

2026 – 2027

Student Handbook
Raymond J. Grey Junior High School



Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

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Welcome to Raymond J. Grey Junior High School

Dear RJ Grey students and families,

I hope you've had a safe, relaxing, and fun summer! While you've been away, we've been making plans for the 26-27 school year. We are hoping that it will be a year full of joy, community, and learning for all of us.

As you transition to either 7th or 8th grade, we hope you build the skills to be successful learners. We seek to make you strong readers, writers, critical thinkers, and problem solvers! Your teachers will ask you to read and write, solve problems, think deeply, and be strong participants in your classroom communities. We'll also design opportunities for you to connect with classmates and teachers. Having students well-connected to the other people at RJ Grey helps to create the safe and supportive community we all desire. We need your investment in all of this work and I am sure you will rise to the challenge!

This student handbook outlines many of the practices and procedures that a student and family will need to be familiar with, as well as certain school committee policies that are helpful to understand. Please take a chance to read through this handbook, as it will tell you a lot about our school community. Teachers will spend some time unpacking the student handbook at the start of the year so that all students are aware of the expectations that come with being a member of the RJ Grey community. If you have questions after reading this document, please reach out to us.

If you are brand new to RJ Grey, meaning you have recently moved to our district, or if you are entering RJ Grey from an AB elementary school, welcome! We are eager to see everyone at the end of August, and we hope you are ready to learn and have fun this year!

Sincerely,

Jim Marcotte

Principal

Home/School Connections

R.J. Grey Website

Information about the school and school activities can also be found on the junior high school website:

<http://rjgrey.abschools.org/>

Principal's Email List

The Main Office sends the daily announcements and other information through email. Families may sign up for this mailing list by visiting our website. In addition, each week our principal sends an *Eye on the Junior High* message to families.

Teacher Email

Each teacher has an email address in the following format: e.g. John Doe: jdoe@abschools.org. For a list of teachers by grade, please access the junior high school website.

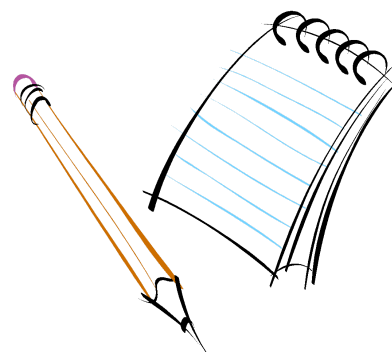
School Council

The R. J. Grey School Council, mandated by the Education Reform Act, consists of elected parents/guardians, teachers, community members, and student representatives, and is led by the school principal. Meetings are held six times throughout the school year to discuss relevant concerns and issues, as well as to develop a school improvement plan. Meetings are open to all. Meeting times and more details can be found online at <https://rjgrey.abschools.org/school-council>.

Acton-Boxborough Regional PTSO

The Acton-Boxborough Regional Parent Teacher Student Organization (PTSO) includes representatives from the junior high and senior high schools. The PTSO's purpose is to improve, provide, and maintain communication among parents/guardians, faculty, students, administrators, school committee, and community members, and to provide a framework for promoting excellence at both schools. Board members are from both schools and sponsor monthly meetings featuring a speaker from the school system, updates from both principals, and general discussion. These open meetings are advertised in the newsletters and via email. Board members are elected for one-year terms in May.

The PTSO also has an informational email list (The Weekly Chatter) that parents/guardians are welcome to join. This is used frequently at the Junior High for reminders and last minute information. The list is maintained by the PTSO Co-Chairs. The PTSO also maintains an updated website which can be accessed at <https://www.abrptso.org/>.



What is expected at R. J. Grey?

One big idea: Respect yourself, respect each other, and respect your school.

How can I be a successful student?

- Have an open mind and a positive attitude
- Believe in myself
- Ask questions and ask for help
- Be an active learner

Active Learners:

Keep organized:

- use a plan book
- plan time wisely
- come prepared to class
- keep organized notebooks
- meet deadlines

Work effectively alone and in groups:

- participate fully in class
- accept help and suggestions
- work cooperatively
- pay attention and use class time well
- participate fairly in group work
- help and encourage others

Take responsibility for their own learning:

- do homework thoroughly
- take pride in their work
- ask for and/or stay for extra help when needed
- read
- work to succeed with challenging concepts and new ideas

Use active study skills:

- write, read aloud, or record information
- study with peers
- access available resources and supports

Demonstrate academic integrity:

- respect RJG equipment, materials, and property
- complete their own work
- give credit to the work, research, and ideas of others
- refrain from sharing work



Academic Progress

How will my parents/guardians know what I am learning and how I am doing?

Hopefully, you will share your life at school with your parent/guardian; they can encourage and support you as you learn. Additionally, there are several formal methods of communication that occur between your teachers and your parent/guardian.

Back-To-School Night

Each fall, R. J. Grey holds an annual “Back-to-School” night for parents/guardians of 7th and 8th graders. Parents/Guardians will be informed about the format and date for this event.

Interim Reports

Interim reports will typically be emailed home mid-trimester or whenever your parent/guardian needs to know that your work or behavior needs improvement or has improved. An interim report does not necessarily mean a failing grade and sometimes an interim report can be sent home to communicate good news! In general, however, should you receive an interim report and have related questions, you or your parents should contact the teacher directly.

Report Cards

Report cards are emailed directly to parents/guardians about two weeks after the end of each trimester while the final report card of the year is mailed home in July.

A	outstanding quality	P	pass by meeting basic requirements
B	good to very good quality	I	incomplete; needs to make up work or “F” results
C	satisfactory quality	W	withdrawal
D	poor quality	M	medical excuse
F	failure to meet basic requirements		

Exploratory subjects and Phys Ed/Health are not assigned letter grades. Rather, students will be graded as *Exemplary*, *Proficient*, *Needs Improvement*, or *Fail*. Teachers may include comments in areas such as your learning, work habits, behavior, attitude or participation.

Honor Roll

If you earn all “As” and/or “Bs” in English, Math, Social Studies, Science, and a World Language, you will be placed on the Honor Roll. To earn High Honor Roll status, you must receive all A's in these major subjects. An unsatisfactory grade in any exploratory course will make you ineligible for either Honor Roll.

Promotion

To move on to the next grade, you must earn a passing grade for the year in four of the five required subjects - Science, Social Studies, Math, Physical Education, and English.

Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are brief meetings to review student progress. Parents may also request a meeting with a student’s team teachers at any point during the year by calling the Counseling Office at 978-264-3350,

Press 4. The team meeting allows for parents to hear specific feedback from teachers about their student, and it also allows the parent to share insights about their child.

Curriculum

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

About the School Day

How will I know if there is no school?

In case of a school closing or a delayed opening, we will initiate a Parent Square call generally by 6 AM. You can also check on the radio (WBZ, WHDH, WRKO-AM / WBMX-FM, WEIM) or watch channels 4, 5, or 7 for school closings or delays.

What If I Am Too Sick To Go To School?

It's very important that you try your hardest to come to school every day, but if you are too sick, then there are several things you should do:

1. Your parent/guardian should call the absence line at (978) 264-3350, Press 2 for Absentee Line by 8:00 AM and state your *name, team, and a brief reason for absence or tardy*
2. Have phone numbers of some people in your classes so you can call them that night and find out what you missed and get homework assignments. You can also check teacher websites to see if any updated homework is posted.
3. If you are absent for **three or more consecutive days**, your parent/guardian may email or call the front office by 10 am for work to be collected for you for the days you have missed so far. The work can be picked up at the front office no earlier than 3 pm on the day of the request.
4. Check in with all your teachers when you return. You are responsible for making up all missed work within a reasonable amount of time (e.g. same number of days as absence).
For more detailed information, please see the Other Important Information and Policies section.

Dress Code

The intent of our school dress code is to create a positive environment that is conducive to the learning and safety of students.

Values:

- Students should be able to dress in a way that allows for individual expression, without the fear of unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- The RJ Grey student population is diverse with regard to race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, religion, cultural observance, household income, body type/size and body maturity. Enforcement of our dress code will be consistent and will not create disparities or reinforce or increase marginalization of any group.

- Staff and students will be expected to manage their own personal distractions.
- Our school dress code should not create any unnecessary barriers to school attendance.

Guidelines for Student Dress:

- Clothing must cover private parts in opaque (not able to be seen-through) material.
- Undergarments may not be worn in place of tops or bottoms.
- Students may not wear or display items such as chains, spikes, heavy rope bands, and other potentially dangerous articles on or around various parts of the body.
- School officials will not interfere with the rights of students as far as personal dress and appearance, unless it is determined that a student's dress or appearance causes a substantial disruption in school by:
 - violating reasonable standards of health, safety and/or cleanliness
 - infringing on the rights of others
 - demonstrating association/affiliation of hate groups or depicting hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or other protected groups
 - describing or depicting illegal activities (e.g. use of drugs or weapons) or prohibited conduct

Enforcement:

Staff will use reasonable efforts to avoid dress-coding students in front of other students. Students will not be disciplined or removed from class as a consequence for wearing attire in violation of this policy unless the attire creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment, poses a hazard to the health or safety of others, or factors into a student behavior rule violation such as harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

Consequences for a violation of school dress code include parent/guardian contact or conference and the directive to cover, change, or remove the non-complying attire. A student may be instructed to leave their classroom briefly to change clothes. An administrator will notify a student's parent/guardian of the school's response to violations of the student dress code policy.

Are there any items that I can't bring to school?

According to state law and school policy, weapons of any kind, alcohol, illegal drugs, drug paraphernalia, tobacco (chewing or smoking) and vaporizer devices ("vape pens", "electronic cigarettes", etc.) are not allowed in school. In addition, any items that are disruptive to the educational process or that jeopardize one's health and safety are not allowed.

What about cell phones and smart watches?

The primary purpose of the school day is to ensure that students have access to the teaching and learning experiences that are central to our school's mission. To maintain this focus, students who choose to bring cell phones, smart watches, smart glasses, earbuds, or other personal electronic devices used for communication, entertainment, or recording to school **MUST** keep them powered off and stored in their lockers for the entire school day (8:00 a.m. to 2:36 p.m.).

Students may not carry a cell phone in a pocket, backpack, or other personal possession, nor may they wear or use a smart watch, smart glasses, or any other electronic communication device during the school day. Doing so is a violation of school rules.

Students who need to use a phone during the school day may do so in the Main Office or Counseling Office, with permission from office staff. Parents and guardians who need to contact their child during the school day should call the Main Office. School staff will ensure that messages are delivered to students as appropriate.

In addition, students are not permitted to wear headphones, earbuds, or any similar device during the school day, including in the hallways and cafeteria, even when the devices are disconnected. Headphones, earbuds, etc. are allowed in classes when using technology under the direction of the staff.

The first time a student violates this rule, school staff will confiscate the device and the student will be required to pick up the device in the Main Office after the school day ends. For a second offense, school staff will confiscate the device, the student may serve a lunch detention and the student's parent/guardian will be contacted. Students who violate this rule more than twice will have the device confiscated and will be subject to a loss of school privileges and additional disciplinary consequences.

How must I act on the bus?

The bus driver is in charge and general school rules apply. You should respect the bus driver and the bus rules. If you act inappropriately, you will be held accountable at school and you may lose your bus riding privileges. *Please see the section on [Behavior and Discipline](#)*

Where do I put my bike if I ride it to school?

There are bike racks outside the building on the side of the staff parking lot, as well as near the front circle, near the entrance to the gym. Lock up your bike!

What if I get to school early?

Students will be informed about where to go when they arrive at school. The school building will open at 7:35 am. No student may arrive before 7:35.

Drop-off and Pick-up

All students must be dropped off and picked up in the LOWER PARKING LOT off Charter Road. Parents and guardians cannot access the rear staff parking lots to pick up their child(ren).

What should I know about lockers?

Each student is assigned a locker to store their backpack and items that they do not need to carry to most classes such as jackets, lunchboxes, cell phones, small musical instruments, etc. **Students may not carry backpacks during the day.**

Keep your locker clean and in good condition. Do not use tape or stickers in your locker; magnets work well. You may not display inappropriate pictures in your locker. Most importantly, **do not give out your locker combination** - even to your best friend! Also, always be sure to lock your locker! Unfortunately, there is always a chance that something might go missing from your locker if it is not locked properly. Make sure to spin the lock after you close your locker to prevent someone from being able to open your locker without your combination. If you find that something is missing from your locker, see your Assistant Principal for a theft report form. It is important to note that the school cannot be responsible for personal items that get lost or stolen. If you have any problems with your locker, check with the office.

All lockers are school property. The school retains the master key to all lockers and all lockers are subject to search by authorized school personnel.

Are there items that I must leave in my locker until the end of the day?

Yes, items such as skateboards, roller blades, personally-owned devices used for communication and/or entertainment (including but not limited to cell phones, smart watches, cameras, portable music devices, and laser pointers) must be kept in your locker during the school day BUT you are taking a risk by bringing them to school at all - think twice about this! If any of these items are out during the day, they may be confiscated. Please remember that the use of skateboards in our building or on school grounds is prohibited. If it is necessary for you to bring a cell phone to school, it needs to be turned OFF and kept in your locker from 8:00 - 2:36.

Can I decorate the outside of my friend's locker on his/her birthday?

No. We do not permit locker decorations on the outside of lockers. While decorating lockers is always well-intentioned, we have found that it can also cause students to feel left out or socially excluded.

What if I get to school late?

It is important to get to school on time - you should make a strong effort to arrive early enough to get to your first class of the day before 8:00 AM. If you arrive after 8:00, check in at the office and get a tardy slip to your first class. Your parent/guardian should call the Attendance line (978-264-3350, Press 2). For more information, please see the [Other Important Information and Policies](#) section of this handbook.

What if I need to be dismissed?

[Bring a note from a parent/guardian](#) and give it to the main office at the beginning of the day, and they will provide you with a dismissal pass to give to your teacher. If a parent determines that a child needs to be dismissed but has not sent in a note, the parent or guardian must come into the office and sign the dismissal form. If a student is dismissed but returns to school later in the day, the student needs to check in at the office to change the status of his/her attendance.

What happens at the beginning of the school day?

7:35 - Doors open. Students may enter the building and go directly to the auditorium, library or cafeteria, where they must remain until the bell rings at 7:45.

7:45-7:55 - Students go to their lockers to drop off their backpack, lunch, jacket, etc. and to gather materials needed for the first few classes of the day. Students may then go directly to their homeroom.

7:55 - All students report to homeroom.

8:00 - Bell rings, marking the beginning of the school day and beginning of homeroom. During the next few minutes, we will take care of school business: attendance, daily announcements, student council reports, etc.

What bells will ring during the day?

Bells ring to signify the beginning and end of each class. Throughout the day, 7th and 8th grade classes will end at the same time and all students will transition to their next assigned classroom. This means that there will typically be two bells that ring following each class:

First bell - end of class

Second bell - beginning of next class

It is important for students to arrive to classes no later than the second bell.

What will my schedule look like? How will I know where to go when I get to school?

Your team teachers will make sure you understand your schedule. Remember, your teammates will be moving between classes at the same time.

Assembly Expectations

Throughout the school year we will have team, grade, and school wide assemblies. All students must follow the following guidelines while participating in school assemblies:

- Enter the auditorium using an indoor voice
- When the speaker comes to the front, give them your immediate attention
- Use applause to show appreciation and respect
- Listen respectfully and enjoy the show
- When the assembly is over, wait to be dismissed

How is my team determined? Will my team or classes ever be switched during the middle of the year?

Team assignments are made over the summer and much thought is put into balancing teams for many variables, including gender, world language preference, elementary school, and other items. We cannot accommodate requests for changes to be with friends, preference of a certain teacher, or other factors. While the goal of making team and class assignments is for them to last all year, there may come a time when the school needs to make a change of team or rearrange the order of a student's on-team or off-team classes. We recognize that a disruption to a student's schedule during the middle of the year may present certain challenges, so we will consider any change carefully before disrupting a student's schedule. Students and parents will be informed of the impending change.

How much time do I have to get to my next class?

The passing time is three minutes. It is important to get to class on time; the teacher can assign a detention if you are late.

Should I go to my locker before every class?

No. You may need to stop at your locker 2-3 times during the day, but you should not need to go before every class. When you do stop at your locker, plan accordingly and get the things you'll need for your next few classes. You will likely need to bring your Chromebook to every class (except for PE).

What behavior is expected of me in and around the school building?

There are a lot of students (and adults, too!) in our school. Please RESPECT one another by treating each person the way you'd want to be treated. This is your school, so remember that your behavior sets the tone. Help keep R. J. Grey a welcoming and inclusive place to spend the day.

Can I leave a class to go to the bathroom or to my locker?

Yes, you may go to the bathroom with the teacher's permission and a hall pass. You may not be able to go to your locker once class has started; your teacher will give you his/her procedure on that. Advice: since you miss class information and learning when you are out of the room, plan ahead so you do not need to go to your locker.

Does everyone take physical education?

Yes. The only excuse is a medical one. A parent/guardian's note can excuse you for up to one week; after that, a physician's note is required. In addition, all students are required to dress appropriately for physical education. This includes athletic sneakers and comfortable outfit which allows for physical movement. Please see the dress code for more detailed information.

Physical Education classes will be graded on an Exemplary, Proficient, Needs Improvement, or Fail basis. Grades in Physical Education classes will be determined based on dressing appropriately every day, active participation in class, effort put into learning the skills being taught, and a good attitude. Students will be marked down if the criteria listed above are not met during each Physical Education class.

