

# SHARON HIGH SCHOOL



## Student/Parent Handbook 2024 - 2025

[Sharon High School](#)

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### SHARON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Dr. Peter Botelho**, Superintendent  
**Dr. Joel Jocelyn**, Assistant Superintendent  
**Ms. Ellen Whittemore**, Assistant Superintendent

*This handbook was approved by the Sharon School Committee on August 28, 2024.*

**[School District policies](#) are reviewed and may be updated throughout the school year.**

Students and Parents/Caregivers must complete this [FORM](#) to acknowledge receipt of this Handbook.

Sharon Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy, or pregnancy-related condition, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law.

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## **Greetings from the Principal**

Dear SHS Students, Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 school year!

As we embark on another exciting journey together, I want to extend a warm welcome to each of you. This year holds endless possibilities, and I am thrilled to see what we will accomplish as a school community. Whether you're returning or joining us for the first time, know that you are an essential part of what makes our school special.

Please take the time to thoroughly read this handbook. It contains important information that will guide you throughout the year, including some new procedures that we have implemented. Pay close attention to our updated policies on phone usage and attendance requirements, as they are designed to support your success and the overall learning environment.

At our school, we are deeply committed to our core values. We strive to provide a safe and nurturing educational environment where meaningful learning experiences can flourish. We encourage you to approach your studies with curiosity, open-mindedness, empathy, and reflection. These qualities will not only help you succeed academically but also contribute to your growth as a thoughtful and engaged individual.

We believe that a strong school culture is built on connections and relationships. I encourage each of you to get involved in the many opportunities our school offers. Whether it's joining a club, participating in sports, or volunteering, being an active member of our community will enhance your high school experience. Remember, a connected student is a better student.

Let's make this year one of growth, discovery, and achievement. Together, we will create an environment where everyone can thrive.

Welcome back, and let's make it a great year!

Sincerely,

Kristen Keenan  
Principal

# SHARON HIGH SCHOOL

## VISION, MISSION, AND CORE VALUES



Sharon High School strives to be a respectful, caring, dynamic, and inspirational learning community.

In order for all students to learn, realize success, and reach their potential, we will:

**Ensure a safe, supportive, inclusive, and stimulating educational environment**

**Set challenging goals and create meaningful learning experiences**

**Encourage curiosity, open-mindedness, empathy, and reflection**

**Promote a healthy, spirited, collaborative, and engaging school culture**

**Establish lasting relationships and partner with our community**

# SHARON HIGH SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

Pride, Responsibility, Integrity, Dedication, Excellence

## **Academic Expectations**

### **Students Will:**

- Read effectively
- Write effectively
- Speak effectively
- Solve problems analytically and critically
- Work Cooperatively
- Use technology effectively and responsibly
- Locate, organize, and process information from a variety of sources

## **Civic Expectations**

### **Students Will:**

- Demonstrate responsible citizenship with a global perspective
- Demonstrate appreciation for community diversity
- Demonstrate honest and moral character

## **Social Expectations**

### **Students Will:**

- Demonstrate appreciation for the physical and emotional well-being of self and others
- Demonstrate respectful behavior
- Participate in activities beyond the classroom



## Sharon High School Bell Schedule 2024 - 2025

			DAY A	DAY B	DAY C	DAY D	DAY E	DAY F	DAY G	
<b>BLOCK 1</b>	8:05AM	8:55AM	1	7	6	5	4	3	2	50
	8:55AM	8:59AM	PASSING							4
<b>BLOCK 2</b>	8:59AM	9:49AM	2	1	7	6	5	4	3	50
	9:49AM	9:53AM	PASSING							4
<b>BLOCK 3</b>	9:53AM	10:43AM	3	2	1	7	6	5	4	50
	10:43AM	10:47AM	PASSING							4
<b>BLOCK 4 &amp; LUNCH</b>	10:47AM	12:32PM	4	3	2	1	7	6	5	77
			LUNCH							28
	12:32PM	12:36PM	PASSING							4
<b>BLOCK 5</b>	12:36PM	1:26PM	5	4	3	2	1	7	6	50
	1:26PM	1:30PM	PASSING							4
<b>BLOCK 6</b>	1:30PM	2:20PM	6	5	4	3	2	1	7	50
<b>ACES</b>	2:20PM	2:40PM	ACES	ACES	ACES	ACES	ACES	ACES	ACES	20
<b>DROPPED BLOCK</b>			DAY A PERIOD 7	DAY B PERIOD 6	DAY C PERIOD 5	DAY D PERIOD 4	DAY E PERIOD 3	DAY F PERIOD 2	DAY G PERIOD 1	

- A new Sharon High School schedule was developed for the 2024-2025 academic year.
- The new schedule was negotiated between the Sharon School Committee, the Sharon Public Schools Administration, and members of the Sharon Teachers Association and is written into the STA contract.
- Sharon High School students will now take 6 classes per day and a 7th class will be dropped each day.
- To accommodate the new schedule, ACES has been shortened from previous years to 20 minutes and will take place at the end of the school day.

## Sharon High School Lunch Schedule 2024 - 2025

1st Lunch	2nd Lunch	3rd Lunch
10:47AM - 11:15AM	11:25AM - 11:53AM	12:04PM - 12:32PM

A grab and go lunch is provided for all students on early release days.

## **Sharon High School Early Release Schedule**

<b>START &amp; END TIME</b>	<b>BLOCK</b>	<b>DURATION</b>
<b>8:05AM - 8:38AM</b>	<b>BLOCK 1</b>	<b>33 MINUTES</b>
<b>8:41AM - 9:14AM</b>	<b>BLOCK 2</b>	<b>33 MINUTES</b>
<b>9:17AM - 9:50AM</b>	<b>BLOCK 3</b>	<b>33 MINUTES</b>
<b>9:53AM - 10:26AM</b>	<b>BLOCK 4</b>	<b>33 MINUTES</b>
<b>10:29AM - 11:02AM</b>	<b>BLOCK 5</b>	<b>33 MINUTES</b>
<b>11:06AM - 11:40</b>	<b>BLOCK 6</b>	<b>34 MINUTES</b>

### **School Cancellation**

In the event of a “no school,” late start, early dismissal, or other unexpected schedule change, the district utilizes several media outlets to communicate information:

- Via the district’s automated phone/text call system.
- Local radio and television stations.
- Posted on the school and district websites: [www.sharonschools.net](http://www.sharonschools.net)
- Posted on the district’s social media platforms.

### **Procedure in Case of Weather-Related Emergencies**

In the event of a weather-related emergency, the Superintendent of Schools will:

- Declare a weather-related emergency on cable TV (channel 22) and via local channels and phone/text messaging system whenever possible
- May declare a time delay for the opening of the school day.

## **Communication and Organization**

Communication between home and school is a priority at Sharon High School. Our goal is to communicate with you professionally and proactively to support your student's high school experience. Through the [school's website](#), official social media, email alerts, and parent groups, a wealth of information is available, and we encourage you to check these resources regularly. If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the appropriate classroom teacher, coach, advisor, curriculum facilitator, counselor, or administrator. Any teacher can be emailed by using First Name Initial, Last Name, @sharonschools.net

**Any emergency related to school safety should be immediately reported to SHS administration.**

<b>SHS Main Phone: 781-784-1554</b>		
<b>SHS Administration</b>		
Kristen Keenan, Principal	x81202	kkeen@sharonschools.net
Jenifer Andrews, Assistant Principal	x81201	jandrews@sharonschools.net
Michael Vitelli, Athletic Director/AP	x81126	mvitelli@sharonschools.net
Robert Pomer, Dean of Academic Affairs	x82201	rpomer@sharonschools.net
Brian White, Special Education Administrator	x81209	bwhite@sharonschools.net
Carla Hands, METCO Coordinator	x82500	chands@sharonschools.net
Amy Belhumeur, Social Studies Coordinator	x82271	abelhumeur@sharonschools.net
Emily Burke, Science Coordinator	x82268	eburke@sharonschools.net
Tina Kelly, Math Coordinator	x82269	tkelly@sharonschools.net
Crystal LaLiberte, ELA Coordinator	x82270	claliberte@sharonschools.net
Derrick Ryan, World Language Coordinator	x82272	dryan@sharonschools.net
Sarah Godino, ELL Coordinator	x82217	sgodino@sharonschools.net

<b>SHS School Counselors</b>		
Dawn Phelps, Counseling Admin. Asst.	x82200	dphelps@sharonschools.net
Andrea d'Entremont	x82208	adentremont@sharonschools.net
Emily Ford Mills	x82204	efordmills@sharonschools.net
Andrea Fugazot	x82205	afugazot@sharonschools.net
Jacqueline Kaye	x82207	jkaye@sharonschools.net
Jenna McLaughlin	x82203	jmclaughlin@sharonschools.net
Marybeth Shinney	x82202	mshinney@sharonschools.net

<b>SHS Nursing</b>		
Debbie Feldman	x81216	dfeldman@sharonschools.net
Karen Waitekus	x81217	kwaitekus@sharonschools.net

<b>SHS Counseling</b>		
Meghan Alson, School Psychologist	x82206	malson@sharonschools.net
Mahesh Balan, Adjustment Counselor	x82210	mbalan@sharonschools.net
Maureen Chamoun, Speech Lang. Pathologist	x82209	mchamoun@sharonschools.net
Dana Cho, School Psychologist	x82210	dcho@sharonschools.net

<b>SPS District Administration</b>	
Dr. Peter Botelho, Superintendent of Schools	pbotelho@sharonschools.net
Dr. Joel Jocelyn, Assistant Supt. for Curriculum & Administration	jjocelyn@sharonschools.net
Ellen Whittemore, Assistant Supt. for Finance & Administration	ewhittemore@sharonschools.net
Jessica Murphy, Director of Student Services	jmurphy@sharonschools.net
Heena Trivedi, Director of DEI & Human Resources	htrivedi@sharonschools.net
Marianne Casano, Human Resources Specialist	mcasano@sharonschools.net
Kenneth Wertz, Director of Facilities	kwertz@sharonschools.net
Carla Hands, METCO Director	chands@sharonschools.net
Molly Van Cott, Director of Food Services	mvancott@sharonschools.net
Celeste Ruggeri, Food Services Operations Asst.	cruggeri@sharonschools.net
Fran Derry, Supervisor of Transportation	fderry@sharonschools.net
Andy Farrer, Director of Technology	afarrer@sharonschools.net
Marielle Wintersteen, Out of District Coordinator	mwintersteen@sharonschools.net

## **Weekly Email Updates/Forms**

- A school newsletter is published weekly and emailed to parents/caregivers. Our newsletter provides details, information, and announcements of school-related items, so it is important to **keep your email contact up-to-date** in PowerSchool.
- Notices and other information will be periodically emailed home to parents/caregivers to communicate news or upcoming school events.
- Information and forms are available on the [Sharon High School](#) website.

