the report. All records of adult bullying incidents shall be maintained in the appropriate employee's official personnel file at the Central Office.

VI. COLLABORATION WITH FAMILIES

This plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the district to prevent and respond to bullying. Resources for families and communication will be provided and are essential aspects of effective collaboration. The plan includes provisions for informing parents or guardians about the bullying prevention and intervention programming used by the district including: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the programming at home and support the school or district plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyberbullying. The student-related sections of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan are available online to all parents and guardians. The plan includes strategies to engage and collaborate with students' families in order to increase the capacity of the district to prevent and respond to bullying.

A. Parent education and resources: The district will offer education programs for parents and guardians that are focused on the parental components of the anti-bullying programming and any social competency curricula used by the district or school. The programs will be offered in collaboration with the PTO, PTA, School Councils, Special Education Parent Advisory Council, or similar organizations.

B. Notification requirements: Each year the district will inform parents or guardians of enrolled students about the anti-bullying programming that is being used. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying, including cyberbullying and online safety. The district will post the student-related sections of the plan and the school's or district's Internet safety policy. All notices and information made available to parents or guardians will be in hard copy and electronic formats, and will be available in the language(s) most prevalent among parents or guardians. The district will post the plan and related information on its website.

VII. PROHIBITION AGAINST BULLYING AND RETALIATION

Acts of bullying, which include cyberbullying, are prohibited:

(i) on school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function, or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, and

(ii) at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses, infringe on their rights at school, or materially and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

As stated in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, nothing in this plan requires the district or school to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

VIII. Problem Resolution System:

Any parent wishing to file a claim/concern or seeking assistance outside of the district may do so with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Program Resolution System (PRS). That information can be found at: http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa, emails can be sent to compliance@doe.mass.edu or individuals can call 781-338-3700. Hard copies of this information is also available at the Superintendent's office.

IX. DEFINITIONS

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, as noted below.

Aggressor is a student or a member of a school staff who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation towards a student.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of a school staff of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Cyberbullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings. See M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O for the legal definition of cyberbullying.

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

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

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

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

X. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER LAWS

Consistent with state and federal laws, and the policies of the school or district, no person shall be discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privilege and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, sexual orientation, or mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, or by association with a person who has or is perceived to have one or more of these characteristics. Nothing in the Plan prevents the school or district from taking action to remediate discrimination or harassment based on a person's membership in a legally protected category under local, state, or federal law, or school or district policies.

In addition, nothing in the Plan is designed or intended to limit the authority of the school or district to take disciplinary action or other action under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½, M.G.L. c. 71, §§41 and 42, M.G.L.c 76 § 5, or other applicable laws, or local school or district policies, or collective bargaining agreements, in response to violent, harmful, or disruptive behavior, regardless of whether the Plan covers the behavior.

APPENDIX A: BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

Tri-Town School Union School Committee Policies Table of Contents

Click here to navigate the TTU policy manual.