What are the library guidelines?

1. Please respect the rights of others to a quiet place.
2. Materials may be checked out for two weeks. Please return them on time or renew them.
3. Take care of all library materials. You need to pay for lost or damaged materials.
4. Students have individual access to the library before and after school, and most anytime during the day with a pass from a teacher.

What do I need to know about my abschools email address?

RJ Grey Junior High School recognizes that the ability to share work in an online environment is important for students and teachers in the 21st Century. RJ Grey issues an individual email address to each student to be used with other members of the RJ Grey community. This email address will allow you to communicate with your teachers and classmates in order to extend your learning environment beyond the end of the school day, but it will not allow you to send emails to or receive emails from any address outside of the RJ Grey community.

This email address will allow you to access various applications that are available through Google Apps for Education, including the ability to share documents with classmates and teachers. Your teachers will tell you about their own expectations for use of email and other applications. Remember that anything you write online can be seen by others – think very carefully about what you choose to write in an email or share with others. If you wouldn't say something to someone's face, do not write it online! All of your online communication should be respectful and appropriate for a school setting – all consequences for school behavior extend to your abschools email account, as well. If there are concerns about how you are using your abschools account, the contents of your account may be reviewed.

What happens if there's an emergency/fire drill?

1. You will hear a continuous ringing of the fire alarm/horn.
2. Follow teacher directions. EXIT maps are posted in each room.
3. Move quickly and quietly in an orderly fashion.

4. If the signal rings between classes, move toward the nearest exit in an orderly fashion and follow the directions provided by the nearest teacher.
5. You should meet your homeroom teacher or a team teacher in the designated gathering area.

You will review and practice the emergency procedures with your class or team early in the year. Please take these drills seriously.

What if I need to use the phone?

The phones in the Main Office and the Counseling Office are available for emergency situations only. Please use courtesy in requesting to use a phone. Students are **not** permitted to use their cell phones, smart watches, or other personal devices during the school day.

What if I need to go to the nurse?

Get a pass from your teacher unless it is an emergency.

What is Quiet Study and why would a teacher send me there?

Quiet Study is a small, quiet area in the main office. You might be sent to Quiet Study to make up a test or quiz missed while you were absent, or you might be sent for disciplinary reasons. Please enter through the main office door. If you are sent out of class for disciplinary reasons, you must report speak to someone in the Main Office, who will likely contact your assistant principal.

What is a counselor?

A counselor is a person trained to help students with problem solving and decision-making. A counselor provides support and encouragement for academic, personal and social problems. Every student is assigned a counselor, who is listed on the top of your schedule.

How do I make an appointment with my counselor?

Go to the counseling office and speak with the counseling secretary, or stop by and see your team counselor. Bring your schedule to find a convenient time when you won't miss a class. On the day of your appointment, you'll get a pass in homeroom. If you miss homeroom, check with the office. Let your teacher know at the start of class if you have a pass and give the pass to your teacher at the indicated time.

What if I lose something?

Check all your classrooms and don't give up – most objects turn up. Go to the lost and found, which is collected in three different places. Lost books are collected in the main office; clothes are collected in the blue bins in the lobby and in the gym locker rooms.

What if I leave something at home?

Your parents/guardians can bring something to school for you. If they do, items need to be labeled with your name, grade, and team. Students will be notified of items during morning announcements at 8:00 AM. Remember, lunches begin around 10:30 AM. If your parents need to get a message to you before the end of school, they should call before 1:15 PM to have the message included in the afternoon announcements. We ask that if students call home for items to be dropped off, they take the responsibility of checking at the office for their arrival. We try to limit classroom interruptions by intercom.

What happens if I lose or damage a school book, Chromebook, or other materials?

You are responsible and may need to pay for items that are damaged or are lost. Families may be subject to a surcharge of up to \$250 for damage, loss, or misuse of district-issued technology devices such as iPads or Chromebooks.

Can I bring my Chromebook home?

Chromebooks are expected to remain at school. Keeping Chromebooks at school allows them to be charged overnight so they are ready for learning each day. While Chromebooks are valuable educational tools, they are most effective when used alongside other learning experiences, such as reading books, writing with pen and paper, and engaging in hands-on activities. If a student needs to access a Chromebook in the afternoon/evening, they will follow the procedure used to loan devices through the RJ Grey Library on a nightly basis.

What if my regular teacher is absent and there is a substitute?

Substitute teachers have a difficult job. They are important to our school so that it can run smoothly when teachers are sick or need to be away from school for personal or professional reasons. You are expected to respect and follow the instructions of the substitute. You may need to accept and help out with activities and procedures that are different from the routine. Remember, you will be held accountable for your behavior by the classroom teacher and the assistant principal, if necessary.

What if I don't feel well?

The school nurse is available each school day from 8:00 a.m. to 2:36 p.m. If you need to visit the Health Office during class, ask your teacher for permission and a pass before leaving class. Students should not contact home to arrange dismissal due to illness or injury; if the nurse determines that you need to go home, the nurse will contact your parent/guardian and make the necessary arrangements.

When do I eat lunch?

There are four lunches. Your team teachers will clearly indicate the lunch period during which you will eat. Each student will be assigned a lunch ID to enter when they wish to receive lunch from school. This year, we continue to offer one free lunch (and breakfast) to every student, every day. Students who wish to receive more than one lunch or breakfast may pay with cash, or your parents or guardians may choose to put money in your account – either way, you will need to use your assigned lunch code.

Students who behave inappropriately may be suspended from the cafeteria and/or assigned to cleaning the cafeteria. Let's make lunch a pleasant time for all of us! When available, students may be permitted to eat outside during lunch. The same rules above apply when eating outside.

All students are expected to pick up their tables and throw away all of their own trash, recyclables, etc. Staff members will remind students about this expectation and will also assign students to wipe the table every day. Your cooperation will make this process go smoothly.

Can I order out breakfast, lunch, or snacks?

Safety and security of all students and staff is most important. Food and beverage delivery services such as DoorDash, Grubhub, and Uber Eats are not allowed during the school day. Drivers will be turned away, and the school is not responsible for any charges incurred due to noncompliance with this policy.

If a student needs food, the RJ Grey cafeteria provides free hot meals, sandwiches, snacks, and milk every day during breakfast and lunch. Parents or guardians may drop off lunches in person at the front office. All other outside deliveries will not be permitted.

What is Grey Block?

Grey Block is a period that meets two days per cycle where students take elective classes. Each grade has a menu of options, and students indicate their preferred choices at the end of the previous school year. Students will be informed about the specifics of their schedule at the beginning of the school year.

What is the Student Council all about and how can I get involved?

The Student Council is made up of a group of interested students chosen by a panel of staff members to represent all of the students in the school. The Student Council is a vital part of the school. The members participate in discussions with the administration and staff and are responsible for leading the organization and carrying out social functions, community service, and service learning projects.

In order to be a member of the Student Council, you must have a minimum of a C average at the Junior High and also exhibit good school citizenship, academic integrity, and responsible behavior. Previous incidents resulting in disciplinary actions may impact the eligibility of a student to be a member of the Student Council. Once appointed as a member, you must maintain these standards and, in addition, show dedication to performing the job requirements of your position. Representatives who are not meeting these requirements may be removed from office.

Meetings are held regularly during Directed Study, generally scheduled during the first week of each month. It is the responsibility of the Student Council member to notify the classroom teacher in advance and to make up any work missed because of a Student Council meeting.

After School

Can I stay after school?

There are several reasons a student may stay after school. In all cases, they should be with a teacher or staff member. If they are not attending extra help or a school-sponsored activity, students may study in the RJ Grey Library until the late bus departs at 4:30.

Can I email my teacher questions about assignments after school?

Students can contact teachers via email, but they may not receive a response until the following school day. Please check with your individual teachers regarding their policies about email communication.

Is there extra help?

Yes! Teachers are available at least once a week after school.

What are student-initiated activities?

Student initiated activities are ones which are organized by students in your school. It is important to remember that all students planning to organize a student initiated activity must get permission from his/her teachers and/or the Principal in order to do so. The administration will not consider any student initiated activity request if prior permission is not obtained.

Are there detentions?

Yes, teachers may give lunch detention for disciplinary reasons. If you skip lunch detention, it may be doubled. If you do not attend at all, the issue will be brought to an assistant principal. In addition, the assistant principals may also issue detentions.

Are there sports in which I can participate?

There are interscholastic sports, which compete with schools from other towns.

Fall: Soccer, Field Hockey, Cross Country

Winter: Basketball, Basketball Cheerleading

Spring: Baseball, Softball, Track & Field, and Boys' and Girls' Volleyball

Tryouts are held for each interscholastic sport except Cross Country and Track & Field. Involvement in athletics is a privilege; you must be passing at least four major subjects (classes that meet every day and in which you receive a grade) and be a good school citizen. You must make a commitment to the "[Extracurricular Agreement-Athletic](#)" policy, which prohibits use, possession, or the buying, or selling of any beverage containing alcohol, any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes), or any controlled substance. This policy is at the [end of this section](#). Your coach or faculty advisor will give you an extracurricular/athletic agreement form that must be signed by you and your parent/guardian. You also must have a current physical (within 1 year). Don't forget to submit proof of your physical the [FamilyID](#) website online, or bring it to the school nurse and obtain a "green form." You can't try out without it!

Each student must also have an updated [FamilyID](#) profile with up-to-date emergency contact information, or a current (within one calendar year) "Interscholastic Athletic Participation Form" (a.k.a. the Green Form) on file in the Nurse's office at least two weeks prior to the start of team tryouts.

Participation in an interscholastic sport requires the payment of an activity fee. However, no student will be excluded from participating for financial reasons. If your family has any concerns about this issue, please see the [Financial Assistance Website](#) for more information.

Teams may organize "psychs" to get the team excited about playing in that day's athletic contest. Only coach-approved teams "psychs" will be allowed on the day of the game. Violation of the team "psych" policy may result in disciplinary action. Examples of appropriate "psychs" for the Junior High may be the following: Jersey/uniform, shirt & tie or skirt/dress, team sweatshirt, t-shirt or warm-ups. Inappropriate "psychs" would be considered anything that involves a costume, face paint, or other clothing or items that would cause a distraction in school.

In some cases, a Junior High School student may have the opportunity to play on a high school athletic team. Please know that the Junior High School dress code and "psych" policy will apply even for these student athletes. A "psych" that may be considered appropriate for the high school may be inappropriate for the Junior High School. If you have questions about an appropriate "psych," please speak with your coach or an Assistant Principal.

Academic Requirements for Athletics and Other Extracurricular Activities that meet more than once per week:

In order to participate on an athletic team or be a member of an extracurricular group that meets more than once per week, students must be passing four major subjects (classes that meet every day and in which you

receive a grade). Students who do not maintain the necessary grades or good citizenship may not be allowed to participate.

Can I participate in the school Musical?

Like athletics, student involvement in the school musical is a privilege, and an activity that will require a substantial amount of your time after school and on weekends. Because academics must remain a priority, we require that you be passing at least four major subjects (classes that meet every day and in which you receive a grade), and be a good school citizen. Students who do not maintain the necessary grades or good citizenship status may be dismissed from the cast.

Attendance Policy and Requirements for Athletics, After School Events, and the Musical

In order to participate in any athletic event, after school activity (including dances), or the Musical, students must be present in school until 11:00 AM or arrive at school by 11:00 AM and stay through the remainder of the day the event is taking place.

Are there groups or clubs I can join?

Yes! There are many opportunities for students to get involved in activities and organizations. There is a \$50 user fee in order to participate in clubs and activities. Some clubs will have an additional cost associated with them, Ski Club, for example. The school will share the process for payment at the start of the school year. Some of these activities may include:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| • Anime Club | • Intramurals and | • School Musical |
| • Art Club | Interscholastic Sports | • Ski Club |
| • Chess and Board Games Club | • Jazz Band | • Student Council |
| • Creative Writing | • Magic Club | • Yearbook |
| • Drama Club | • Math Counts | |

Remember, you are only allowed to participate in after school activities, intramural and interscholastic sports, or dances if you are present in school that day. Also, remember that participating in these activities is a privilege that is earned by meeting the academic and behavioral expectations of our school.

What's the deal with homework?

Students will be assigned homework on a regular basis in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, and World Language. Teachers may assign homework in other subjects, too. You will have up to 90 minutes of homework each night. It is very important to do all of your homework and put effective effort into it. Thoroughly completing all your homework will help you to learn. It is important to complete and pass in your homework on time. To keep up with your homework assignments, we advise you to use your plan book every day; it will help you to be organized.

What if my family has summer plans that will require me to miss assignments at the end of the year?

Students and parents are expected to make every effort to avoid or resolve any conflicts with the end of the year schedule. When planning your summer vacation, remember that given snow days, exams and end of year assessments may be postponed by up to five (5) days.

Student Discipline and General Behavioral Expectations

Student Discipline at RJ Grey

The word discipline comes from the Latin term *disciplina* which means “teaching” or “instruction.” At RJ Grey, we believe that when students misbehave it is usually because there is an underlying issue that is driving the behavior. When we can get to the root of the issue, we can work collaboratively and proactively to solve problems. We believe that consequences should be used to help students build skills, and not simply as a way to punish them into behaving better.

Our response to student misbehavior is progressive and promotes student reflection. In cases of less serious behavior violations, a student may be redirected or reprimanded, and/or asked to participate in a discussion to reflect on the behavior. For more serious or repeated behavior violations, students may experience loss of privileges and/or be asked to take action to repair damage or restore relationships. Suspension may be used as a consequence in instances where a student is being unsafe or has created an unsafe environment for others through their actions or words.

It is important to create a learning environment at RJ Grey where students can grow as individuals, learn how to think for themselves, learn when to talk and when to listen, see another person’s side of things, and be part of a community. These qualities are valuable life-long learning tools. Common expectations, procedures, cooperation, and consequences are necessary to achieve this goal within our community.

General Expectations

Classroom Expectations

Students are allowed in a classroom only when there is a staff member present or when the students have the permission of a staff member.

In order to maintain a positive learning environment, students who repeatedly exhibit disruptive behavior can expect the following consequences:

1. The teacher will speak to you about your behavior and may assign teacher-directed discipline.
2. The teacher will notify your parents/guardians and counselor that there is a problem.
3. The teacher, administrator or counselor will arrange a conference including you, your parents, teacher, counselor and administrator. You may be given a lunch detention or other consequences as well.
4. You may be assigned in-school suspension. Make-up work is allowed. The teacher will deliver any schoolwork to the office.

Lunchtime Expectations

1. Wait in hall until told to enter the cafeteria.
2. Students must choose one seat in the cafeteria and remain seated during lunch (except when getting up to purchase food, use the bathroom, etc.)
3. Keep your hands and body to yourself and respect each other’s space.
4. No using electronics, including Chromebooks, during lunch.

5. Be responsible for cleaning up your own trash and follow the cafeteria protocol for end-of-lunch clean up.
6. Five minute warning:
 - a. clean up & throw away trash and wipe table clean of spills or crumbs
 - b. no more buying food
7. Listen and respond the first time when an adult addresses you.
8. Wait to be dismissed.
9. Food should be thrown away before exiting the cafeteria.
10. Leave through your assigned exit only.

The same rules above apply when eating outside. Students who do not follow the lunchtime expectations may receive consequences, including losing the privilege to eat lunch in the cafeteria.

Hallway Expectations

1. Take the most direct route to your destination.
2. Walk at a regular speed, no running or speed walking.
3. Keep moving, no congregating in the middle of the halls.
4. Keep your hands and body to yourself and respect each other's space.
5. Be mindful of others around you and classes going on. No yelling, swearing, or disruptive behavior is permitted.
6. No technology may be used in the hallways, including cell phones, headphones and Chromebooks.
7. Listen and respond the first time when an adult addresses you.

Academic Integrity

Staff members at R. J. Grey expect you to choose to “do the right thing” in school, especially in learning. Academic integrity requires that students be responsible for completing their own school work, including in-class assignments, homework, quizzes, tests, projects, essays, and reports. These assignments show your teachers and families what you have learned and measure your learning. The guidelines listed below should help you to be aware of what is expected of you in all aspects of academic life.

Homework/Projects/Essays/Reports

It is ok to...

- Do your own homework with a friend as long as you do your own work.
- Check with your teacher about how much help or collaboration is allowed.
- Ask your teacher to clarify an assignment.
- Ask your parents/guardians for clarification.
- Ask your teacher for help.

It is not ok to...

- Copy someone else's homework.
- Borrow someone else's homework just “to look at it.”
- Give someone your homework to copy or look at.
- Have someone else do your work.
- Use an assignment that you wrote for one class and submit it as an assignment for another class without permission.
- Be absent on the day a project is due just so that you have more time to finish your work.

- Plagiarize material from another source. Plagiarism means to submit another person's words, ideas, research, or written expression as your own. In writing reports or essays, you will usually research other sources (books, articles, websites) to find information to use in your own paper. When you use other sources, it is necessary that you give credit to the people whose ideas you are using. You must include a Bibliography or Works Cited page and correctly cite the sources that you used. Check with your teachers about the specific requirements and format for these citations. You may unintentionally commit plagiarism when you take notes and use words and phrases that are too close to the original wording. Be sure to paraphrase and summarize in your own words.
- Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create work that you treat as your own.

Quizzes/Tests

It is ok to...

- Ask the teacher for clarification.
- Check with your teacher to find out when you can talk about a test.
- Speak with your teacher about your grade on a test.