## **SHS Learning Platforms**

- Teachers use **Schoology** to manage assignments and disseminate course-related information
- **PowerSchool** is used to view student progress: grades, report cards, homework, teacher comments/feedback, and attendance
- How to access Schoology and PowerSchool: [SPS Tech Resources - Family Resources](#)
- For help with PowerSchool, email [psquestions@sharonschools.net](mailto:psquestions@sharonschools.net)

## **Student Cell Phones**

- Students are prohibited from using their cell phones during class time.
- Cell phones must be silenced and secured in the designated phone holder in each classroom, including during trips to the restroom/water fountain.
- At the conclusion of class or when the teacher permits, cell phones can be retrieved.
- During passing time and in the cafeteria during lunch, students may use their cell phones.
- Parents/caregivers may call the main office to communicate a time-sensitive message to their child.
- Students must visit the health office if they are unwell instead of calling /texting home first.
- Students may use the main office telephone if they want to contact home.
- Violations of the cell phone policy are subject to disciplinary action. (See pgs. 52-54)

## School Safety

- Individuals must immediately report any safety concerns to a staff member in school.
- Doors to the school building are locked at all times.
- Visitors must enter through the main office and follow sign-in procedures during the school day.
- Students are not permitted to use DoorDash or any meal delivery services during school hours.
- Opening or propping a door during the school day is prohibited. Everyone must enter/exit through the Main Entrance only.
- During a fire drill, students and staff must exit the building as quickly, quietly, and safely as possible.
  - Students must be silent while teachers take attendance during fire drills.
  - Students and staff may return to the building once the principal or their designee authorizes reentry after a fire drill.
  - If students are away from their classroom when the fire alarm sounds, they must leave through the nearest exit and check in with the nearest staff member outside the building.
  - If students are not in their classroom during a lockdown procedure, they must follow the directions of the nearest adult or directions over the PA system.
- **ALICE:** Staff and students are trained annually on the **ALICE** safety protocol. **ALICE** procedures empower individuals facing immediate threats of violence.

<b>Alert</b>	Immediately alert others of the threat, giving as much information as possible.
<b>Lockdown</b>	Students and staff can lock down and barricade the room with any objects necessary if they determine that evacuating is unsafe.
<b>Inform:</b>	We communicate as much information as possible to others and First Responders, including contacting 911.
<b>Counter:</b>	If danger is imminent, individuals are empowered to use every effort to stop the intruder instead of being passive victims.
<b>Evacuate:</b>	All are encouraged to evacuate the building and remove themselves from the threat if it is safe.

## **School Resource Officer (SRO)**

In cooperation with the Sharon Police Department, a full-time School Resource Officer has been assigned to Sharon High School. Fully uniformed, the SRO—contributes in a variety of capacities, including but not limited to: law enforcement, education, and specialized counseling. To that end and amongst other things, the SRO assists in the maintenance of a safe school environment by serving as a positive and informative role model, being an important resource to students, staff, and parents/guardians, and acting as a liaison between the community and the school department.

The SRO attends school functions, participates in a multitude of classroom activities, and supports numerous enhancements to school programs and protocols. A more detailed description of the SRO's roles and responsibilities can be found on the high school's website. The SRO can also be contacted at 781-784-1554 x81208.

## **Building, Grounds, and School Security Guidelines**

Sharon High School is a large complex that houses approximately 1,400 individuals on any given day, including faculty and staff. There are numerous entryways, exit points, gathering places, and events at the high school that make the management and maintenance of such a facility a difficult task. Therefore, it is incumbent upon individuals who use or visit the high school to respect the property, and to help maintain a clean, pleasant, and safe atmosphere at all times.

Common courtesies on all school grounds include refraining from littering, refraining from loitering, not blocking entry or exit points, and refraining from using profane and vulgar language. It is also essential that all individuals adhere to all emergency and security measures. Students who violate any of the aforementioned guidelines will be subject to disciplinary consequences, and guests who violate them may be asked to leave the school premises permanently.

It should be public knowledge that Sharon High School takes proactive steps to ensure building security and keeping unauthorized persons out of the school building. For example, a live video camera system surveys the outside perimeter of the building; a school resource officer is housed in the building (see *School Resource Officer*); all faculty and staff (including coaches) are required to wear identification badges/clothing; visitors and students tardy to school must ring a buzzer, identify themselves, and check-in at the main office to gain access to the rest of the building; and, perimeter doors are locked at all times.

There should be no expectation of privacy on school grounds or buses, except in locker rooms and restrooms. All video and audio recordings from security cameras will be kept confidential, only to be used by school staff under the direction of the Superintendent and/or their designee. If warranted, recordings from security cameras may be used as part of disciplinary inquiries.

These measures, as well as the guidelines on the following pages, will facilitate the longevity of the school department's property, as well as the safety of all individuals in and around the complex. Keep in mind that during normal school hours, and at all school-sponsored events, the Principal or the Principal's designee is in charge of the management and maintenance of the facility. Therefore,

students and visitors should be cognizant of the fact that the Principal retains the right and responsibility to all students and staff to make decisions that will help ensure that Sharon High School maintains a clean, pleasant, and safe atmosphere at all times.

## **Restrooms**

- All students have the right to use a restroom that is clean, safe, and comfortable. Sharon High School has multiple restrooms available for student use, in addition to the restrooms in the Nurse's Office.
- Students must use the designated student restroom **closest** to their classroom.
- Vaping, gatherings, and vandalism to restrooms infringes on the rights of others and will not be tolerated. Any student who is determined to have vandalized a restroom will be subject to disciplinary measures.
- Students are responsible for immediately reporting any vandalism or other concerns about the restrooms to a staff member.
- Only one student at a time is permitted to use a stall or gender neutral restroom. Under no circumstances should two or more students be in the same stall or gender neutral restroom behind a locked and/or closed door.
- Should students be found together in the same stall or gender neutral restroom, they will be immediately subjected to a search for reasonable suspicion. There is no valid reason for two or more students to be in one stall or in one gender neutral restroom.
- Students are not to move or place furniture in the restrooms.
- Should a student be ill, they are expected to go to the Nurse's Office or tell a teacher or staff member.

## **Elevator Use**

- Students are permitted to use the elevator if they have written permission from the school nurse or administrator, or are accompanied by a staff member.

## **Passing from Class to Class**

At any given moment, nearly 1,400 individuals could be occupying the foyers, hallways, and corridors of Sharon High School; therefore, it is incumbent upon all individuals to move through the school in a courteous and expeditious manner.

Passing time between classes is brief, and all students are expected to move from one class to another using the most direct route so that they can arrive at their next class on time. Loitering, public displays of affection, and food and drink are not allowed in the foyers, hallways, or corridors, and any student who impedes others or who violates any of the school's expectations with regard to behavior will be subject to disciplinary consequences.

## **SmartPass Hall Pass System**

- Students must utilize the SmartPass app on their Chromebooks to request a hall pass.

- The SmartPass system records the intended location of the student and the time allotted for the pass.
- Staff must approve all SmartPass requests before a student can leave the classroom.
- The teacher may refer students to the main office if they do not have a hall pass or if they go overtime on their SmartPass time.
- Students must follow any additional procedure for signing out of a room set up by the staff member in charge of that room.
- Students are encouraged to use the restroom between classes or - with permission from their teacher - during the last five minutes of a class period.
- Students who violate SmartPass procedures may be placed on pass restriction and may be subject to disciplinary action.

## **Fire and Evacuation Drills, Lock-Downs, and Emergency Situations**

Periodically during a school year, the school will engage in planned exercises intended to address the school's preparedness for an emergency situation. These exercises may take the form of a fire drill, an evacuation drill, or a lock-down drill. Because the safety of all individuals is the school's first priority, it is essential that all students, faculty and staff, and any guests take these exercises seriously, and that they comply with all directives by responding in a calm and orderly fashion.

The administration of the Sharon Public Schools works cooperatively with local police and fire department officials to ensure that all precautionary measures, as well as safety procedures and protocol, are up-to-date and reflective of best practice. It is our intent to continue doing so, and any student or individual who intentionally jeopardizes the safety and/or well-being of others will be subject to severe disciplinary consequences.

### **Visitors**

In the interest of student and staff safety, building security, and the maintenance of a learning environment that is free from unnecessary distractions, visitors who wish to enter Sharon High School during normal school hours (8:05 a.m. – 2:40 p.m.) are required to check in with the receptionist in the main office and to have a specific purpose for visiting. All visitors must present a valid form of ID and will be screened for admission.

- Visitors must adhere to all school and School Committee policies.
- All visitors must present identification and visibly wear an ID badge for the duration of their stay.
- Students may not bring visitors to the school.

Students who do not attend Sharon High School are not allowed to visit during the school day. Prospective students and their parents/guardians who wish to gain a better understanding of the curriculum and learning environment should make arrangements with the School Counseling Department to schedule a visit.

At all times, visitors on school property are expected to comply with all procedural and safety practices that are in effect. During non-school hours, visitors are required to be accompanied by an enrolled

student or member of the faculty or staff, and they are also expected to confine themselves to the event that predicated their presence.

Anyone who fails to abide by these standards will be asked to leave the premises immediately. It should also be noted that enrolled students might be held accountable for the conduct of their guests.

## **Driving and Parking**

There are several student-designated parking areas for Sharon High School students. There are two lots: the Senior Lot is located on Pond St. and the Junior lot is located at the lake on Beach St. Student parking passes are managed through the Sharon Recreation Department. Students should visit: <https://sharonma.myrec.com/info/default.aspx> for detailed information about parking fees (currently \$150 annual fee) and registration. Students must visibly place their tag on their rear view mirror. Parking stickers are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.

All vehicles being used by students to drive to and from school must be registered with the administration, and it is expected that students who do drive to and from school, and who do park in the student-designated parking areas, are complying with all state laws relative to the operation, registration, and inspection of their vehicles, including abiding by school-zone speed limits and the wearing of safety belts. Failure to adhere to these regulations could subject a student to fines and/or penalties issued by the Sharon Police Department.

While parked in the student-designated parking areas, the vehicle, any contents within the vehicle, and any passengers are the sole responsibility and liability of the driver. Students parked illegally or inappropriately will be required to move their vehicles immediately, and in the interest of safety and security, it should be understood that the administration reserves the right to tow any vehicle parked in any parking area that does not have the necessary authorization to be there. Prior to towing any student's vehicle, the administration will employ progressive discipline to address parking violations.

All students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately in and around the school's parking areas, and students who loiter, violate school rules, or behave in a manner which could jeopardize the safety or well-being of others, will be subject to disciplinary consequences. Additionally, student drivers who exhibit persistent and/or excessive tardiness or absenteeism risk losing their privilege to park in the student-designated parking areas.

At any time, should a student driver exhibit the reckless use of a vehicle on school property, or in the student-designated parking areas, the student will be subject to permanent loss of the privilege to park, or to apply for parking in the student-designated parking areas; any loss of a parking privilege includes the loss of the fee that was paid to acquire this privilege.

As a condition of the parking privilege, a student must consent to having their personal vehicle searched when there is a reason to suspect that a vehicle may contain illegal substances or paraphernalia. *Refusing consent will be considered an admission of guilt.*

Vehicles parked in student parking lots should be locked. Sharon Public Schools assumes no responsibility for lost or stolen belongings or property, nor damage to any vehicles and/or to personal property items contained therein.

Students who park in the teacher lot will be directed to move their vehicle and may be ticketed.

Students may not loiter in parking lots and no motor vehicle may be occupied while parked on school grounds during the school day.

### **Auditorium and Gym**

The two largest gathering places inside the high school are the auditorium and the gym. Periodically, these venues will be used during the school day for presentations or large assemblies; they are also both used for public events by the school department, the town, or private organizations.

All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the school's behavioral expectations while attending a presentation, assembly, or event. Entry and exit procedures must be adhered to as well, and anyone who fails to abide by the school's guidelines at an assembly, presentation, or event, will be removed and subject to the discipline code.

Please note that both the Auditorium and Gymnasium are water-only areas of the building. No food or other beverages are permitted in these areas.

## Attendance

**Children have the right** to attend school daily and on time.

**Parents/caregivers are responsible** for ensuring that their child regularly attends school.

### **Compulsory School Attendance is the State and Federal law.**

- Parents/caregivers are responsible for their child's school attendance (M.G.L. C 76§2, C 76§4).
- DESE's definition for chronic absenteeism counts students who have missed 18 school days for any reason during one school year.
- **In order to reduce the volume of phone calls, SHS is utilizing a Google form for families to communicate a child's absence, tardy, or dismissal.**
- Parents cannot excuse an absence. Please see reasons for excused absences on page 20.
- Absence, Tardy, Dismissal Form: [SHS Student Absence Form](#)
- For emergency attendance issues **ONLY**, please call: 781-784-1554

Sharon High School's academic programs are rigorous. Daily instruction includes presentations, discussions, demonstrations, and experiential learning opportunities, which cannot be replicated. Children who regularly attend school build strong academic, social, and emotional confidence and skills in time management, planning, and organization.

- Arrival and dismissal procedures are necessary to ensure the safety of our students and will be strictly enforced.
- Students may enter/exit the building through the Front Entrance or the Beach Street entrance prior to 8:05 am and after 2:40 pm.
- At 8:05 am the Beach Street entrance is locked and students must enter/exit the building through the Front Entrance.

## Arrival

- Traffic at the entrance to school is very congested in the morning. Please consider travel time into daily routines. Traffic is not an excuse for tardiness.
- Drivers must not enter the bus loop. Drivers must utilize **ONLY** the car loop in the front of the building for drop-off and pick-up.
- Drivers must pull up as far as they can in the loop to allow more cars on campus. This may mean that drivers have to loop almost back to the exit.
- Students are prohibited from parking in the teacher lot. Violators will be required to move their vehicle and may be ticketed.
- Students must park in the lots on Pond St. and Beach St. A parking pass is required to utilize student parking lots. Contact [Sharon Recreation](#) to obtain a student parking pass.
- Free Breakfast is available to all students. Students must arrive before 8:00 a.m. for breakfast in order to avoid being late for class.

### **Punctuality is Important**

- **Students who arrive after 8:05 a.m. are tardy and must enter through the Front Entrance and sign in at the office for a late pass.**
- **Chronic tardiness is disruptive and subject to academic consequences as well as progressive disciplinary consequences.**
- **Students who arrive after 8:45 am without evidence of an excused absence will not be permitted to participate in extracurricular activities, including athletic practices and contests.**

### **Regular Dismissal**

- Students are dismissed at 2:40 p.m.
- Students who stay after school for a club, activity, or athletic event must be under the supervision of a staff member.

### **Early Dismissal Procedure**

- Please notify the main office of any early dismissals. Parents/caregivers must:
  - Complete this [SHS Student Absence Form](#) prior to 8:30am the day of the dismissal
  - For emergency early dismissals, call 781-784-1554
- Dismissed students must sign out in the Main Office.
- “Walk-in” dismissals without prior notification to the office may be subject to delays, especially during lunch time.
- There are no early dismissals allowed after 2:10 p.m.
- **Students returning to school after an appointment** must return to the main office and sign in upon re-entering the building.
- Students are responsible for making up all work missed.
- Students who are eighteen (18) years of age or older may not dismiss themselves from school unless the administration has verified that the student no longer lives with parent(s)/guardian(s).

## **Absences**

All parents/guardians, students, and staff are expected to work collaboratively to monitor, support, and understand the critical role regular attendance plays in the success of our Sharon High School community. This attendance procedure has been developed to promote regular and consistent attendance, which is essential for academic success and personal development. These procedures align with the recommendations from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and include measures for credit reduction, restorative practices, and social restrictions to address and mitigate chronic absenteeism.

Per school committee policy, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance for the following reasons: illness or quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of religious holidays. All other absences will be considered “unexcused” unless excused by the Principal or designee.

Student absences will be excused by the Principal or Assistant Principal for the following reasons:

- Medical appointments and illnesses, with documentation (Must receive doctor’s note within one week)The school will work to support families of students to obtain proper documentation to ensure the requirement does not impact some families inequitably.
- College visit, up to 5 (2 Junior year, 3 Senior year), accompanied by documentation
- Bereavement/death in the family
- Religious holiday/observance
- Field Trip/school-sponsored event
- Testing (special education, etc.)
- Suspension
- Court appearance, with documentation
- Driver’s license exams only (not road lessons)

\*Pre-approved college visits are limited to two (2) during the junior year and three (3) during the senior year. The College Visitation Form, which can be obtained from the School Counseling office, must be completed and returned after a college visit for the absence to be considered an Excused absence.

**All other absences will be considered “unexcused” unless approved by the Principal or their designee.**

The school will work to support families of students to obtain proper documentation to ensure the requirement does not impact some families inequitably.

All absences, regardless of the reason or classification, are recorded in the main office and are summarized on Sharon High School’s official progress reports and report cards, which are distributed to students in accordance with the dates noted on the school calendar.

## **Credit Reduction for Unexcused Absences**

By establishing a credit reduction procedure, our school aims to foster a supportive and accountable environment that values the importance of consistent attendance for academic success and personal growth.

To emphasize the importance of attendance, the following credit reduction procedure will be enforced:

Full Year Courses:

- 10 Unexcused Absences: Reduction of 1 credit for the respective course.
- 20 Unexcused Absences: Reduction of 2 credits for the respective course.

Semester Courses:

- 5 Unexcused Absences: Reduction of 1 credit for the respective course.
- 10 Unexcused Absences: Reduction of 2 credits for the respective course.

**Credit lost due to unexcused absences can impact a student’s progress towards graduation.**

**Restorative Practices for Earning Back Credits**

To encourage improvement and support students in overcoming attendance challenges, the following restorative practices are available:

- Students who maintain zero unexcused absences during a quarter will be eligible to earn back lost credits. The specifics are as follows:
  - One quarter with no unexcused absences: 1 credit restored
  - Two consecutive quarters with no unexcused absences: 2 credits restored
- In addition, we may implement further opportunities to earn back credits, including, but not limited to Saturday School or academic contracts.

**Social Restrictions for Chronic Absenteeism**

In addition to academic consequences, chronic absenteeism will result in social restrictions to encourage better attendance habits:

- Chronic Absenteeism: Defined as 10 or more unexcused absences in a semester.
- Social Restrictions may include:
  - Loss of privileges to participate in extracurricular activities, including sports and clubs.
  - Restriction from attending school events such as dances, proms, and field trips.
  - Limited access to on-campus social areas during free periods.

**Support and Interventions**

To assist students in improving their attendance, the school will provide the following support:

- Counseling Services (School Counselors): Counselors will work to identify additional supports and resources to support school engagement and good attendance.
- Counseling Services (Adjustment Counselors): Available to address underlying issues contributing to absenteeism.
- Parent, Guardian, Caregiver Involvement: Regular communication with families to discuss attendance issues and collaboratively develop action plans.
- Attendance Monitoring: Regular monitoring and communication regarding a student's attendance status.
- Supporting families of students to obtain proper documentation to ensure the requirement does not impact some families inequitably
- Incentives for perfect attendance.
- In cases of truancy, intervention by the SRO.
- NHS tutoring.

## **Responsibilities**

- Students:
  - Responsible for attending all classes, seeking assistance for any challenges impacting attendance, and adhering to the school's attendance procedures.
- Parents, Guardians, Caregivers:
  - Expected to ensure their child attends school regularly and to communicate with the school regarding any issues affecting attendance.
  - As mandated reporters, Massachusetts law requires that any school personnel with a reasonable cause to believe that a child suffers from abuse/neglect due to chronic absenteeism or tardiness must file a report with the Department of Children and Families (DCF).
  - The school may file a Child Requiring Assistance (CRA) application with the Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department to ask the court to help address chronic absenteeism.
- School Staff:
  - Responsible for accurately recording attendance, identifying patterns of absenteeism, and implementing interventions to support students in improving attendance.

## **Appeal Process**

Students and families have the right to appeal credit reductions. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the SHS Administration within two weeks of notification of any credit reduction. SHS Administration will review the appeal and make a determination within ten school days.

## **Make-Up Privileges**

Upon a student's return to school or class from an absence, it is the student's responsibility to inquire about any missed work and/or assessments. The teacher will communicate what the student has missed, and then it is the student's responsibility to take advantage of the available resources, including tutorial assistance, that will expedite the transition back to the class' current curriculum. Students who exhibit a pattern of missing a particular class or scheduled assessments due to absenteeism jeopardize their privilege to make up any missed assessments.

Teachers are available to assist students after school each day until 3:00 p.m. All make-up work must be completed within five (5) school days of a student's return to school or class unless there are extenuating circumstances which would warrant more time and that time is granted. It should be noted, however, that the five (5) day grace period for the completion of all make-up work may be shortened by the teacher if in the teacher's professional judgment there is no reason for the make-up work to take five (5) school days to complete.

Any scheduled assessment that is missed due to an absence from school or class may be modified by the teacher.

### **Tardies**

When a student is late to school, the student must check-in at the main office prior to accessing the rest of the building. All students are expected to be in their first period class by 8:05 a.m. Otherwise, they are considered tardy to school and must acquire an admittance pass at the main office. A failure to do so may result in disciplinary consequences.

All late arrivals will be considered unexcused unless documentation (ie. medical note) is submitted upon arrival. Students arriving to school on a late bus will be given a late bus pass, and this will not be considered tardy.

Beginning anew each quarter of the school year, the following consequences will be imposed for unexcused tardiness:

<b>4th Unexcused Tardy</b>	One (1) Office Detention and/or social suspension from co-curricular activities for up to one week.
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With respect to social suspension (see Revocation of Privileges/Social Suspension), students will be informed that they may not partake in any co-curricular activities and/or interscholastic athletic practices or contests during the probationary period associated with the consequence.

At any time, mitigating factors that warrant consequences that differ from, or add to, those previously outlined may be used. Typically reserved for situations in which it is evident that the student does not partake in school-related activities, or in which the student has exhibited a pattern of missing a particular class or scheduled assessments, the disciplinary options include but are not limited to the following: :

- Forfeiture of make-up privileges
- Assignment of office detention(s)
- Loss of parking or senior privileges
- Lunch detention

- Community service
- In-school suspension

The administration may also consider filing a 51A report with the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families, or filing a CRA (Child Requiring Assistance) petition with the Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department for students who are chronically/excessively tardy to school.