It is not ok to...

- Talk during the test.
- Look at someone else's paper.
- Show someone else your paper.
- Sit so that it is easy for a classmate to see your test.
- Use notes, books, or other material while you are taking the test.
- Talk about a quiz or test until everyone on your team has completed it.
- Change answers after a test has been graded.
- Be absent on test or quiz days just so that you can find out from classmates what was on the test or quiz.
- Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to create work that you treat as your own.

Consequences of violating the expectations for academic integrity may include some or all of the following:

- Receive a zero on the assignment, test, paper, or project
- Referral to a school administrator
- Parental notification
- Detention
- Be required to complete an alternate assignment or test
- Loss of privileges

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) Student Use Expectations

Follow your Teacher's Expectations

- Students are expected to follow expectations set by their teacher on the use of AI tools for every assignment.
- Before using AI, students are expected to seek clarification if teacher expectations are unclear.
- Students should only use the tools a teacher directs students to use.

- Students are expected to use teacher created documents through their Google Classroom for all work completed online. Students should not use private documents in their drafting process and all work should be completed on their abschools account, even if work is completed at home.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

- All work submitted by a student is bound by academic honesty and plagiarism policies.
- Students submitting work generated by AI, unless following teacher guidance allowing specific uses of AI, will be subject to disciplinary action according to the Student Handbook.

Bus Rules

Students are expected to behave in an orderly manner while riding the bus and during loading and unloading procedures. The bus driver shall be in complete charge of the bus and its passengers at all times, and shall ensure the safety and well-being of all students who ride the school buses. Students are to respect the bus driver and the bus rules. If a student acts inappropriately, he/she will be held accountable at school and may lose his/her privilege to ride the school bus. Please be aware that video monitoring systems may be in use on buses. More information regarding bus safety can be found on the [ABRSD Transportation website](#).

School Bus Rules and Safety Procedures

1. The driver's instructions shall be followed at all times.
2. State law prohibits lighting of matches or smoking on the bus.
3. Liability for any bus vandalism must be assumed by the parents of the student(s) involved.
4. No pushing or shoving at the bus stop, or while getting on or off the bus.
5. Remain seated while the bus is in motion.
6. Keep hands and feet to yourself. Do not disturb others.
7. Do not shout or make distracting noises. Profanity will not be tolerated.
8. Do not change your seat or leave your seat unless instructed to do so by the bus driver.
9. Upon departing the bus, walk away from the bus. Do not walk along the side of the bus.
10. Eating or drinking on the bus is not allowed.
11. Do not open windows unless you have the permission of the bus driver.
12. The emergency door at the rear of the bus is to be used as an exit only in the event of an emergency.
13. Throwing objects on or around the bus or at the bus stop is not permitted. Objects which may create a hazard on the bus will not be permitted, such as sharp objects, animals, or excessively large objects which cannot be transported safely.

Student Behavior Violations

Related School Committee Policies:

- [Student Discipline Guidelines - File: JK](#)
- [Discipline Of Students with Disabilities - File: JKF](#)

At R.J. Grey, student behavior violations are split into three levels. The Violations and Consequences are meant to be illustrative, not exhaustive. Each level is more serious than the previous and therefore is treated with increasingly serious consequences. The RJ Grey Administration will investigate and make a

determination as to the level of the violation. Consequences will be assigned at the discretion of the RJ Grey Administration.

Level One

These behavior violations are generally small disruptions or noncompliance with rules. There is usually no one injured or nothing broken. In most cases, teachers/staff will address these issues prior to referring the student to the administration.

Violations (including, but not limited to):

- Swearing/inappropriate language (not directed at someone)
- Tardiness to class
- Hallway disruption
- Horseplay
- Minor classroom disruption
- Noncompliance with school rules
- Uncooperative
- Cafeteria disruption
- Misuse of school technology

Possible Consequences (including, but not limited to):

- Problem solving conversation with teacher
- Educational Assignment
- Warning
- Letter of Apology
- Community Service
- Confiscation
- Lunch/after school detention
- Parents/guardians contacted
- Accountability Project/Reflection Assignment

Level Two

Level Two includes more serious behaviors where there is often a victim, injury, or damage. In most cases, teachers/staff will refer students to the administration instead of addressing the behaviors.

Violations (including, but not limited to): ● Cheating/plagiarism/forgery ● Stealing ● Vandalism ● Bullying, cyber bullying, teasing, humiliation, hazing ● Swearing/inappropriate language directed at another person ● Truancy/tardiness ● Computer AUP/Cyber Speech violation ● Unwelcoming, unkind or disrespectful behavior ● Leaving school grounds ● Possession of fireworks, matches, or lighter ● Dangerous behavior ● Gambling ● Insubordination ● Threats ● Harassment including racial, sexual, religious, other. ● Misuse of school technology ● Incidents involving hate or bias ● Any repeated (3 times or more) Level One behavior that has been previously addressed by a teacher	Possible Consequences (including, but not limited to): ● Problem solving conversation with administrator (and teacher, if appropriate) ● Educational Assignment ● Letter of Apology ● Community Service ● Confiscation ● Loss of privilege ● Restitution ● Lunch/after school detention ● Suspension ● Police involvement ● Parents/guardians contacted ● Involvement of School Resource Officer and/or other district administrators ● Consequences as detailed in ABRSD's Protocols for Responding to Incidents Involving Hate or Bias ● Accountability Project/Reflection Assignment
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Level Three

Level Three violations are the most serious and include many actions that are illegal. In most cases, the staff/teachers must refer a student immediately to the administration. The administration will notify the Acton or Boxborough Police in accordance with the [Memorandum of Understanding](#).

Violations (including, but not limited to): ● False fire alarms ● Bomb threat ● Possession, use of, or threatened use of a weapon* or object used as a weapon. ● Arson/Fire Starting ● Physical aggression ● Fighting ● Possession, sale, distribution, use or manufacture and/or being under the influence of illegal drugs†, alcohol, tobacco, and/or vaporizers (“vape pens”, “electronic cigarettes”, etc.). ● Possession of drug paraphernalia ● Assaulting or striking any staff member ● Harassment including sexual, racial, religious, other ● Bullying and teasing ● Misuse of school technology ● Incidents involving hate or bias	Possible Consequences (including, but not limited to): ● Educational Assignment ● Parents/guardians contacted ● Problem solving conversation with administrator (and teacher, if appropriate) ● Lunch/after school detention ● Restitution ● Suspension ● Police involvement ● Expulsion ● Involvement of School Resource Officer and/or other district administrators ● Consequences as detailed in ABRSD's Protocols for Responding to Incidents Involving Hate or Bias ● Accountability Project/Reflection Assignment
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*The term "weapon" shall include, but not be limited to, any type of firearm, knife or martial arts equipment, explosive devices, including fireworks, or a replica of a dangerous weapon. This would also include multitool gadgets, similar to a swiss army knife. Any dangerous weapon in the possession of a student shall be removed from the student's custody, and any illegal weapon shall be turned over to the Acton Police Department. All other weapons may be returned to the parent at the discretion of the principal or his/her designee.

†The term "illegal drugs" shall include all controlled substances as defined in G.L. c. 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana and cocaine or prescription drugs for which the student does not have a valid prescription.

Detentions

Behavior violations may result in lunch and/or after school detention, which can be issued by a teacher or administrator. Students are required to report to detention and are to be prompt and responsive to the supervising staff member. Failure to do so may result in additional consequences. During this time, the teacher or administrator may utilize an accountability project or reflection assignment, which is aligned with restorative practices.

Accountability Project/Reflection Assignment

It is integral to a student's learning to understand the impact of their actions on themselves and others. Assignments and projects are tailored towards helping students reflect and take accountability for specific actions that violate the student behavior code and do not meet school expectations. Administrators and/or counselors will be responsible for helping students process the events that occurred before, during, and after a given incident. The goal of this exercise is to restore relationships, recognize patterns of behaviors, and collaboratively problem solve to equip students with better strategies for future success.

Confiscation of Articles

The school reserves the right to take possession of any articles which jeopardize health and safety, cause interference with the educational process, or indicate a violation of law or school policy. Any items which are confiscated will remain in the possession of an administrator and at his/her discretion be returned to a parent/guardian. Please see policies about cell phone possession for more information regarding confiscation of cell phones and other communication devices.

Misconduct Outside of School

Misconduct that has a direct relationship to the school may result in disciplinary action, even when the specific conduct does not take place on school property or at a school-related event.

Search

A student and his/her personal possessions are subject to search by school officials when there is reasonable basis for believing that the search will produce evidence of a violation of school rules or of federal or state law.

Selling/Distribution of Goods

Students are not allowed to sell or distribute goods such as candy or gum to fellow students. The only exception is school-sponsored fundraising before and after school hours.

Soliciting Staff

Students are not allowed to ask teachers to buy raffle tickets, tickets for performances, sponsorships, etc.

Cyber-Speech

Schools may impose discipline on cyber-speech occurring outside of school when such speech causes, or can reasonably be expected to cause a material and substantial disruption to the school's operation or environment.

Memorandum of Understanding

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Chief of Police and Superintendent of Schools mandates that the school report the following incidents to the police department:

- possession, use, or distribution of alcohol by a student;
- possession, use, or distribution of an inhalant or any controlled substance, as defined in M.G.L. c.94C;
- any incident in which any individual is reasonably believed to be selling or distributing drugs or alcohol;
- any incident involving intentional assault or negligent behavior that results in personal injury;
- possession of a weapon, as defined in the school handbook;
- any incident involving domestic abuse, dating violence, or a violation of M.G.L. c. 209A order;
- any incident involving the serious physical or sexual abuse of a child (in addition to a report filed with the Department of Social Services);
- any incident involving an actual or suspected hate crime or violation of civil rights;
- any incident resulting in significant damage to municipal or private property;
- any bomb threat, fire, threatened or attempted fire setting, threatened or attempted use of an explosive device or hoax device;
- any creation or possession of a "hit list" of individuals targeted for violence or death;
- any threat, direct or indirect, against a student, school personnel or other school employee;
- any incident of "hazing", involving a threatened or actual risk of physical or emotional harm to a student;
- any sexual assault, rape or incident of gender-based harassment.

Other Important Information and Policies

Attendance Program

We are committed to providing a learning environment where all students have the opportunity to achieve and benefit from their classroom experiences. When students do not attend school or are consistently late, this impacts our ability to teach and students' ability to learn. It is our responsibility to ensure that students are in school to learn. We rely on the parents and guardians of our students to assist in getting students to school, on time, and on a daily basis. Furthermore, the law requires that we take action and address attendance issues and assist students and families in getting students to school.

The following is a description of our Attendance Program at the Junior High. The goal is to use our school and community resources in collaboration with students and parents/guardians to improve school attendance. Therefore, there is a wide range of people and services involved.

Absence and Tardy Procedures

This procedure will be followed for all students, regardless of their reasons for being absent, in order to maintain consistency, offer support, and address all students' and families' needs. Under G.L. c. 76, & 1, necessary absences by a student may not exceed 7 day sessions or 14 half day sessions, in *any* 6 month period.

Absence and tardy totals are reported in a number of ways, including through trimester report cards. In order to assure that students are present for the maximum amount of time, at various checkpoints throughout the year, the following may take place:

1. A letter may be sent home detailing the number of absences or tardies your student has accumulated;
2. An administrator may assign consequences to a student for repeatedly missing or arriving late to school;
3. A counselor and/or assistant principal may contact a family when a pattern of attendance or tardiness has begun to emerge;
4. A S.T.A.R.T. meeting may be scheduled¹;
5. If a student's attendance or tardiness does not significantly improve, then the school may file a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the juvenile court. This is used as a last resort when all other resources have been exhausted and the students continue to experience attendance difficulties. As was discussed above, the goal is to provide support and resources.

A student who is absent may not participate in after-school activities on the day of the absence.

Extended Student Absences

In general, family vacations when school is in session are not recommended. While recognizing that vacation experiences may offer a student valuable learning opportunities, the staff believes that classroom instruction, class discussions, and class activities cannot be replicated and are the most valuable component to your child's instruction. Missing school, even for a few days, can be hard on your child. Prior to a student leaving for a vacation not scheduled during a school vacation week, the student is expected to inform their teachers and the office about the vacation. The student is responsible for their missed assignments upon returning to school. Teachers are not required to provide work in advance. While teachers will provide students with a reasonable period of time to gather and complete the missed assignments, grades can be affected by absences and ultimately, it is the responsibility of the student to complete all missed assignments.

¹S.T.A.R.T. is an acronym for School Tardy and Attendance Review Team. Members of this team include the assistant principal, counselor, Youth officer, the students, and the parents/guardians. The purpose of the S.T.A.R.T. meeting is to meet to discuss the attendance issues, identify problem areas or concerns, problem solve and discuss strategies, and implement a plan. The various strategies that may be implemented are assisting the students with developing a home routine or schedule, daily check-ins with his/her counselor, office homeroom, ride to school by police, and other appropriate suggestions. The goal is to promote collaboration between the home, school, and community to improve student attendance. The team will schedule follow-up meetings to monitor progress, adjust the plan as needed, suggest further action, or determine that the student no longer needs to be monitored by the team.

Instructional Support Team

The Instructional Support Team is available for any teacher, administrator, counselor or community member who would like to refer a student who appears to have a significant problem. Problems might be identified in the areas of learning, but might also include behavioral and/or social/emotional concerns. The Team's role is to develop an understanding of the nature of the problem and to make appropriate recommendations. It is not punitive.

The Team generally includes a school psychologist, an administrator, a special educator, a counselor and a speech and language specialist. Referral forms are available through the counseling office. All inquiries, reports and referrals are kept strictly confidential.

As mandated by federal and state special education regulations, a student experiencing significant academic difficulty, or significant attendance issues may be brought to the attention of the Instructional Support Team as part of the pre-referral process. A parent/guardian is entitled under the law to refer his/her child directly for a special education eligibility evaluation, verbally or in writing. That being said, school staff recommend that any student experiencing difficulty be discussed first within the Instructional Support Team in order to respond quickly to concerns and gather relevant data.

It is important to note that teachers, administrators, counselors or community members may present referrals to the Instructional Support Team without the student's or parent/guardian's prior knowledge.

Counseling Office

The counseling staff at R. J. Grey is available to students, parents/guardians and teachers to help support the emotional, social, and academic growth of students. All students have been assigned a counselor for the school year. The members of the Counseling Department believe that developing a relationship with students and working closely with teams is important during this short and challenging time in the lives of our students. Each counselor will be assigned to approximately 220 students through teams.

Some students find some events in their lives more difficult than others. At these times, a counselor can provide support and encouragement. Students can then choose their own way of dealing with a difficulty, whether it is academic, social or personal. Students are encouraged to get to know their counselor and make an appointment when they are having difficulty. Appointments with a counselor should be made in advance, if at all possible. On the morning of an appointment, a pass will be sent from the Counseling Office to the student's homeroom. Students may arrange to see their counselor without an appointment if there is an urgent issue. When arriving at the Counseling Office, students should check in with the secretary. Parents can contact the Counseling Office by calling 978 264-3350, Press 4.

Students who are planning to apply to private school need to pick up a packet of information from their counselor or from the Counseling Department secretary that outlines the application procedures. It is imperative that this procedure be followed in order to ensure the timely processing of the applications. Students or parents/guardians with questions should contact the student's counselor.

Course Changes

In general, students are expected to stay enrolled in a course for the duration of the course. Courses may not be dropped unless 1) the course interferes with delivery of a special education service, 2) the Instructional Support Team recommends the change, or 3) there are special circumstances as determined by the Assistant Principal.

Field Trips

Students may have the opportunity to attend a field trip during the course of the year. To do so, a parent or guardian must sign and complete a permission slip that will be provided. If there is no signed permission slip, a student may not attend the field trip. Usually a cost accompanies a field trip, and financial assistance is provided for those students who need it. (For more information, see the [Financial Assistance Policy JOA](#).) All school rules apply while on the field trip.

No student may be excluded from a field trip without documented just cause. Just cause may include:

- The student's statements or past history demonstrating a tendency to do harm to themselves, others, or the site being visited,
- The student's statements or past history demonstrating a pattern of disobedience,
- The student's unacceptable behavior during the time directly preceding the trip,
- The student's inappropriate behavior on a previous trip

Any student not attending a field trip will remain in school. Teachers will leave relevant curriculum-based lessons and activities for all students not attending the off-site activity.

Health Information

Medication Policy

Non-prescription medicines may not be brought to school or used by any student on school premises. Occasionally a student may require a Tylenol and/or ibuprofen. These over the counter medications will be given to students only when a parent has signed the emergency card giving permission. Whenever possible, prescription medicines should be administered at home. When a physician specifies that medicine must be administered during the school day, the guidelines for supervision of medication are:

1. All medicine must be brought to the Health Office by a parent or designated adult.
2. Medications that need to be administered daily or emergency medications need to provide the following information:
 - the prescription label and number
 - the name of the drug
 - directions for administration including times of administration and dosage
 - the patient's full name
 - written authorization from a physician
3. Prescription medications that need to be administered for a limited/short duration need to include the following information:
 - the prescription label and number
 - the name of the drug
 - directions for administration including times of administration and dosage
 - the patient's full name
 - note from parent giving permission for the school nurse to administer medication and authorization from a physician. The note must include the start date.
4. For students participating in school-sponsored activities outside of the regular school day (such as athletics, after-school programs, field trips, and extracurricular school events), caregivers are responsible for notifying the school nurse and the appropriate staff member (e.g., coach, advisor, or trip leader) if their child requires medication or has a health-related need during the activity. Upon

notification, school staff will work with families to determine an appropriate plan to support the student's safe participation.

Screenings

The following state mandated health screenings will occur during the school year: Postural screenings and SBIRT (Screening Brief Intervention Referral to Treatment) for students in grade 7 throughout the school year. Hearing, vision, height and weight screenings for RJG students will be conducted during PE and Health classes. According to the state's BMI screening regulation, schools must calculate the student's Body Mass Index. The health office will use the heights and weights from the annual screenings to do this calculation. Student's BMI results are available from the health office upon request. A parent/guardian may choose to opt out of any of the mandated screenings by providing a written request to the health office.

Physical Examinations and Immunization Requirements

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has the following requirements for all students entering Grade 7 in the fall:

1. **PHYSICAL EXAM:** A copy of a current Physical Examination (within 12 months of the first day of the school year) is required for all students before entering Grade 7. A current Physical Examination (dated within 13 months) will also be required for any participation in sports at the Junior High.
2. **IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS** (link to MA School Immunization Requirements):
 - Tdap: 1 dose; and history of DTaP primary series or age-appropriate catch-up vaccination; Tdap given at ≥ 7 years may be counted, but a dose at age 11–12 is recommended if Tdap was given earlier as part of a catch-up schedule; Td or Tdap should be given if it has been ≥ 10 years since last Tdap
 - Polio: 4 doses; fourth dose must be given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥ 6 months after the previous dose or a fifth dose is required; 3 doses are acceptable if the third dose is given on or after the 4th birthday and ≥ 6 months after the previous dose
 - Hepatitis B: 3 doses; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable; 2 doses of Heplisav-B given on or after 18 years of age are acceptable
 - MMR: 2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday, and second dose must be given ≥ 28 days after first dose; laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
 - Varicella: 2 doses; first dose must be given on or after the 1st birthday and second dose must be given ≥ 28 days after first dose; a reliable history of chickenpox* or laboratory evidence of immunity acceptable
 - Meningococcal: 1 dose; this dose must be given on or after the 10th birthday. Meningococcal conjugate vaccine, MenACWY (formerly MCV4) and MenABCWY, fulfill this requirement; monovalent meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine is not required and does not meet this requirement.

Many of the above vaccines may have been administered while your child was in elementary school. Please check with your Healthcare Provider to be certain that your child's immunizations are up-to-date and documented in their record. Send a copy of the exam and updated immunization record to your elementary school health office, and the information will be included in your child's health record when it is transferred to the Junior High School in June. If you do not have the necessary paperwork completed before the end of school, send it to the school nurse at the Junior High School (16 Charter Road) before the start of school in August.

Emergency Cards

It is imperative that we are able to reach a parent or guardian during the school day in the case of a medical emergency. Emergency cards must be completed on the [Parent Portal](#) each August. Please remember to update phone numbers if they change during the school year.

Health Curriculum

Each student will attend Health and Life Skills classes as part of his/her Phys Ed rotation. In the seventh grade, two or three of these classes contain information regarding sexually transmitted diseases. In the eighth grade, three or four lessons about AIDS will be taught by the students' science teachers. If you would like to review this material, please contact the R. J. Grey School Nurse. You have a right to have a child excluded from these specific classes. Please make such a request in writing to the Principal. Your child will be allowed to do independent work in the library.

Religious Holidays Policy

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District observes the establishment clause of the first amendment to the Constitution which guarantees both the separation of church and state and also the right of an individual to free speech. The School Committee understands that there can be a tension between these two parts of the first amendment. The schools must also respect the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In addition, we recognize that in any group there are diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and social traditions which should be understood through educational practice. We shall recognize and honor our differences, not ignore them. Students and staff will be encouraged to appreciate and accept ethnic and religious diversity. We shall be respectful of the beliefs and practices of others. School Committee policies regarding religious holidays and instructional practices can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

Residency

Students are required to live in Acton or Boxborough in order to attend RJ Grey. Exceptions are made through School Choice, special circumstances, and homelessness. All students are expected to maintain accurate home address information through the registrar.

Security Cameras

I. PURPOSE

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District uses video cameras throughout the District for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. The objective is to promote and foster a safe and secure teaching and learning environment for students and staff, to improve public safety for community members who visit or use our school property, and diminish the potential for personal and district loss or destruction of property. Security camera recordings will be viewable in each building by authorized designees only.

II. GENERAL STATEMENT OF POLICY

A. Signage and Notification:

Appropriate signage will be posted at relevant entrances to school buildings and on school buses that notify students, staff and the general public of the District's use of security cameras. Students will receive additional notification at the beginning of the school year

regarding the use of security cameras in the schools, on school buses and on school grounds. Such notification will include, but not be limited to, student handbooks.

B. Camera Placement:

1. The security camera system may be installed in public areas only. These areas include school buses, grounds, athletic areas, exterior entrances or exits to school buildings and large gathering spaces such as classroom corridors, cafeteria, lobby and main entries.
2. Restrooms, changing rooms, nurse's offices and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use.
3. Security camera usage is prohibited in any space where there is a reasonable expectation for privacy. However, this policy does not preclude the District from placing cameras in such areas when there is a reasonable suspicion of activity that violates the law or is a violation of school policy and such a request is made by the building administration.
4. This policy does not prohibit the use of cameras for legitimate educational purposes, including but not limited to student performances.

C. Use of Video Recordings

1. The Superintendent or his/her expressly authorized designee shall oversee video surveillance. The Superintendent shall develop procedures for accessing video surveillance information. However, recorded information will be available for use as necessary by appropriate school officials, and/or law enforcement personnel
2. The Security Camera System will be in operation and may be monitored by school personnel throughout the calendar year.

D. Data Storage:

1. All video recordings are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Recordings will be saved for no fewer than 30 days and appropriately destroyed/deleted.

Video that is used as evidence in a student discipline matter will be considered part of that student's record and will be retained in accordance with student record laws and regulations.

2. Information obtained through video surveillance may only be used for training, visitor management, disciplinary investigations, security or law enforcement purposes. No sound is to be monitored or recorded in connection with the video surveillance system.
3. Any video recordings used for security purposes on school buses, in school buildings or grounds are the sole property of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District. Release of such videos will be made only as permissible pursuant to applicable law and with the permission of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

Legal References:

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

State Laws and Regulations regarding Student Records

Reviewed 6/6/13

Approved 1/15/14

Sex Education Parent Notification Policy

Pursuant to Chapter 291 of the General Laws of Massachusetts, the School Committees direct the Superintendent to ensure timely parental/guardian notification of any curriculum used in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District which primarily involves human sexuality issues or human sexual education.

This policy allows parents/guardians the flexibility to exempt their children from any portion or completely from the curriculum being offered. The Committees want to encourage the flow of information while recognizing the rights of parents.

The following courses contain human sexuality issues or human sexual education:

- Health, Life Skills
- Science

Parents with questions should contact the school nurse or Health Education Coordinator in order to review the material.

Sex Education Parent Notification Procedures

1. Central Office/Principals will notify parents in writing, through newsletters and posting, in advance, so that parents may review the materials that will be used. Parents should call the school nurse or Health Education Director in order to review the material.
2. Parents must write a letter to their child's Principal exempting them from participation.
3. No child exempted shall be penalized.
4. The school will determine which alternative experience will be offered.
5. Any appeal of decisions made should follow the Acton-Boxborough appeals process.

Sportsmanship

The R. J. Grey Junior High School Athletic Department believes that good sportsmanship represents a general feeling that athletic activities are played for the good of the game rather than the promotion of self. Good sports follow a code of conduct that is respectful of all people at the event including players, cheerleaders, officials and spectators. Good sportsmanship is demonstrated when spectators cheer for their team and not against the opposition.

“Taunting” is expressly forbidden. According to the MIAA, taunting includes any actions or comments by coaches, players, or spectators which are intended to bait, anger, embarrass, ridicule, or demean others, whether or not the deeds or words are vulgar or racist. Included is conduct that berates, needles, intimidates, or threatens based on race, gender, ethnic origin, or background, and conduct that attacks religious beliefs, size, economic status, speech, family, special needs, or personal matters.

Examples of taunting include, but are not limited to: “trash talk,” defined as verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including “in the face” confrontation by one player to another and over/straddling a tackled or fallen player.

In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending persons from that contest/day of competition on the first taunting offense. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing MIAA sport specific Disqualification Rules. A review of the MIAA taunting policy and a warning shall be given to both teams by game officials prior to each contest.

At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, contest management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators are subject to ejection.

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Education and Supports

Protecting the health and well being of all students is of utmost importance to the school district.

1. Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, using support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends.
2. The secondary Counseling Chairperson, in coordination with Counseling Department members, is the suicide prevention coordinator for the junior high school and serves as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.
3. When students are identified as being at risk, they will meet with a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker, who, in collaboration with their families, will work to help connect them to appropriate local resources.
4. Students will have access to resources which they can contact for additional support, such as: The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255 / www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).
5. All students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help.
6. Students should also know that because of the life or death nature of these matters, confidentiality or privacy concerns are secondary to seeking help for students in crisis.

For a more detailed review of policy changes, please refer to the district’s full suicide prevention procedures.

World Language Audit Policy

The study of World Language at the Junior High School is a two-year commitment. It is expected that all students will do their homework and seek help from the teacher as needed/requested by the teacher. It is very unlikely that a student who is doing all of the above will fail the WL class.

GRADE 7:

No student in grade 7 is allowed to audit the WL class. It is expected that all students do their homework, that they attend extra help, and that they enlist the help of a tutor if necessary. A student who is on an IEP or 504,

and whose Team determines that World Language is not a priority, should use the WL period to be in the Academic Support Center or in the Special Education classroom.

No student who is placed in the EL program at the beginning of the year will have the option of taking WL later in the year unless he or she has previous experience with the language.

GRADE 8 student who has previously taken WL:

No student in grade 8 is allowed to audit unless he has taken all the necessary steps to ensure success in the class; i.e. the student has come for extra help on a weekly basis over the course of time AND has regularly done his homework. The student will be allowed to remain in the class provided that he is not a discipline problem.

GRADE 8 student who has not taken WL and who is a new student to R.J. Grey:

Students who move into the Acton-Boxborough system from another and have not previously taken WL are exempt from receiving a grade for the first marking period in which they are at R.J. Grey. During those that remain, it is expected that the student will attend extra help in order that he might learn the previously taught curriculum. It is expected that the student will pay attention in class, come prepared with materials for the class, and make every attempt to participate in class. The student will then take the class for a grade during subsequent terms (2nd and 3rd) in the school year.

Policies and Practices Relating to Student Rights

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

The School Committee recognizes and accepts the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District's responsibility to comply with the Massachusetts Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Statute, Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 119, Section 51A.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District recognizes that because of their sustained contact with children under the age of eighteen years, school employees will actively carry out the letter and spirit of the law. It is expected then, that when any staff member in his or her professional capacity has reasonable cause to believe that a child under the age of eighteen years is suffering from the effects of any form of child abuse and neglect, that the staff member will report his or her concerns in conformance with the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District's procedures for reporting suspected abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Social Services.

Hazing

C.269, S.17.Crime of Hazing: Definition: Penalty

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

The term "hazing" as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or any 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. Added by St. 1995, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

C. 269, S.18. Duty to Report Hazing

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to 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. Added by St.1985.c.536, amended by St.1987, c.665.

C.269.5.19, Hazing Statutes to Be Provided: Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and 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 17 and 18.

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with 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 regents and, in the case of secondary institution, 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. Added by St. 1995, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights

To the extent practical and as required by law, the school districts will work with homeless students and their families to provide stability in school attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including pre-school programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs and school nutrition programs. Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence, including:

1. Sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing or economic hardship;
2. Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations;
3. Living in emergency or transitional shelters;
4. Being abandoned in hospitals;
5. Awaiting foster care placement;
6. Living in public or private places not designed for or ordinarily used as regular sleeping accommodations for human beings;
7. Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, transportation stations or similar settings;
8. Migratory children living in conditions described in the previous examples.

The Superintendent has designated the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as the district's liaison for homeless students and families, who can be contacted at 978-264-4700, extension 3265.

Nondiscrimination Notice

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, pregnancy and pregnancy-related conditions, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, employment policies, and other administered programs and activities. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected from discrimination in accessing the course of study and other opportunities available through the schools.

Any person having inquiries or complaints concerning the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District's compliance with Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA or MGL ch. 76, sec. 5 is directed to contact the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, Administration Building, 15 Charter Road, Acton, MA, telephone number 978-264-4700, x3265, who has been designated by the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District to coordinate the District's efforts to comply with these laws, or write to the Office for Civil Rights, J.F. Kennedy Federal Building, Room 1875, Boston, MA 02203, or the Massachusetts Department of Education, Office of Program Quality Assurance, 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148.

Restraint of Students: School Committee [Policy and Procedures](#)

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District complies with the Massachusetts Department of Education's restraint regulations, 603 CMR 46.00 et seq. ("Regulations"), to the extent required by law. According to their terms, the Regulations apply not only at school but also at school-sponsored events and activities, whether or not on school property.

School staff may use physical restraint only (1) when non-physical interventions would be ineffective and the student's behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious harm to self and/or others or (2) pursuant to a student's IEP or other written plan developed in accordance with state and federal law and approved by the school and parent/guardian.

The regulations do not prevent a teacher, employee or agent of the District from using reasonable force to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent serious harm or from restraining students as otherwise provided in the regulations.

Students, parents or guardians who have a complaint regarding physical restraint procedures may request a meeting with the building principal to discuss their concerns. If the issues are not resolved at this level, they may request a meeting with the Superintendent or designee.

Additional information, including a copy of the regulations, can be obtained from the Director of Special Education at 978-264-4700, extension 3265.

Procedures Dealing with Sexual Harassment Complaints Involving Students

A student who believes that he/she is the victim of harassment should report the matter to a teacher, counselor, or administrator who in turn will notify the principal or assistant principal in the school. As an alternative, a student may report directly to the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Notice of each school's complaint managers will be posted in a prominent location in the school.

A student may also file a complaint alleging harassment by contacting the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, 15 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720, telephone 978-264-4700.

If a student does not wish to discuss the issue with other school staff or feels that the staff is not addressing the problem in an effective manner, the student should contact the Superintendent of Schools at 15 Charter Rd., Acton, MA 01720, telephone 978-264-4700.

The Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion as listed above is also available to provide information about this policy and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District's complaint process.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District urges all individuals in the school community to bring any complaint of harassment to the attention of school personnel so that they can resolve the issue. The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District will promptly investigate every complaint, observing all relevant state and federal laws and regulations and school system policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements. If it is determined that harassment has occurred, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District will take appropriate action to end the harassment and to ensure that it is not repeated. When an investigation has been completed, school personnel will inform the complainant of the results and file a report with the Assistant Superintendent for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in accordance with Title IX/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Retaliation against any individual who has filed a complaint of harassment or who cooperates in an investigation is unlawful and prohibited. Persons who engage in harassment or retaliation will be subject to termination/expulsion or other sanctions as determined by the School Administration and/or School Committee subject to applicable school system policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements.

In certain cases, harassment and, in particular, sexual harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law. The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse.

It should be noted that while this policy sets forth the goal of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District in promoting a work and educational environment that is free of harassment based upon race, color, religion, national origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, and disability, the policy is not designed or intended to limit the authority of school officials to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which is deemed unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of harassment.

References:

State agencies that enforce laws prohibiting harassment or receive complaints thereunder include the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), which is located at: One Ashburton Place, Boston, MA 02108, telephone (617) 727-3990 and the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148-5023 (telephone (781) 338-3300).

Federal agencies responsible for enforcing federal laws prohibiting harassment include the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, One Congress Street, Boston, MA 02109, telephone (617) 565-3200, TDD Users (617) 565-3204, and the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 33 Arch Street, Suite 900, Boston, Massachusetts 02110, telephone (617) 289-0111, fax (617) 289-0150

Student Records

Annual Notice: The Family and Educational Rights and Privacy Act Massachusetts Student Records Regulations

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (“FERPA”) and the Massachusetts Student Records Regulations (“Massachusetts Regulations”) together provide parents and eligible students (those who have reached the age of 14 or who have entered the ninth grade) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. A general overview of those rights is provided below.

These rights include:

1. The right to access the student’s education records as soon as practicable and within ten days of the day the school receives a request for access. Parents/guardians or eligible students should submit to the school principal a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school principal will make arrangements for access and notify the parent/guardian or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 71, Section 34H provides who does not have physical custody of a child. Information about these procedures can be obtained from the building principal or the Deputy Superintendent of Schools.
2. The right to request amendment of the student’s education records. Parents/guardians or eligible students should direct their request to the principal, clearly identifying the part of the record they wish to have amended and why they believe it is inaccurate.

3. The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA and the Massachusetts Regulations authorize disclosure without consent.

Some of the Exceptions:

One exception that permits disclosure without consent is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the school as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement unit personnel); a person serving on the SchoolBoard; a person or company with whom the school has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing their tasks. A school official as a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

ABRSD may disclose information to eligible receiving high schools for the purpose of transition from eighth to ninth grade.

Upon request, ABRSD also discloses all student records (which include health records and special education records, if any) without parent/guardian/eligible student consent to officials of other schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll.