Throughout the school day, students are also expected to arrive at all of their assigned classes on time. Students who anticipate being legitimately late to class for any reason should request a pass from a teacher or the main office. In this way, there is a record of accountability. Any student who exhibits a pattern of being late to a particular class risks being subject to disciplinary measures.

Students who miss more than half of a class will be recorded as absent during that period.

## **Dismissals**

Parents/Guardians who wish to dismiss their student from school are expected to do so at times that minimize disruptions to the learning process. Students are not permitted to leave the building without permission and/or without following proper dismissal procedures:

- Prior to the start of the school day, students must inform the main office of the necessary dismissal time and associated reason(s)
- Dismissals are not permitted after 2:10 pm unless it is an emergency. If that is the case, a family member must come into the main office to dismiss their child.
- Parents/guardians must contact the school to inform the main office of the necessary dismissal time, as well as the associated reason(s).
- Once the dismissal has been verified and approved by the main office, a dismissal slip will be provided to the appropriate student
- If the dismissal is scheduled to occur during class time, or during the 2nd or 3rd lunches, the student must present the dismissal slip to the teacher at the beginning of the departing period
- If the dismissal is scheduled to occur between classes or during the 1st lunch, the student may present the dismissal slip to the main office
- At the time of the dismissal, students are expected to avoid disrupting the learning process for others and to check out at the main office in order to be officially dismissed
- Sharon High School students who are eighteen (18) years of age or older may not dismiss themselves from school unless the administration has verified that the student no longer lives with parent(s)/guardian(s).

In the interest of the safety of all students, no student will be released to an individual who is not listed in the school's records as a contact person, unless the parent/guardian has specified alternate arrangements.

More than five (5) dismissals in a semester is considered excessive. When a student has been dismissed from school five (5) times, or has exhibited a pattern of missing a particular class or scheduled assessments due to dismissal, the opportunity to make up any missed work and/or

assessments is jeopardized. Further, the student will be required to meet with an administrator to discuss the problem. The administrator will explain to the student what the consequences will be if the problem persists, and the administrator will also contact the parents/guardians to inform them of the school's concern.

Students should also be aware that they must be in school for more than half the school day to be considered present. Any student who gets dismissed from school prior to fulfilling this requirement will be considered absent. 11:22 a.m. is considered the midpoint of the school day, and half the school day equates to three hours and seventeen minutes of time.

**Individual or Family Travel**

Student absences caused by individual or family travel, at times other than the days or weeks identified in the school calendar as extended breaks from school, are strongly discouraged.

Therefore, parents/guardians who remove students from school for individual or family travel at these times need to be aware that teachers are not obligated to provide school work in advance of these planned absences; however, teachers should be notified in advance.

All missed work and/or assessments created by the absence must be completed within five (5) school days, and as with any absence, it is incumbent upon the student to approach teachers to inquire about what has been missed, and to also take advantage of the available resources that will expedite the transition back to the class' current curriculum.

**Class Cuts**

All students at Sharon High School are expected to attend the classes that they have been scheduled into, and for which they are accountable. Students who cut class are not eligible to make up work missed and will receive a zero for those assignments.

**In addition to academic consequences, utilizing progressive discipline, the administration will address class cuts in the following manner:**

<b>First offense:</b>	<b>One (1) teacher detention and/or social suspension</b>
<b>Second offense:</b>	<b>One (1) office detentions and/or social suspension</b>
<b>Third offense:</b>	<b>Two (2) office detentions plus restorative practice referral including parent meeting, and social suspension</b>
<b>Subsequent offenses:</b>	<b>Between one (1) and three (3) days in or out-of-school suspension</b>

Upperclassmen who drive to school also jeopardize parking and/or senior privileges. Furthermore, when it has become evident that a student has cut class or left the school building and/or grounds without permission, the administration will notify the student's parents/guardians.

### **Chronic Absences and Truancy**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts defines a habitually truant child as "a school-aged child, not excused from attendance under the lawful and reasonable regulations of such child's school, who willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter". (Truancy Prevention Research and Best Practices | Mass.gov)

DESE reports chronic absenteeism as the percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of their days in membership regardless of whether such absences are excused or unexcused (e.g., absent 18 school days when enrolled for 180 school days). (Student Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism - Student and Family Support (SFS))

If a student's refusal to attend school is evidently chronic or meets the criteria for truancy, the administration will make every effort to work with the students and their family/caregiver to re-engage the student to support and improve student attendance. The administration may also file a 51A report with the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families or a CRA petition (Child Requiring Assistance) with the Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department.

Any student of age who is absent from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days will be notified that their continued placement relies on their future attendance. This notice will include reference to the need for a meeting to discuss re-engagement opportunities, educational options, placements, and alternatives. A failure to respond within five (5) school days of receipt of the first notice will trigger a second notice, to be issued upon 15 days of consecutive absence. Failure to respond to the second notice will be cause for classifying the student as having withdrawn.

### **Special Events**

Periodically, Sharon High School has an interscholastic athletic team or co-curricular club that is granted, or that has earned, the opportunity to participate in a special event that generates a lot of Eagle Pride and student interest. In practically every case, the scheduling of these events is not done by Sharon High School, and they are often scheduled during the school day.

In order to satisfy several needs, including the school's attendance requirements, and those created by the genuine interest of students to support their friends and show school spirit at such an event, Sharon High School has committed itself to creating a safe and legitimate manner by which a limited number of students, who are not a part of the participating team or club, can attend the event without compromising the school's rules and expectations, or their own personal safety.

Should this situation arise, timely efforts will be made to coordinate and schedule bus transportation to and from the event at a minimal cost to interested students. Since seating is limited on a bus, a lottery will be conducted if student interest exceeds the number of seats available on the bus. Those who are

not successful in the lottery are expected to be in school during the event. It should be understood that school rules and expectations apply at all special events.

**At any time, should there be a question about an attendance policy or procedure, or if there is a need to communicate extenuating circumstances affecting a student's attendance, please feel free to contact the high school's main office at 781-784-1554 and request to speak with an administrator.**

## **Registration and Enrollment (Residency Requirements)**

### **Residency Requirements**

**(JF, JFA)**

In order to attend Sharon High School, a student must legally reside in the Town of Sharon with at least one parent or legal guardian, or be accepted as a student through the METCO Program.

New students who wish to enroll at Sharon High School must, upon registration, be able to provide proof of residency, and all students are expected to keep the school informed about any change in residency.

Students suspected of not residing in the Town of Sharon will be required to submit additional proof of residency; those who cannot, or those found not residing in the Town of Sharon will receive written notice that they may not remain at Sharon High School.

### **Homeless Students**

**(JFABD)**

If a student experiences homelessness during the school year, the student and their family/caregiver is encouraged to inform a member of the administration.

Sharon High School's liaison for students and families experiencing homelessness is:

Mr. Mahesh Balan, ext. 82238

Students and families experiencing homelessness have federally-protected educational rights under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Students may remain enrolled at Sharon High School while they remain homeless, or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. At any time, however, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the homeless student may request to transfer to another school where the student is actually residing.

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

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

Sharon High School 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, and all homeless students will be provided services for which they are eligible, including Title I, similar state programs, special education, English language learner programs, vocational and technical education programs, transportation, gifted and talented programs, and school nutrition programs.

### **Academic Information**

At Sharon High School, the academic program is an essential part of each student’s learning experience, and the faculty and staff of Sharon High School pride themselves on providing a challenging, diverse, and progressive curricular program that emphasizes depth of understanding over breadth of coverage. Sharon High School strives to facilitate each student’s learning experience with programs, policies, procedural safeguards, and support mechanisms that will allow and encourage every student to reach their potential.

As a partner in the educational process, Sharon High School will communicate and provide clear course standards and expectations, and provide guidance and advice that addresses the interests and needs of each student. All students at Sharon High School, however, are expected to assume a certain level of responsibility and accountability for their own growth, and they should become very familiar with the school’s Vision, Mission, Core Values, and Expectations for Student Learning.

During a student’s tenure at Sharon High School, opportunities to succeed will be readily available so that each student can define success in a way that is personally meaningful. It is our hope that by creating a learning environment that is interesting and fun, yet focused and also vigorous, that all students who receive a diploma at the commencement exercises leave the Sharon Public Schools with a passion for life and learning.

### **Graduation Requirements**

In accordance with the state requirements, as well as with what the community of Sharon believes to be in the best interest of students who graduate from the Sharon Public Schools, Sharon High School has established graduation requirements that every enrolled student must meet prior to receiving a diploma (see *Diplomas*). These are:

<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Requirement</b>
<b>English</b>	4 full years of coursework
<b>Social Studies</b>	3 full years of coursework, including U.S. History and World History
<b>Mathematics</b>	4 full years of coursework
<b>Science</b>	3 full years of coursework
<b>World Language</b>	2 full years of coursework in the <i>same</i> language
<b>Wellness</b>	Students are required to take Wellness and/or Physical Education each year
<b>Unified Arts</b>	2 semesters of coursework
<b>Other</b>	A cumulative total of at least 102 credits
<b>MCAS</b>	ELA, Mathematics, Science (STE)

In summary, students must pass the relevant MCAS Exams and earn at least 102 total credits. 20.0 of those credits must be earned during a student’s senior year in order to participate in Sharon High School’s commencement exercises (see *Commencement Exercises*).

It should be noted that the transcripts and MCAS results of students who transfer into Sharon High School will be reviewed by the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Principal in order to determine what requirements may already have been met at the student’s previous school, and in order to determine the most appropriate schedule that will enable the transfer student to meet Sharon High School’s established graduation requirements.

No student may attempt to meet a graduation requirement through participation in a dual-enrollment program, an internship, a distance or virtual learning program, courses taken through Sharon Community Education, or have a graduation requirement waived without the prior approval and written consent of the Principal or designee (see *Extended Learning Opportunities*); furthermore, Sharon High School does not permit students to graduate before having completed their senior year.

### **MCAS Testing**

Each school year, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education schedules specific dates on which the MCAS Exams must be administered. Sharon High School publicizes these dates on the school’s calendar and website, and students should make every reasonable effort to ensure that they are in school on these dates so that they have the opportunity to pass these exams (see *Graduation Requirements*).

Sharon High School operates on a normal school day when the MCAS Exams are administered, and testing conditions have been optimized so that the students taking the exams are not disrupted, and so that the remainder of the student body can continue school as normal. If a student is not in school on the predetermined testing dates, make-up dates have been incorporated into the calendar. No student

may receive a diploma from Sharon High School without passing all of the required portions of the MCAS exams.

Please also note that any student who fails a required portion of the MCAS exams three (3) times, and who does not maintain an attendance rate of 95% or better during the junior and senior years (nine (9) absences or fewer in a school year), jeopardizes the right to file an MCAS Performance Appeal. ([603 CMR 30.00](#))

Students who perform well on the MCAS exams may be eligible for one of two awards: the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship or the Stanley Z. Koplik Certificate of Mastery with Distinction. Information about each can be acquired by contacting the School Counseling Office or by visiting [the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education](#).