ABRSD may disclose, without written consent, designated "directory information," which is information generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if disclosed. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the district to include this type of information from your child's records in certain school publications. Information that a district designates as directory information may be disclosed to outside organizations (for example, yearbook publishers) without prior consent.

4. The right to file a complaint concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the regulations and laws governing student records. Complaints may be filed with the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148 and/or the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202-5901.

In addition, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District maintains student records using an electronic student information management system, PowerSchool. These electronic student records include the same documents that would otherwise be found in a paper version of the student record including, but not limited to, student photos, emergency contact cards, report cards, etc. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) protects the privacy and confidentiality of student records. All of the FERPA protections apply to electronic student information management systems.

As permitted by these laws, the ABRSD School Committee has designated selected student records to be "directory information." For elementary school students the following records have been designated as directory information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date of birth
- Grade
- Classroom assignment

For middle and high school students, the following records have been designated as directory information:

- Name
- Address
- Telephone number
- Date of birth
- Graduating class
- Team/class assignment (middle school)
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Honors and awards

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District will release the designated directory information without the consent of the parent or eligible student, unless the parent or eligible student provides the principal with written notice that he/she does not wish the school to release such information. The notice must be received annually by a date designated by the principal. As required by federal law, Acton-Boxborough releases the name, address, and telephone listing of secondary school students to military recruiters or officials of institutions of higher education, upon request. In the event that a parent or eligible student objects to the release of any of this information, the parent/eligible student must provide the principal with written notice of the objection annually by a date designated by the principal; otherwise the information will be released without further notice or consent.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District shall also disclose all student records (which include health records and special education records, if any), without the consent of the parent/eligible student, to officials of other schools in which a student seeks or intends to enroll, upon receipt of a request from such school officials.

To the extent required by applicable law, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District will provide parents, guardians and/or eligible students with an annual notice of their general rights relative to student records. The Superintendent will determine the content and method of such notice.

Destruction of Records

A student's temporary record shall be destroyed no later than 3 years after graduation. Students who withdraw, transfer, graduate, or otherwise leave the district will have access to their ABSchools Google account (including Gmail and Drive) until June 30th of the calendar year in which they leave the district, at which point accounts will be permanently deleted. Should the family/student want to maintain any items from the ABSchools account, it is their responsibility to export items contained in the account prior to the June 30th deletion date. A student permanent record, which consists of a high school transcript, may be destroyed no sooner than 60 years after the student leaves the school system.

Statutory References:

Family Education and Privacy Rights Act (FERPA): 20 U.S.C. §1232g, 34 CR §99

Massachusetts Student Records Regulations: 603 CMR 23.00, et seq.

Student Records Access for Non-Custodial Parents: General Laws, Chapter 71, §34H

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by NCLB, 20 USC 7908

Student Rights: Due Process Procedures

In-School Suspension For Less Than 10 Cumulative Days During A School Year

An in-school suspension is a removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises. The procedure for an in-school suspension of no more than (10) school days (consecutive or cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year) will be as follows:

1. The administrator will inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged, the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to respond. If the administrator determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the administrator will inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which may not exceed 10 days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.
2. On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The administrator will also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meetings will be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the administrator is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least (2) attempts to do so, such attempts will constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.
3. The administrator will send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the administrator for the purpose set forth above, if such meeting has not already occurred. The administrator will deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the administrator and the parent.

An in-school suspension of more than 10 cumulative days in a school year will be subject to the procedures for [long-term suspension](#).

Procedures For Short-Term, Out-Of-School Suspensions (10 Cumulative Days Or Less In A School Year)

Except in the case of an [Emergency Removal](#), prior to imposing a short-term out-of-school suspension (10 days or less in a school year) for conduct not covered by M.G.L. c. 71, §37H AND 37H ½, an administrator will provide the student and his/her parent oral and written notice and an opportunity to participate in an informal hearing.

1. **Notice:** The written notice to the student and the parent will be in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate and will include the following:
 - a. the disciplinary offense;
 - b. the basis for the charge;
 - c. the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
 - d. the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the administrator concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
 - e. the date, time, and location of the hearing;
 - f. the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
2. Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and parent.

3. **Efforts to Involve Parent:** The administrator will make reasonable efforts to notify the parent of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the administrator must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The administrator is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the administrator has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.
4. **Format of Hearing:** The administrator will discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also will have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the administrator should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate. The administrator will provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administrator should consider in determining consequences for the student.
5. **Decision:** The administrator will provide written notice to the student and parent of his/her determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal. The notice of determination may be in the form of an update to the original written notice of hearing.

The parent or guardian shall be requested to attend a readmission conference with the principal or designee upon the student's return to school. At the principal's discretion, the conference may be held by telephone. Expectations for the student's reentry to school shall be outlined at this conference.

Procedures For Long -Term Suspension

Except in the case of an [Emergency Removal](#), prior to imposing a long-term suspension (more than 10 days of suspension, whether in-school or out-of-school, whether consecutive or cumulative for multiple offenses during a school year), an administrator will follow the procedures for short-term suspension plus additional procedures as follows:

1. **Notice:** The notice will include all of the components for a short-term suspension in Section C above, plus the following:
 - a. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the administrator may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
 - b. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;
 - c. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so;
 - d. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district;
 - e. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the administrator, and a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request; and the right to appeal administrator's decision to impose long-term suspension to the superintendent.
2. **Format of Hearing:** The Hearing will afford the rights set forth in the notice above. The administrator will also provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the administrator should consider in determining consequences for the student.

3. Decision: Based on the evidence, the administrator will determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to long-term suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The administrator will send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the school and the parent. If the administrator decides to suspend the student on a long-term basis, the written determination will:
 - a. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
 - b. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached;
 - c. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
 - d. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school (if more than 10 cumulative days);
 - e. Inform the student of the right to appeal the administrator's decision to the superintendent or designee. Notice of the right of appeal will be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and will include the following information stated in plain language:

the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the administrator's determination on appeal.

No long-term suspension will extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Amended language of Section 37H3/4(b) (effective 11/08/2022)

For all conduct other than 37H and 37H1/2 violations: "Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident."

Exception For Emergency Removal

Notwithstanding the provisions for short or long-term suspension set forth above, a student who is charged with a disciplinary offense may be removed temporarily from school if the continued presence of the student

poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the administrator's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption.

The administrator will immediately notify the superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger [or disruption] by the student.

The temporary removal will not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the administrator will provide the following, as applicable to the length of suspension:

- Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and other applicable matters;
- Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in Section C or D above, as applicable;
- Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the administrator, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the administrator, student, and parent.
- Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day.

An administrator may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

Appeal To The Superintendent

If a decision by an administrator, following the parent meeting, results in suspension of a student for more than 10 cumulative school days for the school year, the student may appeal the decision to the superintendent. In order to do so the student or parent must file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within five (5) calendar days with a seven (7) day postponement option. The superintendent must hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not filed within this time frame, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The following apply:

- The superintendent will make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent will be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent will send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.
- The superintendent will conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence will be. The superintendent will arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which will be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent will inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.
- The student will have all the rights afforded the student at the administrator's hearing for long-term suspension as described in Section D above.

- The superintendent will issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements for a long-term suspension as described in Section D above. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the administrator, but will not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the administrator's decision.

The decision of the superintendent constitutes the final decision of the school district.

Educational Opportunity

Students serving a suspension shall be given the opportunity to make up any missed work and earn credit for missed work (tests and quizzes) while on suspension.

Additionally, any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

Discipline of Students with Disabilities (File: JKF)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline.

In general, students with disabilities who violate school rules are subject to removal from their current placement for up to ten (10) consecutive school days to the extent that such a removal would be applied to students without disabilities. This removal can occur without a prior determination of whether the conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. Students may be removed for additional periods for up to ten (10) consecutive school days in the same school year for separate incidents of misconduct without a manifestation determination, as long as the removal does not constitute a "change in placement" as described below.

If the IEP Team, including the parents, determines the behavior was not a direct result of the student's disability, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that the district must continue to provide the student with educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion. However, if the Team determines that the behavior was a direct result of the disability, the student may not be excluded from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapons, drugs, or serious bodily injury) until the Team develops and parents/guardians consent to a new Individualized Educational Program (IEP). The Team also must conduct a functional behavioral assessment and develop or revise a behavioral plan for the student as necessary.

A suspension of longer than ten (10) school days or a series of shorter term suspensions that constitute a pattern are considered to represent a change in placement. Whether a pattern exists must be decided on a case-by case basis, considering such factors as the length of each suspension, the nature of the alleged conduct, the proximity of the suspensions to one another, and the total amount of time the student is excluded from school. Prior to a suspension that constitutes a change in placement, the student's Team must meet to determine whether the behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability. In making this determination, the Team must review all relevant information in the student's file, including the IEP, teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents, to determine if the conduct was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to the student's disability or was the direct result of any failure by the school to implement the IEP.

Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense for more than ten (10) consecutive days will have an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress during the period of removal under the school-wide education service plan, and will so be informed at the time of the suspension/expulsion. When a student with a disability is excluded from their program for more than ten (10) school days in the school year, the district must provide the student with services to the extent necessary for progress in the general curriculum and/or towards Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals, as determined by the principal in consultation with at least one staff person who is a member of the student's IEP Team.

If an administrator imposes an out-of-school suspension for a student in preschool or in grades K through 3, the administrator will send to the superintendent a copy of the written determination and an explanation of the reasons therefore, before the out-of-school suspension takes effect.

In the event a student possesses, uses, sells or solicits a substance or possesses a weapon, or seriously injures an individual at school or a school function, the District may place a student in an interim alternative education setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Hearing officers may also order the placement of a student in an appropriate IAES for up to 45 school days upon determination that the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

When a parent disagrees with the Team's decision on the manifestation determination or with a decision regarding placement, the parent has a right to request an expedited due process hearing with Bureau of Special Education Appeals. Additional information regarding the procedural protections for special education students can be obtained from the Director of Special Education at 978-264-4700, extension 3265.

Discipline of Students Subject to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Discipline of students with disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides students with disabilities certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. Prior to imposing a "significant change in placement" for disciplinary reasons, the district must determine whether the conduct is a manifestation of the student's disability. A significant change of placement results not only from an exclusion for more than 10 consecutive school days, but also from a pattern of shorter suspensions accumulating to more than 10 school days during a school year. Whether a pattern exists must be decided on a case-by case basis, considering such factors as the length of each suspension, the nature of the alleged conduct, the proximity of the suspensions to one another, and the total amount of time the student is excluded from school.

Prior to any significant change in placement for disciplinary reasons, a group of individuals with knowledge of the student, the evaluation data, and the school program must determine whether the conduct at issue is related to the student's disability. If the conduct is directly related to the disability, the district will not impose the discipline and will develop an individual behavior management plan if the behavior significantly interferes with the student's ability to benefit from his/her education. If the conduct is not directly related to the student's disability, the district may discipline the student as it does general education students. Additional information regarding the procedural protections for students eligible for services under laws providing for services for students with disabilities under Section 504 can be obtained from the Assistant Superintendent for Student Services at 978-264-4700, extension 3265.

Discipline of Students Not Yet Determined Eligible for Special Education

The IDEA protections summarized in this policy for students who are eligible for special education also apply to students who have not yet been found eligible for IEPs if the school district is deemed to have knowledge that the student was eligible for special education before the conduct that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

The IDEA provides that a school district is “deemed to have knowledge” if: (1) the child’s parent/guardian had expressed concern in writing to district supervisory or administrative personnel or the child’s teacher that the child needs special education and related services; (2) the child’s parent/guardian had requested an evaluation of the child to determine eligibility for special education services; or (3) the teacher of the child or other school district personnel had expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior by the child directly to the district’s director of special education or to other supervisory personnel. However, a school district is not “deemed to have knowledge” if the district evaluated the student and determined that the child was not eligible for special education services or the child’s parent refused an evaluation of the child or IDEA services.

If the school district has no knowledge that a student is an eligible student under the IDEA before taking disciplinary measures against the student, the student may be disciplined just as any other student may be. If, however, a request is made for an evaluation to determine eligibility while the student is subject to disciplinary measures, the district must conduct the evaluation in an expedited manner. Pending the results of the evaluation, the student must remain in the educational placement determined by the school authorities, which may include suspension or expulsion without services. If the student is determined eligible for an IEP as a result of the evaluation, the school district must provide the student with special education and related services in accordance with the IDEA.

Additional information regarding the procedural protections for students with special education services can be obtained from the Director of Special Education at 978-264-4700, extension 3265.

References: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
MGL Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H 1/2, 37H 3/4

Approved: April 26, 2018

APPENDIX A: Computers, Internet & Other Technology

This Acceptable Use Policy is designed to make the school's technology resources available to the entire school district and to help you use those resources responsibly. Your cooperation and adherence to these guidelines and policies is a condition of continued access to the school's technology resources. Violation of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in the loss of computer privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal consequences.

Acceptable Use

- The district's computers and network infrastructure are provided as educational tools for students, staff, and the community. Class and course-related use of this equipment will take priority and all non-educational use (including exploring Internet resources of personal interest) will be dependent on availability of computers, network capacity, and staff approval.
- Students using computers in the school are expected to cooperate with the staff members supervising computer areas and are to follow the instructions for computer use in each area. This includes but is not limited to specific guidelines for printing, downloading from the Internet, playing audio and/or video, and playing educational games. Other games, chat, and instant messaging are not allowed.
- Each user bears full responsibility for his or her actions. Users shall assume full liability (legal, financial, or otherwise) for their actions. In addition, the school system takes no responsibility for any information or materials that are transferred through the Internet.
- Students may not connect personal computers, peripherals, or related equipment to the school system's equipment without specific permission from the Department of Educational Technology.
- No changes in computer settings, software, or configurations may be made without the authorization of the Department of Educational Technology. Only software installed or authorized by Ed Tech staff may be used.
- Use of the computers and/or network to develop or knowingly pass along viruses or other programs that infiltrate/damage computers or computing systems is prohibited.
- Any password issued to a user is for his or her personal use. Each user must protect his or her password and must not allow anyone else to use the password.
- A document storage folder is provided for all students. This folder is for school-related documents and projects. Storage of non-educational files in this location is not permitted and will be subject to removal.
- In order to be compliant with the Children's Internet Protection Act, all student computers are subject to remote monitoring by authorized staff. The school also reserves the right to inspect all student documents.
- In order to protect school equipment, food and drink are not permitted in the library or computer labs and must be kept away from computer equipment in other areas of the school.

Email

All students will be issued an email account to be used for the purpose of communicating with teachers, administrators, counselors, librarians, school staff members, and peers. It is important to note that internet and email messages are public communication and not considered private. Further, use of this service must be in full compliance with the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District Anti-Bullying Policy, which amongst other things, prohibits bullying through the use of any district and/or non-district technology resource/service where such bullying creates a hostile environment or infringes upon the rights of the victim at his/her school. Remember, all electronic mail messages and other use of electronic resources by students are property of

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District and may be disclosed to law enforcement, where appropriate, without prior consent of the sender or receiver.

Students should communicate with their teachers about how teachers will expect their students to utilize email and other Internet applications. If a student does not have access to school computers during the school day and does not have the necessary technology to do so at home, he or she is responsible for notifying a teacher, administrator, or counselor so that accommodations can be made.

Personally-owned Equipment

- Personally-owned computer equipment or peripherals cannot be used on school grounds without approval which will only be given for curriculum-related purposes. Use of student-owned laptops in school is limited to classroom use for a particular course presentation or other single use. Specific permission must be obtained from the teacher for this kind of use, and students should make sure the laptop is stored securely when not in use. Students bear responsibility for any damage, theft or loss of personal equipment brought into school. Use of personal laptops is not allowed in common areas of the school, including computer labs and the library.
- Students who need to bring in a document or presentation for use in class are encouraged to use their district-issued email account. For larger projects, students can also use a CD or a USB drive.
- After school use of personal equipment in the school requires permission of the teacher/advisor and of the Department of Educational Technology.
- No personally owned equipment is to be connected to the school system's Servers or network. Peer to peer wireless communication is also prohibited, which includes tethering to personal cell phones.
- iPods and other MP3 players are not allowed in school as listening devices and may not be attached to school computers.

Etiquette/Online Safety/Plagiarism

- Students' online communications are expected to avoid use of profane language and other offensive means of communication. Be mindful of your digital footprint, understanding that anyone may conduct online "searches" of you. Poor judgment could negatively impact future opportunities.
- Students should never give out personal information (i.e. name, phone number, address, credit card information, etc) over the school's network.
- Students should assume that all materials available on the Internet are protected by copyright. When using on-line resources (text, graphics, multi-media files, etc) for school papers or projects, students are required to cite sources. Students should consult with their teachers to determine proper format for citations.
- When completing school assignments, students must not submit someone else's work as their own (see the section on Academic Integrity), whether it is information from the Internet or from another source.
- Accessing the school's network or equipment to create, access, download, edit, view, store, send or print materials that are illegal, offensive, harassing, intimidating, discriminatory, sexually explicit or graphic, pornographic, obscene or otherwise inconsistent with the values and general standards of the school is prohibited.
- Use of the school's computers or network to access any of the following types of web sites is prohibited:
 - Any site displaying sexually explicit or pornographic content of any kind
 - Any site containing on-line games including, but not limited to, gambling, lotteries, sweepstakes, and other games of chance
 - Any site promoting violence, hate, the use of controlled substances, or other illegal activities

- Any site promoting a multi-level marketing, home based business or other money- making scheme, mass solicitations (colloquially known as “spam”), chain letters.