### **Course Credits and Promotion Conditions**

At the conclusion of a course, credits are awarded to those students who have successfully passed the course by meeting all of the course's requirements. Please see Attendance Policy regarding Credit Reduction policies for excessive absences from class.

The number of credits that can be earned in a particular course is published in the [Program of Studies](#). Courses that meet every day for a full year are worth 5.0 credits, and courses that meet daily for only a semester are worth 2.5 credits. Directed studies do not earn credit.

During the course selection process, which takes place in March of each school year, all Sharon High School students must select courses for the following academic year that could ultimately lead to the awarding of 30.0 credits (a full course load). While the high school will do everything possible to meet the needs and requests of its students, students and their parents should be aware that scheduling conflicts, budget constraints, low student enrollment, and teacher availability may prohibit a student from getting their preferred courses.

Although there are no formal requirements for promotion from grade to grade, students should remain aware of the number of credits they can earn annually and that they have accumulated to date.

As with the graduation requirements, any student who transfers into Sharon High School will be subject to a credit review by the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Principal in order to determine how many credits the transfer student shall be awarded. This process also applies to students attending Sharon High School through an exchange program and any student seeking to earn credit by completing a pre-approved course through a summer school program; however, no credit will be awarded to students enrolled in courses via participation in a dual-enrollment program, an internship, a distance or virtual learning program, and/or courses taken through Sharon Community Education without the prior approval and written consent of the Principal or designee (see *Extended Learning Opportunities*).

### **Academic Contracts (Seniors)**

- Students may be placed on an Academic Contract if they are in danger of failing to meet graduation requirements

- The Academic Contract outlines steps students must take and how teachers will support them.
- Academic Contracts remain in place until the end of the term.
- Teachers will meet with the student to collaborate on goals and action steps.
- The student is only eligible to participate in co-curricular activities once they demonstrate progress toward Academic Contract goals.
- The student’s parent/caregiver will receive a copy of the Academic Contract.

## **Academic Eligibility for Athletics & Co-curricular Activities**

**Co-curricular activities** occur outside the traditional classroom and can be related to the school curriculum. However, participation is voluntary and *does not affect a student’s grades*. Consequently, **participation in co-curricular activities is a privilege, not a right**. Student participation may be revoked as a disciplinary response until the student is back in good academic standing and compliant with behavior and regular attendance expectations.

In order to be eligible to participate in interscholastic athletics or co-curricular activities, students must meet ALL of the following criteria:

- Students must be scheduled for a full course load during the quarter in which they are participating, unless otherwise approved in advance by administration;
- Students must have earned credit in at least 4 core academic major courses credits for the year preceding the fall season, unless you are an entering 9th grader;
- Students must secure during the last marking period preceding participation (i.e., second quarter grades for third quarter eligibility) a passing grade in the equivalent of four major courses.

Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered official only on the published date when the report cards for that marking period are issued. Students in year-long activities will have their eligibility assessed quarter to quarter.

## **Grading System**

Although Sharon High School strongly believes in, and adheres to, a standards-based education model, the following traditional grading system that colleges and universities recognize (based on numerical values) is used to communicate a student’s achievement of course standards:

<i><b>Grade</b></i>	<i><b>Numerical Value</b></i>
<b>A+</b>	98-100
<b>A</b>	93-97

<b>A-</b>	90-92
<b>B+</b>	87-89
<b>B</b>	83-86
<b>B-</b>	80-82
<b>C+</b>	77-79
<b>C</b>	73-76
<b>C-</b>	70-72
<b>D+</b>	67-69
<b>D</b>	63-66
<b>D-</b>	60-62
<b>F</b>	Below 60

The only exceptions to the chart above are directed studies, educational support programs for regular or special education students, mitigating circumstances involving transfer or exchange students, and programs of study pursued through the Independent Study Program, all of which are graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

It should also be noted that if extenuating circumstances exist that prevent a student from being able to complete a course's requirements, a grade of incomplete, which is denoted as an "IC", may be temporarily assigned. Typically, however, a grade of incomplete is reserved for students whose absences are classified as "Exempt" (see *Attendance Information*). In most cases, the student will be granted ten (10) school days after the conclusion of the term in which to make up any missed work and/or assessments. Once this grace period has expired, if the student has not made up any missed work and/or assessments, grades for incomplete assignments will automatically be changed to an F.

## **Grades**

All assignment and term grades are intended to accurately represent a student's academic performance. The [PowerSchool](#) portal provides real-time access to grades for all courses. As grades are finalized toward the end of each term, the portal is closed. These closures are noted on the school's calendar and website.

## **Honor Roll**

Students who earn grades that are reflective of a high degree of achievement as it relates to course standards are eligible for the Honor Roll. The Honor Roll is divided into three (3) categories:

High Honors:	<i>No grade lower than an A-</i>
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Honors:	<i>No grade lower than a B</i>
Second Honors:	<i>No grade lower than a B-</i>

Shortly after the conclusion of each term, students who have met the eligibility requirements outlined above are sent a congratulatory letter indicating their level of achievement. In light of the fact that grades are a private and confidential matter, the Honor Roll is not published.

### **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

The Grade Point Average (GPA) is a cumulative computation of a student’s academic achievement.. It is a number that takes into account the difficulty of the student’s historical course load, and that reflects the student’s commitment to academic rigor.

The GPA is calculated (or “weighted”) in accordance with the credits earned and the levels of the courses that a student has completed to date during high school. The official GPA uses only the final average of each course. Course grades are weighted in the GPA as follows:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>AP/Honors</b>	<b>Standard/Accelerated</b>	<b>Foundations</b>
<b>A+</b>	6.3	5.3	4.3
<b>A</b>	6.0	5.0	4.0
<b>A-</b>	5.7	4.7	3.7
<b>B+</b>	5.3	4.3	3.3
<b>B</b>	5.0	4.0	3.0
<b>B-</b>	4.7	3.7	2.7
<b>C+</b>	4.3	3.3	2.3
<b>C</b>	4.0	3.0	2.0
<b>C-</b>	3.7	2.7	1.7
<b>D+</b>	3.3	2.3	1.3
<b>D</b>	3.0	2.0	1.0
<b>D-</b>	2.7	1.7	0.7
<b>F</b>	0.0	0.0	0.0

All “unleveled” courses, noted in the [Program of Studies](#), as well as Extended Learning Opportunities and/or the Independent Study Program, are not included in the GPA.

In addition, students who transfer into Sharon High School after the start of grade 10 will NOT have an official GPA calculated. Transfer students who take honors courses at another school in a subject area where honors courses are not available at Sharon High School (e.g. English and/or Social Studies) will have those grades weighted at the Standard course weighting listed above.

For additional insight into the nature and purpose of the GPA, above and beyond what is explained here, please contact the School Counseling Department.

### **Graduating with Honors**

Since 2017 students have been distinguished at the commencement exercises for having reached specific cumulative GPA thresholds. These are calculated following the 2nd term of the senior year, but subject to re-evaluation prior to graduation so that the honorary status can be confirmed. A student must have been enrolled at Sharon High School since the start of the sophomore year in order to be eligible for these honors.

They are:

Summa Cum Laude (“with highest honor”)	<i>GPA of 5.70</i>
Magna Cum Laude (“with great honor”)	<i>GPA of 5.50</i>
Cum Laude (“with honor”)	<i>GPA of 5.20</i>

These honors replaced the valedictorian and salutatorian distinctions in order to prioritize collaboration over competition in the learning process, to foster the pursuit of academic interests in the course request process, to model the college/university system, and to honor more SHS students.

### **National Honor Society**

Sharon High School’s chapter of the National Honor Society was chartered in 1965 during the tenure of principal John Smith. Like chapters at high schools across the country, our chapter seeks to identify students who demonstrate the highest level of commitment to each of the following traits: scholarship, character, leadership, and service. It also seeks, through its members, to contribute to the school community in a positive fashion, and to promote academic excellence and integrity.

Membership in this prestigious organization is both an honor and a privilege, and students who exemplify the aforementioned traits are inducted each school year. A student must complete an application to be considered. This process begins at the beginning of each school year, when juniors and seniors with a cumulative GPA of 5.0 (or higher) are identified. Students who meet the minimum scholarship criterion for Sharon High School’s chapter receive an invitation to apply, as well as an application that provides each prospective member with an opportunity to highlight their commitment to good character, strong leadership, and noble service.

Once submitted, a committee of five (5) faculty members who are appointed each year by the Principal reviews each application. Using a rubric, each component of the application is assessed in an objective and quantifiable manner. Equal weight is assigned to each of the four traits, and students who exceed the collective minimum standard are subsequently invited to join Sharon High School's chapter.

Any student not accepted into Sharon High School's chapter of the National Honor Society may appeal the decision to the Principal. The candidate's original application will be re-scored by the Principal or their designee using the same rubric. New information that may enhance a candidate's application cannot be submitted for this process, and the outcome of the review will be final.

Following the induction ceremony, members are expected to attend regularly scheduled meetings, participate in chapter initiatives, and adhere to the scholarship, character, leadership, and service standards upon which their membership is based. Students who fail to do so may have their membership status placed on probation or revoked.

General information about the [National Honor Society](#) can be found at their website. Additional details about Sharon High School's chapter can be found by contacting the Principal or chapter advisors.

### **Schedule Changes (Add/Drop Policy)**

Sharon High School classes are scheduled after students have made course selections in March. Based upon the requests of all students, the master schedule is then developed. The course selection process helps determine teacher assignments, courses offered or not offered, room assignments, and the number of sections of each course that is offered.

Because the course selection process is a cooperative venture between the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), the teacher, and a school counselor, it is expected that when course selections are made, that the student will commit to the decision. Any proposed change must be discussed with the teacher involved, the curriculum coordinator, and the school counselor. Although some changes may be made, it should be clearly understood that requests will not be automatically honored or approved and some requests may not be possible due to the constraints of the schedule.

Course change policy is outlined below:

- No schedule changes will be entertained during the first cycle (7 school days) of the school year
- Schedule changes may be proposed at the start of the second cycle (8<sup>th</sup> school day) of the school year
- Schedule changes for semester courses must be completed by the end of the second cycle (14<sup>th</sup> school day) of the school year
- Schedule changes for full-year courses must be completed by the end of the third cycle (21<sup>st</sup> school day) of the school year
- Students granted approval for a course change will be required to complete all work necessary to catch up to the curriculum being addressed in the new course

During the first cycle, and following this "add/drop period", schedule changes will not be entertained unless school counselors and administrators deem that special or urgent circumstances exist. A low

grade in and of itself is not sufficient justification for a course change. The final decision to approve or deny any course change request lies with the Principal or their designee.

## **Homework**

Studying outside of the classroom is an essential component of the learning process, and every student at Sharon High School is expected to engage in this kind of learning.