Vandalism

- Tampering with, altering, or “hacking” into the school’s computer, network, or peripherals is considered vandalism and is not permitted.
- Users may not use the network to perform any act that may be construed as illegal or unethical, including use of the network to gain access to non-public resources on the network or on the Internet.
- Users may not alter or delete another person’s files which may exist in a “shared folder” unless given permission to do so by the file’s owner.

Accountability

Violation of this Acceptable Use Policy may result in the loss of computer privileges, disciplinary action, and/or legal consequences. Specifically, the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District reserves the right to deny, revoke, or suspend specific user privileges and/or to take other disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion, for violations of this policy. The district will advise appropriate law enforcement agencies of illegal activities conducted through the district’s Internet service, cooperating fully with local, state, and/or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted through the service. Simply put, access is a privilege subject to regulation, not an absolute right. Access necessitates responsibility.

Cyber-Speech Outside of School

The Principal or Assistant Principals may impose discipline on cyber-speech occurring outside of school when it:

- Constitutes a threat- an immediate, unconditional threat of violence directed at a person(s), and where conduct is directly linked to school; or
- Created or was reasonably expected to cause a material and substantial disruption to school’s operation or environment.

Cameras/cell phones

No cameras (including those currently available on cell phones and other PDA tools and video cameras) are to be used in school except with the express permission of the classroom teacher and the person whose picture is being taken.

APPENDIX B: Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy

Links to Anti-Bullying [Policy](#) and [Plan](#)

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (hereinafter referred to as “The District”) recognizes that safe learning environments are necessary for students to learn and achieve high academic standards. The District strives to provide and maintain safe learning and working environments for all students and all employees. It is the conviction of educators that all students have the right to participate confidently and fully in learning activities, both in and out of school, and contribute meaningfully to society by learning in a community culture where individual and developmental differences are acknowledged, appreciated and respected.

Bullying behaviors are persistent, pervasive or chronic which intimidate and/or intentionally harm or threaten to harm someone who is perceived as weaker and vulnerable. Specifically, bullying is defined as the act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through electronic, written, verbal, physical acts, either direct or indirect, mental and/or visual, when such intentional behavior substantially interferes with a student’s education, threatens the overall educational environment, and/or substantially disrupts the operation of the school. These behaviors include maliciously teasing, taunting, name-calling, sexual remarks, stealing or damaging an individual’s possessions, spreading rumors, or encouraging others to reject or exclude someone. This intentional behavior includes but is not limited to harassment, intimidation, and bullying based upon race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, marital status, physical appearance, or mental, physical or sensory disability. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited. This prohibition shall apply to all District employees, contractors, volunteers, parents/guardians, and students, including conduct between/among all parties.

The School Committees expect administrators and supervisors to make clear to students and staff that bullying behaviors (as defined above) in the school building, on school grounds, on the bus or school-sanctioned transportation, or at school-sponsored functions will not be tolerated and will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion for students, and termination for employees.

Furthermore, the Districts will immediately investigate allegations of bullying, including cyber-bullying, intimidation, and/or harassment. The Principal of each building, or his/her designee, will be responsible for responding to all complaints by students alleging harassment, including bullying, in accordance with harassment. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, the District will take appropriate action to end the bullying and ensure that it is not repeated. In this regard, schools will remain sensitive to the confidentiality of all parties, but may not be able to preserve fully the confidential nature of the allegation.

All schools in Acton-Boxborough will include a bullying prevention and intervention plan that is proactive and educational, in keeping with the guidelines published by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The district is committed to supporting each school in their adoption of a school-wide bullying prevention and intervention program by providing the necessary funding, training and staff time. Each school is directed to develop or adopt a research based bullying prevention program and/or curriculum that include the major components listed in the Bullying Prevention and Intervention procedures. Additionally, bullying prevention and intervention will include school based teams responsible for the systematic tracking, monitoring and evaluation of the school based Bullying Prevention program with special emphasis on analyzing incidents for systemic intervention at the school building level and the school system at large.

Each Team will:

- Consist of members of the already existing Crisis Intervention Team appointed by the Principal representing the following constituents: Building Principal or Assistant Principal, Teacher representatives, Counselor/Psychologist/SPED.
- Additional collaboration from administration and/or School Nurse.
- Meet a minimum of two times during the school year.
- By October 1st of each year:
 - Distribute Policy and procedures to all students, parents, faculty and staff (student handbook, annual written notice, website, employee handbook, etc.)
 - Notify the Superintendent of Schools in writing of their school's compliance with this Policy and submit a copy of the bullying prevention and intervention procedures adopted for each school.
- Yearly, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Procedures.
- By June of each year, provide a brief annual summary to the Superintendent of Schools regarding the implementation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy with recommendations for building based enhancements/improvements.

The Superintendent or designated representative has operational responsibility for the Districts' implementation of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy.

Procedures and Guidelines

Bullying behaviors are persistent, pervasive or chronic which intimidate and/or intentionally harm or threaten to harm someone who is perceived as weaker and vulnerable. Specifically, bullying is defined as the act of one or more individuals intimidating one or more persons through electronic, written, verbal, physical acts, either direct or indirect, mental and/or visual, when such intentional behavior substantially interferes with a student's education, threatens the overall educational environment, and/or substantially disrupts the operation of the school. These behaviors include maliciously teasing, taunting, name-calling, sexual remarks, stealing or damaging an individual's possessions, spreading rumors, or encouraging others to reject or exclude someone. This intentional behavior includes but is not limited to harassment, intimidation, and bullying based upon race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, economic status, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, marital status, physical appearance, or mental, physical or sensory disability. Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, who provides information during an investigation of bullying, or who is witness to or has reliable information about bullying is prohibited. This prohibition shall apply to all District employees, contractors, volunteers, parents/guardians, and students, including conduct between/among all parties.

Peer conflict involves disagreement and oppositional interactions which are situational, immediate, and developmentally appropriate. These latter behaviors, with adult guidance and modeling, assist in developing new skills in social competency, learning personal boundaries and conflict resolution strategies.

All schools in Acton-Boxborough will include a bullying prevention and intervention plan that is proactive and educational. Major components include:

- Development of a community culture that publicly communicates that bullying is unacceptable in any form.
- Commitment to a pro-social, research based curriculum and/or program that promotes positive peer relations.

- Commitment to addressing the needs of the victim concurrently with the on-going investigation and response to the bully.
- Annual discussion of the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy with students (no later than October 1st of each year).
- Adequate supervision of students to address bullying prevention and intervention.
- Ongoing training and support of teachers and school staff in the use of proactive and effective strategies for responding to bullying and supporting bystanders and victims.
- Systematic review of the overall bullying prevention and intervention approaches used by the school.

As used in the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy, bullying can be any intentional written, electronic, verbal or physical act or actions against a student, school volunteer or school employee that a reasonable person, under the circumstances should know will have the effect of:

- A. Placing a student, school volunteer or school employee in reasonable fear of harm to his or her emotional or physical well-being or damage to his or her property,
- B. Creating a hostile, threatening, humiliating or abusive educational environment due to the pervasiveness or persistence of actions or due to a power differential between the bully and the victim,
- C. Interfering with a student, school volunteer or school employee having a safe environment that is necessary to facilitate educational achievement, opportunities or benefits,
- D. Perpetuating bullying by inciting, soliciting or coercing an individual or group to demean, dehumanize, embarrass or cause emotional, psychological or physical harm to another student, school employee, or school volunteer,
- E. Infringing on the rights of the other student, school volunteer or school employee at school, or
- F. Materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Reporting Requirements:

A culture of openness is considered the most effective means for countering this behavior. It is the responsibility of each member of the school community: students, staff and parents to report instances of bullying or suspicions of bullying, with the understanding that such reports will be listened to and taken seriously.

- A. Any school employee that has reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying shall immediately report it to the administration. This includes custodians, cafeteria workers, recess and bus monitors.
- B. Each school is required to have a procedure for the administration to promptly investigate in a timely manner and determine whether or not bullying has occurred.
- C. If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, commonwealth charter school, or non-public school, a school administrator shall promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school or district so that both may take appropriate action.
- D. All confirmed bullying incidents must be reported to parents and guardians and must be documented. In addition the administrator must be aware that some acts of bullying may also be a crime and required to be reported to law enforcement.

Investigative procedures:

Each school is required to investigate in a timely manner and determine whether or not bullying has occurred. This requires a determination as to the nature of the incident (bullying v. peer conflict). Once determined, an investigation and outreach to the victim and family shall occur concurrently with a commitment to addressing

the needs of the victim, identifying and educating bystanders, and providing formative/educational consequences for bullies. Steps to be taken should include:

- A. Determine the nature, chronicity, and severity of the presenting situation.
- B. Identify bully(s), victim(s), and bystanders
- C. Provide a safety and comfort plan for the victim(s).
- D. Identify whether or not the bullying has occurred on or off campus.
- E. Immediately inform bullies/cyberbullies about the consequences for bullying or cyberbullying in or out of school.
- F. Have conversations with all parties.
- G. Inform parents, guardians and all relevant adults of initial investigation; notice of confidentiality.
- H. Establish a timetable for following up with parents, especially parents of victims
- I. Collection and documentation of data.

Non-Classroom Supervision:

Each school must supervise non-classroom areas. The review and exchange of information regarding non-classroom areas are important to:

- A. Determine “hot spots” that bullying may more likely occur.
- B. Consider ways of keeping certain groups or students apart during transitions, or building positive collaborations between older and younger students.
- C. Consider adult density in “hot spots” if necessary.

Consequences from Findings:

Consequences for bullying should be immediately and consistently applied and must be delivered in a non-hostile manner. Consequences should be disagreeable or uncomfortable but should not involve revenge or hostile punishment.

Consequences should take into consideration:

- A. Nature, severity, and chronicity of the behavioral impact on the victim
- B. Degree of physical, psychological, social harm on the victim
- C. Student’s age, development and degree of maturity
- D. Surrounding circumstances and context in which the incident(s) occurred
- E. Prior disciplinary history and continuing patterns of behavior
- F. Relationship between and among the parties involved
- G. Context in which the alleged incident(s) occurred

The appropriate range of consequences, subject to due process where appropriate, is as follows:

- A. Verbal reprimand
- B. Temporary removal from the classroom
- C. Loss of privileges, including before and after school activities
- D. Time-out
- E. Notice to parent
- F. Supervised break times
- G. Detention
- H. In-school suspension
- I. Out-of-school suspension

- J. Reassignment of seats in lunch, bus, class, etc.
- K. Reassignment of classes
- L. Referral to an outside agency
- M. Reassignment to another school or another mode of transportation
- N. Expulsion
- O. Report to law enforcement

In addition, formative activities will be given, which may include:

- A. Reparation to the victim (recognizing that direct apology may be contraindicated)
- B. Completion of curricular based assignment(s)
- C. Meeting with Civil Rights Coordinator
- D. Completion of community service designed to help the perpetrator understand and respect differences; written report required by the perpetrator
- E. Therapeutic support for both perpetrators and victims

Professional Learning

The District will provide a combined bullying prevention and intervention training each year for all employees to help them identify and respond to bullying, teasing and harassment. Continual ongoing coaching for administrators will be provided to enhance the skill set of teachers and staff. In addition, schools are encouraged to offer education to parents about bullying prevention. This requires a common language to be presented.

APPENDIX C: Wellness Policy (ABRSC Policy ABF, Procedure ABF-R)

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District is committed to providing a school environment that enhances the learning and development of lifelong wellness practices. To that end, the Districts promote actions, behaviors and learning that create a healthy and safe environment for all.

It is our goal to promote physical, emotional and social well-being through coordinated school and community guidelines. This includes providing a healthy environment, counseling services, school nurse services, nutritious school meals, comprehensive health education, physical education and other opportunities for physical activity. It is the intent of this policy to foster independence in students in order to enable them to become independent and self-directed learners by taking the initiative to meet their own health and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate, with the support of their families.

Furthermore, it is our expectation that specific actions will take into account the health needs and well-being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the School Districts' belief that education along with open and informative communication is vital to the establishment of an environment that promotes the making of healthy choices by children. The guidelines herein reflect a commitment to the development of the whole child to foster an environment in which students and staff can make healthful choices related to food and physical activity, throughout their tenure in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District.

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District will support this district-wide Wellness Policy through building based Health Advisory Councils. These Councils will have the primary function of overseeing the implementation of the Wellness policy. The Food Service Director will be responsible for all the Nutrition Standards. Each school will establish a Health Advisory Council responsible for the implementation of the Wellness Policy. Each School Health Advisory Council will:

- Meet a minimum of two times during the school year.
- Consist of members appointed by the Principal representing the following constituents: Building Principal, School Nurse, Teacher representatives (2), Parents (2), Food Service Director and/or Food Service Building Manager, and may include a student Council Representative (if appropriate).
- Develop guidelines for each standard (Nutrition Education, Physical Activity and other school-based events).
- By November 30th of each year, develop and submit action plans for implementation of the recommended standards, using the prior June's Annual Report.
- Yearly, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of Wellness Guidelines.
- By June of each year, provide an annual report to the Superintendent of Schools regarding the implementation of both the Wellness and Life-Threatening Food Allergy Policies with recommendations to improve student wellness.

The Superintendent or designated representative has operational responsibility for the Districts' implementation of the Wellness policy.

District Guidelines/Procedures on Foods and Food Practices During School Hours

Soda and candy will not be provided for students in school.

Food shall not be used as a reward or given out as a treat by school staff with the exception of approved celebrations and in situations where food is part of an Individualized Education Plan.

Fundraising activities that include selling or providing food to students on school premises during school hours will only include items approved by the Food Service Director.

In instances when food is served as an integral part of the curriculum it is important that staff, through reasonable communication with parents or appropriate health care professionals, work to reduce risk and create an inclusive experience.

Food will only be used as a student manipulative in lessons when the purpose is directly related to the food (i.e. studying onion cells in science or surface area and effect of buoyancy of orange peels).

Whole class or group non-curricular celebrations involving food should be used sparingly and should be an inclusive experience.

When celebrating birthdays at school we strongly encourage families to consider healthy options or low cost alternatives to food. Schools will communicate a list of alternatives to families.

Principals and School Health Advisory Councils shall consider the following resources when developing school-level guidelines in regard to food brought into the school outside of the school lunch program:

- Foods on the Massachusetts A la Carte and Food and Beverages Standards A-List
- Massachusetts A la Carte and Food and Beverages Standards to Promote a Healthier School Environment
- A-List Healthy School Snacks – Water, Bottled

During School Hours

The following requirements apply to food and beverages available to students during school hours, up until 30 minutes after the end of the school day:

All foods and beverages made available on campus (including vending, concessions, a la carte, student stores, parties, fundraising, and classroom snacks) during the school day must be consistent with these requirements.

Outside of School Hours

For events that take place during non-school hours, such as dances, parties, socials, plays, concerts, etc., we encourage those in charge of the activities to consider the wellness standards when serving or selling food and beverages. In particular, school-sponsored activities and events should be consistent with wellness policy goals.

Recommendations

- Every teacher and family should receive a copy of the Healthy Celebrations Handout. The Healthy Celebrations Handout should be included in the packet of info that is sent home to each family every year.

- Teachers and administrators should be required to uphold the wellness standards for all school activities taking place under their supervision.
- The students themselves could be involved in food choices – this could be done through school councils and other student groups, or even teachers and their classes if they wanted to participate. Projects could include researching the nutritional content of different snack foods, party foods, etc. Other topics for research could include pricing, taste, packaging, marketing, etc.
- Celebrations in school should focus on activities other than eating except when the food is connected to the curriculum. If a celebration does involve food, it should conform to the wellness standards.
- Food should not be used as a reward or incentive.
- Schools should encourage fundraisers that promote positive health habits such as the sale of non-food and nutritious food items.
- Beverages such as soda, sport drinks, and fruit beverages with minimal nutritional value are not allowed during the school day or at school events.

The Superintendent or designated representative has operational responsibility for the Districts' implementation of the Wellness policy.

R. J. Grey Junior High School Nutrition Education

Nutrition education and promotion aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students and the school community. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at RJG as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is not only part of health education classes, but also may be integrated into classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social studies, world language and the exploratory subjects;
- includes developmentally-appropriate, culturally relevant, participatory activities that may include community resources such as local farms, companies, and other organizations that aim to promote the healthy eating among our students and school community;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health enhancing nutrition practices as well as providing information about healthy alternatives including vegetarian diets, organic foods, and dairy substitutes such as soy products;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure, or physical activity;
- utilizes the school cafeteria as a “learning laboratory” to allow students to apply critical thinking skills taught in the classroom;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing and how to read and understand food labels;
- incorporates activities and programs to share nutrition information with students' families and other community stakeholders and is consistent with the information being taught in school to engage and support families as partners in nutrition education; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff and information on available resources.

Physical Activity

- Physical activity may be integrated across curricula and throughout the school day. Movement may be made a part of math, science, language arts, social studies, world language, and the exploratory subjects.

- Physical education courses will be in a safe environment where students learn, practice, and are assessed on developmentally appropriate motor skills, social skills, and knowledge.
- Policies ensure that state-certified physical education instructors teach all physical education classes.
- Physical education shall be required for all students, unless a medical excuse is documented by the student's physician, for the entire academic year.
- Time allotted for physical activity will be consistent with research, national, and state standards. According to the National Institutes of Health, being active benefits an adolescent's self esteem, energy level, concentration, and overall emotional well-being.
- Physical education includes the instruction of individual activities as well as competitive and non-competitive team sports to encourage life-long physical activity.
- Adequate equipment should be available for all students to participate in physical education. Physical activity facilities on school grounds will be safe.
- The school provides a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable activity for all students.
- Information will be provided to families to help them incorporate physical activity into their student's lives.
- RJG is committed to maintaining a strong partnership with Acton-Boxborough Community Education to provide community access to, and encourage students and community members to use, the school's physical activity facilities outside of the normal school day.
- Schools encourage families and community members to institute programs that support physical activity, such as a walk- or bike-to-school program.

Life-Threatening Allergy Procedures

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District recognizes the increasing prevalence and life-threatening nature of allergies for many students. The goals of this procedure are to reduce the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students, to educate members of the school community on management of students' life-threatening allergies, and to plan for the needs of these students. This procedure aims to provide age-appropriate procedures and to assist children in assuming more individual responsibility for their health and safety as they grow older. The schools will work with students with life-threatening allergies and their parents to address the students' emotional and social needs in addition to their health needs.

Allergic reactions vary, and can range from mild local reactions to severe, potentially life-threatening anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body; the most dangerous and potentially fatal symptoms are breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock. Anaphylaxis may occur in allergic individuals after exposure to a specific allergen even when prior exposure has not resulted in symptoms. Reactions can occur immediately or several hours following allergen exposure. Anaphylaxis in a food allergic student may occur with ingestion of the allergen. It is also possible that the student may touch an allergen, not wash hands afterwards, and then touch his or her mouth or eyes. Some students, who are very sensitive, may react to inhaling the allergen.

The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to:

- Foods (most commonly: peanuts, tree nuts, milk, dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish)
- Insect stings (yellow jackets, bees, wasps, hornets)
- Medications
- Latex (refer to Latex Allergy Procedure)

For the student with life-threatening allergies, the school nurse, in collaboration with parents/guardians, school physician, and principal, as needed, will develop an individualized Emergency Health Care Plan

addressing the student's needs and reasonable accommodations. To promote an inclusionary experience for all students and to reduce exposure to allergens, controlled food choices, no food, or food restrictions will be considered.

Responsibilities

The implementation of the District procedure and of the individualized plan for each allergic student requires a team approach and cooperation among administrators, teachers and other staff members, school nurses, school physicians, parents/guardians, and the student.

Responsibility of Parents/Guardians

The parents/guardians of students with life-threatening allergies will:

- provide physician's documentation of specific allergies to the school nurse each September (or school entry if mid-year start) or when diagnosed.
- provide an EpiPen and physician orders for its administration to the school nurse each September (or school entry if mid-year start) or when diagnosed.
- inform the bus or van driver, and any substitute driver when possible, about their child's life-threatening allergy, as needed.

Responsibility of Student

The student with a life-threatening allergy will:

- take as much responsibility as possible for avoiding allergens.
- not trade or share foods.
- wash hands before and after eating.
- learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- promptly inform an adult upon exposure.
- discuss his or her life-threatening allergy with adults in extracurricular activities.
- bring medication on school-sponsored field trips and to all extracurricular activities.

Responsibility of the School Nurse

The School Nurse will:

- collaborate with the school's physician, as warranted, and develop an Emergency Health Care Plan at the beginning of the school year, or as needed when a student's allergy is identified. The plan will be reviewed annually.
- maintain all student Emergency Health Care Plans in an available location in the nurse's office.
- provide annual training to staff for grades 7-8 who work directly with students with life-threatening food allergies when the school nurse is not present, e.g. during field trips. This training will be on the management of student life-threatening allergies, and the administration of Emergency Epinephrine via auto-injector (EpiPen), as outlined in the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations. Training will be reviewed periodically during the school year as needed, such as prior to a field trip.
- offer an overview annually to staff for grades 7-12 that will focus on prevention efforts, information about common allergens, recognition of signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and emergency procedures to follow in case of a severe allergic reaction.
- maintain a list of all staff members trained to use an EpiPen.
- keep a record of all EpiPens, with their expiration dates, along with the physician orders and care plans, and notify staff about location of EpiPens as needed.

- instruct staff that any student receiving an EpiPen should be transported to the hospital via emergency services.
- instruct staff to follow the Emergency Health Care Plan and/or call 911 when school nurse is not present.

Responsibility of Administration

The School Administrator will:

- arrange time necessary for the school nurse to conduct the training of staff.
- provide walkie-talkies, or other means of communication, to staff supervising students with food allergies outside the classroom setting if no other means of communication is readily available or the location is not in proximity to the administrative/nurses offices.
- Responsibility of the Food Service Director
- The Food Service Director will:
 - Be aware and knowledgeable of procedures in operating the kitchen, food preparation and serving.
 - Establish communications and training for all school food service staff and related personnel regarding safe food preparation and student food allergies.
 - Maintain information concerning food ingredients or food labels.
 - Maintain contact information with vendors and purveyors to access food content information and require clear and complete labeling of all food products.
 - Annually review the laws protecting students with food allergies as they relate to food services.
- Responsibility of Community Education

The Community Education Director will:

- indicate in writing to groups and individuals using the APS buildings that students and staff using the building during the school day have life-threatening allergies to foods, such as peanut, tree nut, shellfish, and latex and that their help is needed to reduce the risk of life-threatening allergic reactions.
- include in the Community Use of the Building forms a statement that, if food is used, it is the responsibility of the individual reserving the space to wipe all tables and chairs with an appropriate cleaning material prior to leaving the building.

Building-Based Procedures (grades 7-8 only):

Prior to or within three weeks of the start of school:

- The parent/guardian provides the school nurse with physician documentation of an allergy to begin the process of planning for the needs of the student with life-threatening allergies.
- At the start of the school year, the nurse will provide the classroom teacher information regarding students with life-threatening allergies and the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction. This documentation will be provided at this time. This information will be kept in substitute teacher folders.

During the school year:

- The nurse will inform other staff members about students with life-threatening allergies as needed.
- The classroom teacher of a student with a life-threatening allergy will be provided a means to communicate with the school nurse or administration office in the event of an emergency.

Field Trip Procedures (grades 7-8 only):

- The nurse must be notified of all field trips prior to the scheduled date.
- The student's EpiPen and Emergency Care Plan will be sent on the field trip. The nurse will review with the teacher the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and administration of an EpiPen prior to the trip as needed. Planning for the field trip will include designation of persons carrying an EpiPen.
- The teacher will carry a cell phone or other means of communication, and will be instructed to follow the Emergency Care Plan and to call 911/*77 in the event of a suspected allergic reaction.

Cafeteria Procedures:

- The school kitchen will prepare products in a manner that will reduce the risk of cross contamination of foods. This preparation area and all utensils will be washed, rinsed and sanitized after the completion of the task.
- All school kitchen staff will use only latex-free gloves.

Transportation Procedures:

- Each school bus or van will have a working means of two-way communication and a plan to check the communication system periodically.
- Eating will not be allowed on routine school bus or van routes. Exceptions will be provided for students with diabetes who may need a snack to treat a hypoglycemic episode or other specific circumstances.
- School bus drivers shall be provided an overview annually in prevention efforts, information about common allergens, recognition of signs and symptoms of anaphylaxis and emergency procedures to follow in case of a severe allergic reaction.

Emergency Response Procedures:

- For grades 7-8, annual training to staff who work directly with students with life-threatening food allergies when the school nurse is not present, e.g. during field trips, will be provided.
- An overview will be provided annually to staff that will focus on prevention efforts and emergency procedures
- When allergic symptoms are suspected in a student, the teacher or staff member supervising the student shall contact the school nurse as soon as possible. When allergic symptoms are suspected in a student during a field trip without a nurse present, staff will call 911. The school nurse and parents/guardians will be informed whenever allergic symptoms are suspected in a student with diagnosed allergies.
- Staff members supervising students with life-threatening allergies must have a means of communication to call for assistance.
- Any student receiving emergency epinephrine will be transported to the hospital via emergency services.
- The student's parent/guardian(s) will be notified as soon as possible in the event of anaphylactic reaction and as appropriate in the event of other allergy symptoms.
- The school nurse or another school staff member trained to administer epinephrine in accordance with 105 CMR 210 will be available in each school facility during the school day.
- The school nurse will maintain an authorization signed by the school physician to administer an EpiPen to individuals with unknown allergies. In the event that an individual with unknown allergies exhibits symptoms of anaphylaxis, staff will contact the nurse and/or call 911 if nurse is unavailable.

APPENDIX D: Extracurricular Agreements

Extracurricular Agreement - Junior High

To Be Used For Any School-Sponsored Activity

To the Student²:

This agreement between you, your parent(s)/guardian(s) and the Acton -Boxborough Regional School District is designed to serve several purposes. It is intended to influence students to make wise and legally sound decisions. It is designed:

- To help ensure the physical and mental health of students;
- To enable participating students and student leaders to set an example of responsible behavior;
- To promote zero-tolerance of under-age (21 years) drinking, as well as the use of illegal and harmful chemical substances among our youth;
- To bind the community together in support of its students' health.

Rule

During the school year, or from the first meeting of an extracurricular activity, a student involved in this activity shall not, regardless of quantity, use or consume, possess, buy, sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol³, marijuana, steroids or any controlled substance as defined under Mass. General Law, Ch. 90D, or inhale the vapors of any intoxicating substance such as glue, nitrous oxide and the like, sometimes referred to as "huffing." Students using tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) within 100 feet of the school property (as described by Mass. General Laws, Ch 71 Section 2A and 37H) will be subject to penalties of this agreement. Smoking or any use of tobacco products (including e-cigarettes) is also prohibited during all school activities off school property.

Consequences

First Violation

When the extracurricular activity's advisor or director and the school administration find that a student has violated the above rule, the student shall lose eligibility to participate in any and all activities for a period of two weeks. Activity advisors, parent(s)/guardian(s) counselors, the R. J. Grey Instructional Support Team and the principal/assistant principal will be notified of such finding and the resulting action as soon as possible.

Officer's Rule:

If a student officer of a class or school sponsored organization is involved in violation of the above rule, the student will be ineligible for that position and any other leadership role for an entire calendar year.

Second and Subsequent Violations:

When the advisor, director and school administration confirm that a second or subsequent violation has occurred, and following an opportunity for the student to be heard, the student shall lose eligibility to

² Students involved in athletics should see "[Extracurricular Agreement - Athletics](#)".

³ The use of wine or an alcoholic beverage for religious observances does not violate this agreement.

participate in all extracurricular activities for the next twelve (12) weeks. Parent(s)/guardian(s), counselor, and the R.J. Grey Instructional Support Team will be notified as soon as possible.

If the student, on her/his own volition, becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in her/his extracurricular activities after a minimum period of six (6) weeks. Such a program must be recommended and approved and the subsequent certification confirmed by the Instructional Support Team.

Consequences shall be cumulative only during one academic year. A period of consequences will extend into the next academic year if the consequences are not met during the current school year.

It is recommended that a student involved in a play, Jazz Band, Select Chorus and any academic-type teams be allowed to attend rehearsals or practices in a non-participatory fashion while he/she is meeting the consequences of his/her violation.

The first time a student signs this agreement, he/she is considered to be bound by the agreement for the rest of his/her involvement in the extracurricular activities offered in the Acton-Boxborough Regional School System. However, each year the student, parent, and activity advisor must sign the agreement as reaffirmation of acceptance of the terms of the agreement.

A copy of the agreement can be obtained from the principal's office of the R.J. Grey Junior High School.

Extracurricular Agreement - Athletics - Junior High School

Preamble

This agreement, among students, their parents or guardians and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, is designed to serve several purposes. It is intended to influence students to make wise and legally sound decisions. It is also designed:

- To help ensure the physical and mental health of students.
- To enable student athletes and leaders to set an example of responsible behavior.
- To promote zero-tolerance of under-age (21 years) drinking, as defined by federal and state laws, as well as of the use of illegal and harmful chemical substances among our youth.
- To bind the community together in support of its students.

This agreement was first developed by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), and was created pursuant to the rules of the MIAA. Our high school and junior high school membership in this association allows our athletic teams to compete in the Dual-County League. To maintain membership, we must adhere to and enforce the MIAA policy.

Rule

During the school year or from the first day of practice, if earlier, a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy, sell or give away any beverage containing alcohol⁴, any tobacco product (including e-cigarettes), marijuana, steroids or any controlled substance as defined under Mass. General Laws, Ch. 90D, or inhale the vapors of any intoxicating substance such as glue, nitrous oxide and the like, sometimes referred to as "huffing." This policy includes products such as "NA or near beer".

Penalties

⁴ The use of wine or an alcoholic beverage for religious observances does not violate this agreement.

First Violation

When the coach and/or athletic director and/or school administration find that a student has violated the above rule, the student shall lose eligibility to participate in his or her particular athletic activity. The student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season during which the violation occurs. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating 25% of the interscholastic contests in that season. Parents(s)/guardians(s) and counselors will be notified of such finding and the resulting action as soon as possible.

A student charged with violation of the above rule will first be given the opportunity to be heard and to present evidence in his or her defense before a finding for or against a student is made.

A student may appeal a finding against him or her by appealing to the Junior High School principal.

Captain's Rule

If a captain of a team has been found to have violated the above rule, his or her captaincy will be revoked as well. The revocation of captaincy shall be for one calendar year (12 months) from the date of the violation of the first offense.

Second and Subsequent Violations

If a student is found to have violated the above rule a second or subsequent time, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. For the student, these penalties will be determined by the season during which the violation occurs. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating 60% of the interscholastic contest in that season. Parents(s)/guardian(s), counselors and the RJG Instructional Support Team will be notified of such finding as soon as possible.

Upon the finding of a second or subsequent violation, the student may of his/her own volition become a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program. The student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of the interscholastic contests in that sport. The director or a counselor of a chemical dependency treatment center must issue such certification. Such a program and certification must be confirmed and approved by the RJG Instructional Support Team. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. all fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the interscholastic contest in that season. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year. If the penalty period is not completed during the season of violation, the penalty shall carry over to the students next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year.

It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice.

The first time a student athlete signs this agreement; he or she is considered to be bound by the agreement for his or her entire athletic career at the Acton-Boxborough Regional School System. However, each year the student athlete and parent must sign the agreement as reaffirmation of acceptance of the terms of the agreement.

This agreement is reviewed yearly by the Local Alcohol and Drug Abuse Task Force of the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District. A copy of the agreement can be obtained from the principal's office of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School or the R.J. Grey Junior High School

APPENDIX E: ABRSD Homework Policy (ABRSC Policy IKB)

The intent of homework, when assigned, is to support student engagement in the classroom. The term "homework" refers to an assignment or activity that supplements and supports instruction. Homework should increase in complexity with the maturity of the student. This can be established through activities and assignments that encourage students to investigate for themselves and to work independently as well as with others. Educators will strive to emphasize quality over quantity of homework.

This policy supports balance for our students while still engaging them in deep learning experiences. The District recognizes the need for students and families to have playtime, downtime and family time (PDF) to promote wellness. Social-emotional wellness and balance in the lives of our students leads to better learning. Better balance also allows students to engage in activities of their choice, including independent reading.

Research supports independent choice reading as a powerful tool for learning and well-being. When students read for pleasure and hear conversations relating to text, they engage in deep learning. Such powerful activities foster profound academic growth and well-being, according to research. Independent choice reading happens best when schools and families partner together. Encouraging students to be self-motivated readers does not solely rest on the District, but also on families. The District strives to help students become independent readers alongside families. Families play an important role by creating environments that nurture the desire and motivation to read for pleasure. Because research shows that intrinsic motivation is most effective in fostering a lifelong love of reading, the District will not assign independent choice reading.

To ensure all students have equitable access to programs and curricula, the information for any homework assignment should be clear and specific so that the student can complete the assignment independently. Homework assignments should take into consideration individual student differences, needs and available resources. Teachers will follow Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 Plans when planning for homework. Homework should not require the use of materials not readily available in all homes.

Frequency of Homework

- **Grades K-2:** Students will have no homework except for an occasional activity that may include other people.
- **Grades 3-4:** Students will occasionally have an assigned activity.
- **Grades 5-6:** Students may expect homework more frequently, Monday through Thursday.
- **Grades 7-12:** Students should expect homework in one or more subjects nightly.

Vacations K-12

Homework will not be assigned with the expectation that it be worked on and/or completed during any school vacations. Long-term projects assigned before a vacation cannot have a due date earlier than the Thursday after a vacation.

Long Weekends K-12

Homework will not be assigned over long weekends, including those due to religious holidays and those marked by a district-wide closing. When there is no school on Monday, in-class assessments will not be scheduled earlier than the following Wednesday.

Mid-years - High School only

Mid-years - No assessments given or homework during mid-year week, except for homework directly related to exam preparation.

MCAS

- Grades 3-8: Nights prior to MCAS testing are homework-free.
- High School: Limit homework to twenty minutes per night per course

Religious Holidays

For practices related to religious holidays, please refer to District policy IMD located on the district website: <http://www.abschools.org/school-committee/policies/section-i>

APPENDIX F: Suicide Prevention and Awareness

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Education and Supports

Protecting the health and well being of all students is of utmost importance to the school district.