Homework can take many formats, including but not limited to, problem-solving, writing, reading, and project completion. Homework may also include preparation for tests, quizzes, or any other announced or unannounced assessments, as well as review of past lessons to help with retention. Collaborative or self-directed in nature, there is also an expectation that academic integrity guides these efforts (see *Cheating and/or Plagiarism*).

No student should spend an exorbitant amount of time completing homework – time that compromises going to sleep at a reasonable hour or the ability to participate in at least one school or non-school-related co-curricular activity. Any student having a hard time completing assigned homework should bring this to the attention of a teacher as soon as possible, as well as to a school counselor or administrator.

[A time management worksheet](#) can be found on page 14 of the Program Of Studies. Students are strongly encouraged to use this resource, which was created to help them keep track of their commitments and responsibilities in and outside of the classroom.

Students should be aware that homework expectations and guidelines vary between subjects. It is also important to know that conscientious efforts are made to ensure that there is minimal variation in related expectations and guidelines between teachers who teach the same course. In most cases, the communicated expectations will be higher for students enrolled in upper-leveled classes (i.e., AP and Honors), but the reason for homework will always be the same, no matter the level of the class – to support and enhance the learning experiences in the classroom, as well as to promote good study habits.

Students who work, or who participate in interscholastic athletics or co-curricular clubs or activities, should be prepared to make adjustments in their schedules to accommodate the need to complete and engage in homework. It should also be noted that teachers will always make reasonable homework accommodations when school is in session during major religious holidays.

## **Academic Enrichment and Support Period (ACES)**

- Students are expected to be on time and engaged with school-related, educationally appropriate work for each academic enrichment and support period.
- Students are expected to remain in their respective classrooms for the duration of the period, unless they have a valid SmartPass from a faculty or school support staff member or counselor.

- Students may not wander the halls during the academic enrichment and support period. Failure to report to and remain in ACES will be treated as a class cut.

## **Assessments**

Assessments such as tests, quizzes, projects, and presentations are another important part of each student's educational experience at Sharon High School. Teachers use assessments frequently to assess a student's mastery of a specific topic and to assess a student's progress towards meeting stated expectations.

Teachers will clearly communicate the potential impact that these kinds of assessments have on a student's formally reported grade (i.e. how grades are calculated), and as with homework, collaborative efforts are being made to minimize the disparities that may exist on scheduled assessments given by different teachers who teach the same course.

At the discretion of the teacher, any assessment that is missed due to an absence from school or class may be modified, and no make-up privileges will be granted to a student whose absence is due to a class cut. Students who exhibit a pattern of missing a particular class or scheduled assessments due to absenteeism may jeopardize their opportunity to make up any missed assessments.

In order to minimize the stress associated with assessments, students, if at all possible, will not be required to take more than two full-period assessments in one day. Students with more than two assessments scheduled for the same day should notify the teachers involved as soon as possible, and no less than 24 hours prior so that the situation can be resolved. If a conflict cannot be resolved, then an administrator should be contacted.

## **Mid-Year and Final Exams**

All semester and full-year courses will give an assessment during the designated exam period. Each assessment will be weighted 5% of the final grade in that course. The Mid-Year exam period is scheduled for January 23-28, 2025. The Final exam period is scheduled for June 16-20, 2025. Exam period dates are subject to change. Families should note these dates and avoid scheduling vacations or other appointments during exam periods. Students are not permitted to take exams early.

## **Independent Study Program**

Although Sharon High School offers a rich and diverse academic program, there are subjects of interest to our students that may not necessarily be offered at Sharon High School. In order to meet the needs and interests of all students who express a desire to pursue such interests and enhance their educational experience, Sharon High School offers extended learning opportunities for students in grades 11 and 12 through Independent Study.

Independent Study is coordinated through student/teacher collaboration to further explore a curricular area at SHS. Due to the rigorous nature of the existing Sharon High School curriculum, participation in such programs is generally only recommended for students who are self-directed and extremely

motivated. It is Sharon High School's intent to work collaboratively with outside agencies, and the school administration is willing to consider joint ventures in the greater-Sharon community.

Students who wish to pursue an independent course of study must complete the Independent Study Application, which may be acquired in the School Counseling Office. The application must include the following:

- a description of the student's proposed independent study
- the curricular topic and a summary of the resources that will be used to facilitate the program of study
- the proposed duration of the program, and the forms of assessment that will be utilized to measure the student's successful completion of the proposed program
- the proposed number of credits (not to exceed 2.5 per semester)
- commitment signatures from the student, parent or guardian, and the participating faculty member (teacher, school counselor, or administrator), and approval signatures from the student's school counselor and the subject area coordinator
- students with at least one grade below B- on their most recent report card may be required to submit a written appeal to participate in these programs

Applications are due by the end of the second cycle of the intended semester of study. Submitted applications will be reviewed in a timely fashion by the Principal and the Dean of Academic Affairs, who will determine if the independent study can be aligned with both the school's mission and the goals of the student.

The Principal and the Dean of Academic Affairs will communicate any approval, denial, and/or recommendation or expectation for change required for future approval. Programs of study submitted for review after-the-fact or after the deadline date will generally not be considered but may be appealed to the Superintendent.

In light of the fact that Sharon High School does offer a rich and diverse academic program, and because there is an expectation that all students at Sharon High School take a full complement of courses each year (30.0 credits), Sharon High School reserves the right to limit the number of participating students, as well as the number of credits that may be granted and applied towards the fulfillment of Sharon High School's graduation requirements through such programs. At the present time, those students who meet at least one of the following conditions will be given consideration to participate:

- those who lack the necessary credits to maintain pace with their anticipated graduation date
- those with documented medical concerns that prevent them from attending school for a significant period of time
- those considering withdrawing from school during their senior year (see Withdrawal from School)
- those involved in specialized travel or training over a limited period of time that impacts regular school attendance
- those wishing to pursue vocational or technical careers, or to explore possible career options
- those wishing to explore coursework above and beyond that which is offered at Sharon High School

Participating students are expected to meet and consult with their cooperating teacher either before or after the regular school day on a regular, predetermined basis (i.e. weekly), and will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Those who successfully complete the Independent Study Program will be awarded credits in accordance with Sharon High School's existing credit structure. Students will generally be awarded 1.25 credits for semester-long independent study and 2.5 credits for a full year. The student's transcript will be updated to reflect completion of the program (a grade of Pass or Fail). Grades from these programs of study are not incorporated into GPA calculations or Honor Roll decisions.

At no time may a student participate in Independent Study and Internship (see below) concurrently.

Finally, though Sharon High School is committed to providing students with varied and rewarding opportunities, there are often transportation and/or enrollment costs associated with the pursuit of such a program. Funds are generally not available to support Independent Study, and students (and parents/guardians) should be prepared to incur any related expenses. Students qualifying for free/reduced lunch and those whose families are experiencing financial hardship may contact the Principal to discuss possible assistance for expenses related to an approved Independent Study. All information regarding fee reduction and fee waiver will remain strictly confidential.

### **Internships**

Students interested in pursuing career-oriented study in education or technology may have the opportunity to participate in an internship. Internships are currently available through the English, Mathematics, Science and Technology departments, the Pathways program, Early Childhood Center, and Sharon elementary schools. Internships are designed to be integrated into the school day, serving as the student's seventh course.

Semester internships will generally be awarded 2.5 credits, and 5.0 credits for a full year. Expectations are outlined in the Program of Studies.

As there are a limited number of internships available each year, students must apply to participate, and not every applicant may have the opportunity to participate. The application may require teacher recommendation or endorsement, an interview with the collaborating staff member, or other requirements as determined by that staff member.

Participating students are expected to meet and consult with their cooperating teacher on a regular, predetermined basis, and will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Those who successfully complete an internship will be awarded credits in accordance with Sharon High School's existing credit structure. The student's transcript will be updated to reflect completion of the program (a grade of Pass or Fail). Grades from Internships will not be incorporated into GPA calculations or Honor Roll decisions. At no time may a student pursue multiple programs of study through Internship and/or Independent Study concurrently, or earn more than 5.0 credits through such programs in a given year.

Finally, though Sharon High School is committed to providing students with varied and rewarding opportunities, there are often transportation and/or enrollment costs associated with the pursuit of such a program. Funds are generally not available to support Internships, and students (and parents/guardians) should be prepared to incur any related expenses.

## **Cheating and/or Plagiarism**

Integrity is a virtue that Sharon High School firmly values, and cheating and plagiarism are not acceptable. Examples of cheating and/or plagiarism may include::

- Looking at another student's paper during an exam, test, quiz, or other form of assessment
- Carrying information into an exam, test, quiz, or other form of assessment with the intent of using it inappropriately
- Using an unapproved instrument or device that could provide an unfair advantage on the assessment
- Receiving information (by any means) prior to and/or during an exam, test, quiz, or other form of assessment
- Copying another student's work to complete an assignment
- Providing unapproved information to another student (by any means) prior to and/or during an exam, test, quiz, or other form of assessment
- Sharing materials for the purpose of using them inappropriately to complete an assignment
- Plagiarism, including inappropriate and/or unattributed use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) (see Sharon Public Schools, Grades 6-12, Research and Writing Guide)

In light of the above, as well as efforts that the faculty and staff routinely make to educate students about the inappropriateness of cheating and/or plagiarism, it is incumbent upon students to ensure that dishonesty will not be suspected when they submit or complete an assignment. During all assessments, cell phones/laptops must be stored in the phone caddy.

Students are also strongly encouraged to seek out their teachers and to ask questions about the use of content or materials that may call into question the authenticity of a student's final submitted work. Parents and guardians also need to be cognizant of the fact that while the school certainly encourages and understands efforts at home to guide, assist, and support the learning process, a student's final submitted work should be reflective of their current knowledge and ability level. Anything submitted by a student that seems contrary to what a teacher has become familiar with from the student makes it very difficult for a teacher to accurately assess the academic progress of the student.

Students should also be mindful of the pitfalls that the Internet, as well as other forms of technology, can present (e.g. programmable calculators, cell/smart phones, language translators, Artificial Intelligence); therefore, students who are found guilty of cheating and/or plagiarism will be subject to the following:

- First offense: Teacher managed with academic consequences; reported to parent and administration
- Second and subsequent offenses: Academic consequence plus Office Detention(s)

In all cases, the student may be subject to possible eviction and/or social suspension from co-curricular and/or interscholastic activities or organizations as well, including but not limited to, athletics, the National Honor Society, Student Council, etc.

For egregious offenses that include additional violations of student conduct (i.e., stealing assessment materials from a teacher, MCAS, SAT, ACT, or AP cheating violations, mass distribution of assessment materials) in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension and/or a notation on the student's permanent transcript may be the penalty.

## **Tutorial Assistance**

(GCRD, IHBF)

Students seeking tutorial assistance are encouraged to ask their school counselor about the services that may be available. While teachers are available to help students after school between 2:40 p.m. and 3:00 p.m., there are also many students willing to give of their time to tutor their peers before school, during the school day (e.g. Academic Enrichment and Support), or after school. In light of the fact that the school library is open before the school day starts and after the school day ends (see Library), it should be known that safe and supervised arrangements can be made for tutoring during these times.