1. Students will learn about recognizing and responding to warning signs of suicide in friends, using coping skills, using support systems, and seeking help for themselves and friends.
2. The secondary Counseling Chairperson, along with the Junior High Administration and Counselors serve as a point of contact for students in crisis and to refer students to appropriate resources.
3. Students in the 7th grade will participate in the [Signs of Suicide program](#). Parents/guardians will be asked to sign-off on their student's participation in the lesson and the use of the BSAD screening tool.
4. When students are identified as being at risk, they will meet with a school counselor, school psychologist, or school social worker, who, in collaboration with their families, will work to help connect them to appropriate local resources.
5. Students will have access to resources which they can contact for additional support, such as The National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255 / www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org).
6. All students will be expected to help create a school culture of respect and support in which students feel comfortable seeking help for themselves or friends. Students are encouraged to tell any staff member if they, or a friend, are feeling suicidal or in need of help.
7. Students should also know that because of the life or death nature of these matters, confidentiality or privacy concerns are secondary to seeking help for students in crisis.
8. For a more detailed review of policy changes, please refer to the district's full suicide prevention procedures.

ABRSC Policy ACAB

APPENDIX G: Harassment Policy and Procedures

PROHIBITION OF HARASSMENT

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) is committed to maintaining a school environment that values civil discourse and diversity where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. Therefore, the District will take appropriate action to:

- Prevent and/or otherwise respond to demeaning behavior and unlawful discrimination or harassment of its employees or students, and
- Define processes by which individuals can bring concerns about unlawful discrimination or harassment to the Schools' attention for resolution.

ABRSD will not tolerate harassment of their employees or students. Harassment of staff or students based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, employment policies, and other administered programs and activities is prohibited. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected from discrimination in accessing the course of study and other opportunities available through the schools.

It should be noted that while this policy sets forth the goal of promoting a work and educational environment that are free of harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit the authority of school officials to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which is deemed unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of unlawful harassment.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment includes verbal or physical conduct which may offend, denigrate, or belittle any person because of, or due to, any of the characteristics described above. Harassment may include pictures, jokes, comments, innuendoes, slurs, derogatory remarks based on a protected characteristic or any other behavior which creates an environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive to anyone.

Investigations of Harassment

The District will promptly investigate every complaint of harassment, observing all relevant state and federal laws and regulations and school system policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements. *There are separate protocols for responding to complaints of allegations of sexual harassment against students, which are outlined in Procedure ACAB-R.*

Student or Staff Complaints

All District employees must respond to suspected harassment and to complaints by students of harassment by notifying the building principal or Title IX coordinator. Employees are expected to take every report of harassment seriously. A student or any individual wishing to file a complaint alleging harassment may inform any trusted staff member, their building principal, or the Title IX Coordinator listed below.

The ABRSD Title IX Coordinator is:

Jennifer Faber, Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
15 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 x3265

The Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Deputy Superintendent are available to provide information about this policy and the District's complaint process.

Prohibition of Retaliation

It is unlawful to retaliate against, or discipline, any individual who files a complaint of harassment or discrimination, or who cooperates in an investigation of such a complaint. The Schools will not tolerate any such retaliation, and individuals who engage in retaliation will be subject to termination/expulsion or other sanctions determined by the School Administration and/or School Committee, subject to applicable school system policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements.

PROHIBITION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT**Definition of Sexual Harassment**

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, ABRSD has a Grievance Process for investigating and resolving Formal Complaints of Sexual Harassment (Refer to Procedure ACAB-R.).

In Massachusetts, Sexual Harassment is defined as any unwelcome sexual conduct, including sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to, acceptance of, or rejection of such advances, requests, or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or education or a basis for

employment decisions affecting an employee or for educational, disciplinary, or other decisions affecting a student; or

2. Such advances, requests, or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance, education or participation in extracurricular activities by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or offensive work or school environment.

According to Title IX, sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An ABRSD employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to ABRSD's education programs or activities; or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (all as defined by federal laws.)

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are examples of prohibited conduct at ABRSD:

- Unwelcome sexual advances -- whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comments about an individual's body, sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, touching, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences, and
- Discussion of one's sexual activities
- Taking or posting of photographs, videos or images of a sexual nature without consent

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, its procedures, and federal regulations. Any ABRSD employee with knowledge of alleged sexual harassment, must report it, whether they personally witness the sexual harassment, learn of it from a third party, or they are the alleged victim themselves. ABRSD will promptly respond to all reports alleging sexual harassment to ensure a fair and equitable resolution to the report, provide support to the victim, eliminate harassment, and impose discipline if necessary. Discipline may range from verbal reprimand to suspension and expulsion or termination in the case of an employee.

Title IX Coordinator

The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the District's proper response to sexual harassment, compliance with Title IX and overseeing the Grievance Process. ABRSD's Title IX Coordinator is the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, who can be reached at 978-264-4700 x3265 or at 15 Charter Rd., Acton, MA 01719.

Contact Information for State & Federal Agencies

The Schools urge all individuals in the school community to bring any concerns or complaints of harassment to the attention of school personnel so that they can be addressed. If either party to the complaint is dissatisfied with the results or progress of the Schools' investigation, they may discuss this directly with the Superintendent of Schools.

The state agency responsible for enforcing laws that prohibit harassment in the workplace is the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), One Ashburton Place, Suite 601, Boston, MA 02108-1518; telephone (617) 994-6000; TTY Users (617) 994-6196. The time frame for filing a complaint with the MCAD is within 300 days from the date of the most recent incident of alleged harassment. The state agency responsible for ensuring that Massachusetts public schools do not discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics is the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), 75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148-4906; telephone (781) 338-3300; TTY Users (800) 439-2370. The MA DESE's Program Quality Assurance Services (PQA) accepts complaints when the alleged violation occurred no more than one year before PQA received the written complaint.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) is the federal agency that enforces federal laws prohibiting employment discrimination. The deadline for filing a complaint with the EEOC is within 300 days from the day of the alleged discrimination. The EEOC is located at JFK Federal Bldg., 475 Government Center, Boston, MA 02203; (617) 565-3200 or (800) 669-4000; TTY Users (800) 669-6820. The US Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is a federal agency that enforces five federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability and age in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance from the US Department of Education. In most cases, a complaint must be filed with OCR within 180 calendar days of the date of the alleged discrimination. OCR is located on the 8th Floor, 5 Post Office Square, Boston, MA 02109-3921; telephone (617) 289-0111, fax (617) 289-0150.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BESE 603 CMR 26:00

34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

Cross Reference: Policy ACAB replaces former policies JBA and GBA

Revised and Approved – September 17, 2020

ABRSC Procedure ACAB-R

HARASSMENT- PROCEDURES

The Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (ABRSD) is committed to maintaining a school environment that values civil discourse and diversity and in which all individuals are treated with dignity and respect. ABRSD will not tolerate harassment of staff or students. Harassment of staff or students based on race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, active military/veteran status, ancestry, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of ABRSD's educational policies, employment policies, and other administered programs and activities is prohibited. In addition, students who are homeless or of limited English-speaking ability are protected from discrimination in accessing the courses of study and other opportunities available through the District.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment includes verbal or physical conduct which may offend, denigrate, or belittle any person because of, or due to, any of the categories or characteristics set forth above. Harassment includes pictures, jokes, comments, innuendoes, slurs, derogatory remarks based on a protected category, and any other behavior which creates an environment that is intimidating, hostile, or offensive.

Prohibition Against Retaliation

It is unlawful to retaliate against, or discipline, any individual who files a complaint of harassment or discrimination, or who cooperates in the investigation of such a complaint. The Schools will not tolerate any such retaliation, and individuals who engage in retaliation will be subject to termination/expulsion or other sanctions determined by the School Administration and/or School Committee, subject to applicable policies and procedures, as well as applicable contractual requirements.

Staff or Student Complaints

Any individual wishing to file a complaint alleging harassment may inform any trusted staff member or a supervisor. If an employee does not wish to discuss the issue with a supervisor or feels that the problem is not addressed in an effective manner, the employee should contact the Employee Title IX Coordinator:

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Acton-Boxborough Regional School District
15 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 x3265

The Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and the Deputy Superintendent as listed above are also available to provide information about procedures applicable to this policy.

Investigation, Corrective Action & Closure of a Harassment Complaint

The Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and/or the Deputy Superintendent will coordinate all investigations. Typical investigative steps include separate interviews with those involved, reducing statements from all parties to writing, identifying and questioning witnesses, and taking other appropriate actions. The investigation will be conducted with as much confidentiality and privacy for all parties as possible without compromising the thoroughness of the investigation.

The Schools/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 quickly as practicable. Additionally, if the respondent is subject to a collective bargaining agreement that sets forth a specific timeline for notice and/or investigation of a complaint, such timeline will be followed.

If after investigation, a determination is made that harassment, participation in harassment, or retaliation for complaining about harassment has occurred, the Schools/District will promptly take appropriate action to end 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.

The District will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse.

When the Schools/District have completed the investigation, school personnel will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint of the results of that investigation and will file a report with the Coordinator for Title IX/Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act/Chapter 622.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Pursuant to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, ABRSD has a Grievance Procedure for investigating and resolving allegations of Sexual Harassment. ABRSD will promptly respond to all reports alleging sexual harassment to ensure a fair and equitable resolution to the report, provide

support to the victim, eliminate harassment, and impose discipline if necessary pursuant to District policies.

According to Title IX, sexual harassment is conduct on the basis of sex that satisfies one or more of the following:

1. An ABRSD employee conditioning the provision of an aid, benefit, or service of the recipient on an individual's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct;
2. Unwelcome conduct determined by a reasonable person to be so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to ABRSD's education programs or activities; or
3. Sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking (all as defined by Federal laws.)

While it is not possible to list all circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are examples of prohibited conduct at ABRSD:

- Unwelcome sexual advances - whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences, and
- Discussion of one's sexual activities
- Taking or posting of photographs, videos or images of a sexual nature without consent

Complaints of Sexual Harassment

Any individual wishing to file a complaint alleging harassment may inform any trusted staff member, a supervisor, or the Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Any staff member who receives such a report is required to report it to an administrator. If an employee does not wish to discuss the issue with a supervisor or feels that the problem is not addressed in an effective manner, the employee should contact the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for ensuring the District's proper response to sexual harassment, compliance with Title IX and overseeing the Grievance Process.

ABRSD's Title IX Coordinator is:

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
15 Charter Rd., Acton, MA 01720
978-264-4700 x3265

Response to Sexual Harassment

A student or any individual wishing to report sexual harassment may inform the Title IX Coordinator or any other employee. Any District employee with knowledge of an allegation of sexual harassment, must report it, whether they personally witness the sexual harassment, learn of it from a third party or the alleged victim themselves.

Once the Title IX Coordinator learns of an allegation of sexual harassment, they will contact the alleged victim, or “the Complainant,” to gather preliminary information, offer “Supportive Measures,” and inform that person of the right to file a “Formal Complaint” against the alleged perpetrator, or “the Respondent,” that initiates the Title IX “Grievance Process.”

A “Formal Complaint” is a document filed by the Complainant or signed by the Title IX Coordinator alleging sexual harassment against a respondent and requesting that ABRSD investigate the allegation of sexual harassment and initiate the Grievance Process. Formal Complaints may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or electronic mail. To file a Formal Complaint, the alleged sexual harassment must have occurred in the school’s district educational programming or activity, and within the United States.

In some circumstances, the District will dismiss a Formal Complaint. The District has discretion to dismiss a Formal complaint where the passage of time results in an inability to gather sufficient evidence for a determination of responsibility, the district lost responsibility over the Respondent. The District must dismiss the Formal complaint if it does not constitute sexual harassment as complicated by Title IX. However, the school may investigate the conduct as it pertains to other school policies.

“Supportive Measures” are non-disciplinary, non-punitive individualized services offered as appropriate, as reasonably available, and without fee or charge to the complainant or the respondent before or after the filing of a formal complaint or where no formal complaint has filed. Such Measures are designed to restore or preserve equal access to ABRSD education and activities, including measures designed to protect the safety of all or the educational environment, or deter sexual harassment.

ABRSD will maintain the confidentiality of any Supportive Measures to the extent possible and document the supportive measures offered by the Title IX Coordinator to the Complainant and Respondent. Examples of supportive measures include, but are not limited to the following: counseling, deadline extensions, course adjustments, work or schedule modifications, and increased security.

Grievance Process

Once the Formal Complaint is filed, the “Grievance Process” commences. ABRSD is committed to treating all parties equitably during the Grievance Process. ABRSD is committed to completing the Grievance Process as soon as possible with the goal of completion within 60 days. However, if required, by good cause, such as the absence of a party, a party’s advisor, or a witness; law enforcement or DCF involvement; or the need for accommodations, the parties will be notified of the need for delay.

ABRSD will provide the Complainant and Respondent with written notice of the allegations and the Grievance Process. This notice will include specific detail of the allegations against the Respondent. The parties will be informed at this time of their right to have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney, and may accompany them at any point during the process. They will also be informed of their right to inspect and review evidence. ABRSD will remind the parties of the school’s prohibition against knowingly making false statements during this process. The Respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination of responsibility has been made. Supportive measures are available to all parties during the Grievance Process.

The Title IX Grievance Process requires the involvement of several different employees that fulfill separate roles. As noted earlier, the Title IX Coordinator oversees Title IX compliance and the Grievance Process. Additionally, each Formal Complaint will be assigned an “Investigator,” who could be a Principal, Vice-Principal, or other employee that is properly trained in investigations. Each Title IX investigation will be assigned a “Decision-Maker,” which similarly could be a Principal, Vice-Principal, or other employee that is properly trained. All appeals will be reviewed by someone who was involved in the underlying Title IX investigation.

ABRSD will ensure that Title IX coordinators, investigators, Decision-Makers, and any person who facilitates an informal resolution process, receives training on Title IX policy and procedure and his or her respective role.

Informal Resolution of Sexual Harassment

If appropriate, the Title IX Coordinator will offer the parties the option of an informal resolution process, but, pursuant to Title IX, not until a Formal Complaint has been filed and the parties have been fully advised of their Title IX rights. Before beginning an informal resolution process, ABRSD will obtain written consent from the Complainant and Respondent. At any time, the parties can withdraw from the informal resolution and the Grievance Process will resume. Informal Resolution shall not be offered in the event the Respondent is an ABRSD employee.

Investigation of Sexual Harassment

A properly trained Investigator will complete an investigation into the Formal Complaint. Both the Respondent and Complainant, will have an equal opportunity to present witnesses and other evidence. Prior to any interviews with a witness, ABRSD will provide the witness with notice of the date, time, location, participants, and sufficient time to prepare for that interview. Both parties will have an equal opportunity to examine and inspect evidence. Unless waived by one of the parties, the investigation will not intrude on any information legally protected as privileged. Questions and evidence about a person's sexual predisposition or prior sexual behavior are not relevant, unless it is offered to prove that someone other than the Respondent committed the alleged act, or the questions and evidence concern specific incidents of sexual behavior between the parties and it is offered to prove consent. At the conclusion of the investigation, the Investigator will create an Investigative Report that summarizes the relevant evidence and send it to each party and the party's advisor.

The parties will have 10 days before any hearing or determination of responsibility to review and respond to the report if they so choose. Time periods may be extended or delayed for good cause, including the absence of a party, a party's advisor, or a witness; concurrent law enforcement activity; or the need for language assistance or accommodations of disabilities.

The designated Decision-Maker will afford each party the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions. The Decision-Maker, who will first evaluate the relevancy of each question. In the event that the Decision-Maker decides to exclude a question, they will provide a written decision explaining their reasoning.

Hearings

Though it is not required, ABRSD reserves the right to conduct a full-live hearing as part of the Grievance Process. At such a hearing, the Decision-Maker will permit each party's Advisor to ask the other party and any witnesses relevant questions. If a party does not have an advisor, ABRSD will provide one at no cost. Upon the request of the Complainant or Respondent, the ABRSD will utilize technology to separate the parties during the hearing process. If a party or witness does not submit to cross-examination at the live hearing, the Decision-Maker will not consider any statement of that party or witness in determining responsibility.

Finding of Responsibility

Any Respondent found, by a preponderance of the evidence, to have committed Sexual Harassment shall be subject to a range of discipline, including, but not limited to: detention, exclusion of extracurricular activities, suspension, and expulsion, or in the case of an employee discipline, suspension, or termination of employment.

The Decision-Maker will simultaneously issue a written determination of responsibility that includes a description of the allegations, the procedural steps of the grievance process, the findings of facts, the conclusions reached, and a statement and rationale of responsibility and related discipline. If applicable, it will also include remedies designed to restore or preserve equal access to education and activities at ABRSD.

Appeal

Both the Complainant and Respondent shall have the right to appeal the decision of the Grievance Process by notifying the Title IX coordinator in writing within 10 business days of receiving the decision. The grounds for appeal are limited to: procedural irregularity, new evidence that was not reasonably available at the time of the determination or dismissal, or an alleged conflict of interest. Both parties shall have an opportunity to provide a written statement supporting their position on Appeal. The Appeal shall be reviewed by a person who is not the original decision-maker, investigator, or Title IX Coordinator. That person shall issue a written decision and rationale simultaneously to the parties.

Retaliation

ABRSD strictly prohibits retaliation in any form against persons seeking protection under or participating in an investigation related to this policy. As such, the District will investigate any reports of retaliation and take separate disciplinary action against those found to have retaliated against someone.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A
Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972
BESE 603 CMR 26:00
34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b)
34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1)
34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

Revised and Updated – September 17, 2020