Students with chronic illnesses who have recurring home/hospital stays and who are absent (or are expected to be absent) from school for a period of time equating to at least fourteen (14) school days are entitled to tutorial services. Generally, ten (10) hours per week are provided at home or in the hospital, but the actual amount could be more or less based on the individual needs of the student as determined by the Director of Student Services. In order to initiate tutorial services, the School Counseling Department must be notified and a Physician's Affirmation of Need for Temporary Home or Hospital Education for Medically Necessary Reasons must be approved by the Director of Student Services. It is recommended that any related request be made as soon as reasonably possible.

## **Summer School**

Sharon High School students may make up a course that was failed during the school year by attending an approved summer school. In order to qualify to take a "credit recovery" (modified) course in summer school, the student must meet one the following criteria:

- Passed at least two out of four terms during the school year
- Passed at least one out of four terms with a grade of C- or greater

Students who do not meet either of these criteria may take an approved full-credit summer school course. Summer school courses will only be approved for credit recovery, and will not be approved or accepted for course advancement.

Prior to the conclusion of the last term of the school year, students who are likely to require summer school will receive a letter from the School Counseling Department explaining their options and requirements. Students will only be allowed to make-up courses that they have failed during the most recent school year. No student is allowed to make-up more than two courses in any given summer.

In such circumstances, the student must then meet with a school counselor to discuss available summer school options. The counselor will identify programs that can fulfill graduation requirements and also inform the student of the number of credits that can be earned. Upon successful completion of any summer school course, the grade(s), as well as any credits that are awarded, will be recorded on the student's transcript; however, they will not be incorporated into any re-calculation of the student's failing grade(s) or the student's GPA and the original grade will remain on the transcript as well

Sharon High School will contract with an online credit recovery vendor to offer a low-cost online summer school option (both "modified" and full-credit courses) for students who qualify and require them.

### **Withdrawal from School**

In the interest of enrolled and prospective students, the local community, as well as the faculty and staff of Sharon High School, have made concerted efforts to provide academic programs, support services, and enrichment opportunities that can meet the needs and interests of all students.

Measures have also been taken to ensure that the atmosphere and culture of the school is warm and inviting. In light of the steps that have been taken, those considering withdrawing from Sharon High School are encouraged to discuss and explore educational options, placements, and alternatives prior to making a decision to withdraw.

Students of age who do choose to withdraw must return all borrowed textbooks, as well as any other property belonging to the school. A form that can be obtained in the School Counseling Department should be used to verify that all of the necessary materials have been returned. Once this form has been completed, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) have signed it, and a consultation with a school counselor and a member of the administration has taken place, the student will be designated as having withdrawn.

It should also be noted that those students electing to be "home-schooled" must withdraw from Sharon High School and have a homeschool plan approved by the School Committee.

Any student of age who is absent from school for more than ten (10) consecutive school days will be notified that their continued placement relies on their future attendance. This notice will include reference to the need for a meeting to discuss re-engagement opportunities, educational options, placements, and alternatives. Failure to respond within five (5) school days of receipt of the first notice will trigger a second notice, to be issued upon fifteen (15) days of consecutive absence. Failure to respond to the second notice within ten (10) school days will be cause for classifying the student as unenrolled.

### **Commencement Exercises**

Annually, on the first Sunday of June, the Sharon Public Schools celebrate the graduating class by hosting a ceremony to award diplomas to those who have successfully met all of Sharon High School's established graduation requirements (see Graduation Requirements).

Beginning with the Class of 2014, it was determined that all graduates would wear the same colored gown, maroon. The change reflects Sharon High School's non-discrimination clause, as well as Massachusetts General State Law, Chapter 76, Section 5, stating that no person shall be discriminated against based upon gender identity.

Participation in Sharon High School's commencement exercises is a privilege and not a right. Therefore, it should be understood that students must be in good standing before being allowed to participate. This means that all graduation requirements, both local and state, have been met, all textbook and equipment obligations are satisfied, and that the student is not the current subject of disciplinary consequences that have been imposed for violating the school's standards or expectations for behavior.

Students in good standing who have not met Sharon High School's graduation requirements prior to the commencement exercises may participate in the ceremony if they are able to meet the established graduation requirements prior to the conclusion of the summer that follows the commencement exercises in which they participate. Before permission to participate is granted, however, a formal written plan for completing whatever requirements have not been met must be approved by the Principal. Once the plan has been completed by the student, and verified by the Principal, a diploma will be awarded.

At the discretion of the Principal, foreign exchange students attending Sharon High School as a member of the graduating class may participate in the commencement exercises without having met all of Sharon High School's established graduation requirements. While a diploma will not be granted, an honorary certificate of attendance may be presented.

## **Diplomas**

Any student enrolled at Sharon High School for the entirety of senior year who has met the established graduation requirements (see Graduation Requirements) is eligible to receive a diploma from Sharon High School. This includes any student with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) who is educated at an alternative educational setting that was coordinated, documented, and paid for by the Sharon Public Schools.

Exceptions to the aforementioned may be authorized through the prior approval and written consent of the Principal and Superintendent. Typically, exceptions are only made for students who move into the district under extenuating circumstances during the expected graduation year.

## **Student Discipline**

All students are expected to meet reasonable expectations for their behavior while enrolled at Sharon High School. Each individual is responsible for their conduct in school, on school property, at all school-related activities or events off school property, or on school-provided transportation. Failure to adhere to the school's expectations for behavior listed on the following pages may subject a student to disciplinary consequences, which can include:

- Parent Meeting
- Restorative Practices (e.g., mediation, restitution)
- Revocation of Privileges/Social Suspension

- Teacher Detention
- Office Detention
- In-School Suspension
- Short-Term Out-of-School Suspension
- Long-Term Out-of-School Suspension
- Expulsion

In all cases, a student will receive notice of, and have the opportunity to respond to allegations or charges (except in cases of extreme emergency) prior to the imposition of discipline (see *Due Process and Appeals*). School property is inclusive of all buildings and grounds, modes of transportation, and land used by the school on a regular basis such as the Ames Street fields, parking areas adjacent to the school, and beach area.

The Principal and the principal's designee retains the right and responsibility to all students and staff to issue penalties for acts not stated herein, to examine any mitigating factors that, in the Principal's judgment, should be considered, and to employ penalties stated herein as guidelines (which may be adjusted to reflect the seriousness of the conduct in question).

## **Due Process and Appeals**

Prior to the imposition of discipline, a student will be given an opportunity to receive notice of, and respond to, the allegations or charges against (except in cases of an emergency removal).

For a student facing an in-school or out-of school suspension, the student and the student's parent/guardian will receive:

1. Verbal and written notification of the potential suspension that includes an invitation to attend a disciplinary hearing.
2. The right for the student and parents to hear an explanation, in their native language, of the evidence against the student in the hearing that includes an opportunity to ask questions about the evidence & present their side of the story.
3. Written determination that includes the supporting factual evidence, the handbook infraction and detailed description of the consequence

A student who is suspended has the right to appeal that suspension at a hearing with the Principal and the student's parent(s)/guardian(s), unless the student is eighteen (18) years of age and elects not to have their parent(s)/guardian(s) present. The appeal must be requested, either verbally or in writing, within one (1) school day of the determination letter, and the appeal hearing must be held within two (2) school days following the determination letter. While on appeal, the student will remain in class/school unless the Principal determines that the student's continued presence poses a danger to others, or that the student's continued presence poses a threat of disruption to the teaching and learning environment at Sharon High School.

In cases of long-term suspension, the student and parent(s)/guardian(s) may appeal the decision of the Principal to the Superintendent of Schools by notifying them verbally, or in writing, no later than ten (10) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension (this notification must be written, and completed within five (5) calendar days, if the nature of the offense is related to [M.G.L., Chapter 71](#)).

[Section 37H½; see Conduct Outside of School](#)). The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing within three (3) school days of any appeal notification, and the student will render a decision within five (5) calendar days following any hearing. The Superintendent's decision will be final. There is no appeal to the Superintendent for in-school suspension and short-term suspension.

### **Revocation of Privileges/Social Suspension**

Parking on school grounds, including the senior lot on Pond Street and the junior lot on Beach Street, using school-provided transportation, eating lunch in the cafeteria with friends, and participation in, or attendance at, co-curricular activities or interscholastic athletic events are privileges, not qualified rights. They are granted to each student for fulfilling academic, attendance, and social/civic expectations.

A student whose conduct violates the school's expectations risks losing the aforementioned privileges, as well as any privileges granted not listed herein (i.e., senior, etc.). It should also be noted that any costs associated with the acquisition of privileges that may have been granted, and that are subsequently revoked, are not refundable.

### **Teacher Detention**

Students may be assigned a teacher detention for behavior deemed unacceptable, or contrary to the reasonable expectations for conduct at Sharon High School. While teacher detentions are typically associated with work or conduct in the classroom that is unsatisfactory, it should be clear to all students that any member of the faculty or staff has the authority to correct misconduct at any time, anywhere in the building or on school grounds.

Teacher detention is to be served for a period of time after school that is designated by the teacher. It may not exceed one hour in length. Students are expected to serve the detention on the day that it is assigned (which may be on a day other than the day on which the infraction occurred), and any failure to report to a teacher's assigned detention will result in a referral to administration who will assign a minimum of two (2) office detentions. It should also be noted that teacher detention takes precedence over all other in-school and out-of-school commitments, including work and/or participation in co-curricular clubs and activities, or interscholastic athletics.

### **Office Detention**

Upon receipt of a written discipline referral from a member of the faculty or staff, an administrator will meet with the student to discuss the circumstances of the alleged behavior. If the administrator concludes that the alleged behavior violated school rules, or that the behavior was contrary to the reasonable expectations for conduct that Sharon High School has of its students, the administrator may assign office detention(s) to the student in question.

Once office detention has been assigned by an administrator, the expectation of the student is that the student will attend the assigned office detention(s) on the agreed upon date(s). Office detention is held every day immediately after school (except on Fridays) from 2:45 p.m. until 3:30 p.m. Students

should be cognizant of the fact that they may be required to complete a written reflection about the conduct that led to the assignment of office detention.

Any disruption to, or failure to report to, the assigned office detention(s) may result in an assignment to Saturday School or in-school or out-of-school suspension. It should also be noted that office detention takes precedence over all other in-school and out-of-school commitments, including work, and participation in co-curricular clubs and activities, or interscholastic athletics.

### **In-School Suspension**

In the spirit of progressive discipline, in-school suspension is an option that may be used by the administration to discipline students who have violated rules. It is not designed to be used in all situations. In-school suspension is most frequently used to address infractions that have begun to become repetitive and for which documentation of alternative interventions have not resulted in a change in the student's behavior. (see *Summary of Conduct Code and Consequences for Infractions, Category I, Category II, and Category III*).

In-school suspension is an all-day program in which students are required to complete schoolwork in a separate setting.. It is a student's responsibility to come prepared with pertinent schoolwork. If possible students should see their teachers prior to the day on which in-school suspension is served.

During the course of the day, students assigned to in-school suspension will also be expected to reflect on their behavior by developing a plan of action that helps ensure that they will make good decisions about their behavior in the future. Students should also be cognizant of the fact that they may also be required to complete general maintenance activities in and around the school complex.

In-school suspension may be used, at the discretion of the administration, to help a student who has been suspended out-of-school make the transition back into the normal routine.

A student who is assigned to in-school suspension may not attend, or participate in, any school-related events or activities on the day that the student is assigned to in-school suspension; this includes any activity that occurs off of school property.

### **Short-Term Out-of-School Suspension**

(JKD)

Students whose behavior compromises the learning environment of the school may be suspended out-of-school for a period of time determined appropriate by the Principal or the Principal's designee. Out-of-school suspension is intended to address the most serious of offenses, as well as the behavior of students who continually disregard the school's rules and expectations (see *Summary of Conduct Code and Consequences for Infractions*).

A student who is suspended from school is not permitted on school grounds at any time during the period of the suspension, nor may the student attend, or participate in, any school-related events or activities through the duration of the suspension, including those off of school property.

Prior to a student's return to school from an out-of-school suspension, a parent/guardian conference with the administrator, and the student is required. The student's school counselor and/or the school adjustment counselor may be invited to attend. Once the student has returned to school, it is the student's responsibility to approach, and work cooperatively with, their teachers to make-up any missed assignments and/or assessments. A reasonable time limit to complete any make-up work and/or assessments will be determined by the classroom teacher, and a specific date for the submission of any make-up work, as well as for the completion of any missed assessments, will be communicated to the student involved. Students with concerns about the time they are provided should see an administrator.

## **Expulsion**

### **Long-Term Out-of-School Suspension**

(JKD)

In accordance with what is implied and/or communicated in [Chapter 71, Section 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾](#) of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Principal may initiate long-term suspension proceedings against a student who has acted in such a manner that the student's removal from school is necessary to protect the physical safety of others, or in order to prevent substantial interference with the right of others to pursue an education. The law specifically states the following:

*"Any student who is found on school premises, or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife, or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94, Sections C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal."*

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

Should either of the aforementioned occur, or should any other behavior occur that jeopardizes the physical safety of others, and/or interferes with a student's opportunity to pursue an education, the Principal reserves the right to take action in accordance with the law.

In the event that a student is suspended for a lengthy period of time, an educational service plan will be created for the student.

### **Disciplining Students Educated on an IEP**

The faculty and staff at Sharon High School recognize and appreciate the unique needs of students with disabilities and are committed to identifying children at risk and providing quality programs, services, and procedural safeguards that are consistent with state and federal requirements. That being said, while all students are expected to meet the requirements as set forth in this handbook, Massachusetts General Laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an Evaluation Team to have special needs and whose program is described in an Individualized Educational

Program (IEP). These provisions also apply to those students who, prior to the disciplinary action were identified as a child with a disability through one of the following means:

1. The parent of the student expressed concern in writing to district or school administration, or to a teacher of the student, that the student is in need of special education and related services; or
2. The parent of the student requested an evaluation of the student; or
3. The teacher of the student or other school personnel expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the Special Education Administrator and/or the Director of Student Services.

If any of (1), (2), and/or (3) is true, the special education evaluation of the student will be conducted in an expedited manner.

The following additional requirements apply to the discipline of special needs students.

1. In accordance with regulations, when it is known that the suspension(s) of a special needs student will accumulate, individually or cumulatively, to greater than ten (10) days in any given school year, the student's special education TEAM will convene a manifestation meeting to determine whether the student's disciplinary behavior is a manifestation of the student's disability.
2. It should be known that parent(s)/guardian(s) of a student educated on an IEP are considered part of the TEAM, which almost always includes the student's liaison to the general education curriculum, a representative from the School Counseling Department, an administrator, and a member of the school's clinical staff. Together, they will consciously operate with the best interests of the student in mind, and do everything reasonably possible to discuss and agree upon a plan that will ensure that the student's educational needs are being met in the least restrictive environment.
3. At the time of the manifestation meeting, the TEAM will review the IEP to also determine the appropriateness of the student's program or placement.
4. The TEAM will also determine whether it is necessary to conduct a functional behavioral assessment (FBA), and whether it is necessary to develop or alter a behavioral intervention plan (BIP)
5. If the behavior leading to the imposition of disciplinary measures is determined not to be a manifestation of the student's disability, the student may be suspended for more than ten (10) cumulative school days. Additionally, prior to the accrual of ten (10) school days of suspension in any given school year, a student on an IEP may be suspended from school in accordance with the same guidelines and consequences that are applied to students without an identified learning disability, and not educated on an IEP.
6. If a special education student commits an offense that causes the student to be expelled from school, the school district continues to be responsible for providing the student with a free appropriate public education in another educational setting.
7. The IDEA protections summarized above also apply to a child who has not yet been found eligible for services under the statute if the district is "deemed to have knowledge" that the child was eligible for such services 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 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 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.

8. There are certain situations in which school personnel may order a change in placement of a special education student without regard to whether the student's behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability. These situations include:
  - Carrying or possession of a weapon
  - Possessing or using illegal drugs; selling or soliciting the sale of a controlled substance
  - Inflicting serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

Should an individual ever have a question or concern about the discipline or education of a student on an IEP, or the nature of the consequential provisions to which a student may be granted who is not yet eligible to be educated on an IEP, the student is encouraged to contact the high school at 781-784-1554 x8015 and request to speak with the Special Education Administrator, who will answer pertinent questions or direct the individual to someone who can.

### **Disciplining Students Educated on a 504 Plan**

School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten consecutive days without a manifestation determination. Procedural protections for students with a 504 plan are the same as those afforded to special education students.

### **Conduct Outside of School**

While a student is enrolled at Sharon High School, the student is considered a representative, as well as an ambassador of the school at all times. This implies that when a student is not at school, not attending or participating in a school-related activity or event, or not on school-provided transportation, that the student is still expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the civic, social, and behavioral expectations that Sharon High School has of its students. That being said, students should remain cognizant of the fact that the school's ability to impose discipline extends beyond the walls and grounds of the school, and that the school has an obligation to not only consider taking action against a student whose conduct is of concern, but to report certain behavior(s) to the appropriate authorities in the interest of public safety.

This scope of school authority is predominantly used to address off-campus cases that infringe on the rights of others at school, or that materially or substantially disrupt the education process or orderly operation of the school, such as incidents related to bullying, harassment and/or discrimination, violence, drugs, or alcohol; therefore, so that there are no misunderstandings about the school's decision to investigate and/or act against a student whose behavior raises serious questions about the effect that that student's continued presence might have on others, [Chapter 71, Section 37H½](#) of the Massachusetts General Laws has been cited as follows:

*“Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint or indictment charging a student with a felony, or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the Principal may suspend the student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal, if the student determines that the student’s continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.....conviction of a felony, or adjudication or admission of guilt to a complaint or indictment alleging a felony, or upon a felony delinquency finding, the Principal may expel a student when it is determined that the student’s continued presence would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.”*

When a Sharon High School student is not in school, or is not attending or participating in a school-related activity or event, or is not on school-provided transportation, the student is still expected to:

- Refrain from conduct that violates the rights of others
- Refrain from behavior that is in violation of state and federal laws
- Refrain from activities that would jeopardize the safety, eligibility, or well-being of others

Failure to abide by these expectations may subject a student to any applicable aspect of Sharon High School’s discipline code, which has been adopted by the School Committee, and which is written in accordance with all state and federal laws. In all cases where discipline is considered, a student will be granted the student’s right to due process and appeals.

In the event that the school administration becomes aware of a behavioral incident outside of school that does not specifically fall under [Chapter 71, Section 37H½](#), students and families should know the school administration may address the issue, if in the judgment of the school administration, the alleged or substantiated action(s) has the potential to infringe on the rights of others at school, or materially or substantially disrupt the education process or orderly operation of the school.

For alcohol, tobacco/nicotine and drug-related cases, student-athletes will be held accountable in accordance with [MIAA Chemical Health Policy](#) and are subject to losing playing time, as well as captaincy or other leadership positions. All involved will also be required to participate in related educational programming/counseling during the school day. For cases involving violence, bullying/cyber-bullying, or harassment of any kind, related educational programming/counseling may be required as well.

Though none of the aforementioned information is intended to impose upon the private lives of students, the school does have the right and the responsibility to address conduct that interferes with the ability of others to access their education in a safe environment. It is important that all students make responsible decisions, model appropriate behavior, and ensure that their school is recognized as an institution where character is of the utmost importance.

### **Disclosure of Disciplinary Records to Colleges/Universities**

Sharon High School believes in maintaining confidentiality in matters of student discipline. Our goal is to help students learn from mistakes, most of which are minor violations of school rules; therefore, we

consider most disciplinary infractions an internal matter among students, their parents, and the institution.

To that end, we tell students to respond honestly to any question regarding their disciplinary history on a college application, and counselors and administrators will honestly answer such questions when asked directly by a college admissions office. Counselors provide opportunities to discuss student responses within the counseling relationship, and, when asked, place the violation in the context of a student's overall record.

Sharon High School reserves the right to disclose disciplinary records. While we do not automatically send disciplinary records to post-secondary institutions, we are committed to collaborating with our college counterparts to promote and preserve the safety and integrity of the institution. Prior to the disclosure of information, parents and students will be informed of the school's intentions to disclose records.

## Conduct Code and Consequences for Infractions

### Category I

A student who fails to abide by the school-wide, classroom, or Academic Enrichment expectations listed below may be warned on a first offense at the discretion of administration. Offenses of these expectations may result in any of the following:

- Parent Meeting
- Restorative Practices
- Revocation of Privileges/Social Suspension
- Teacher Detention
- Office Detention
- Subsequent, repeated, and/or deliberate violations of any of the expectations listed below may result in a decision to suspend the student from school for a period of time lasting between one (1) and three (3) school days should documented alternative interventions not result in a change in student behavior.

#### A. School and Classroom Expectations

1. Arriving to school and to each class on time (see *Tardiness*)
2. Demonstrating honesty and integrity (see Cheating and/or Plagiarism)
3. Complying with all classroom and Academic Enrichment and Support expectations
4. Signing in and out of class using the SmartPass application
5. Refraining from wandering the halls
6. Passing from one class to another in an orderly and efficient fashion
7. Adhering to appropriate restroom behavior (see Restrooms)
8. Refraining from engaging in overt public displays of affection
9. Dressing appropriately (see *Dress and Apparel*)
10. Refraining from the use of profanity
11. Eating breakfast and lunch in areas designated for that purpose
12. Cleaning up after oneself
13. Adhering to all school rules and/or guidelines with respect to the management and maintenance of the facility and its related grounds
14. Complying with all school rules and/or adopted guidelines with respect to the participation in interscholastic athletics, co-curricular clubs and activities, school-related functions and events, and school-provided transportation
15. Respecting the rights of students who wish to recite or abstain from the Pledge of Allegiance (see *West Virginia v. Barnette, 319 U.S. 624 (1943)*)
16. Placing cell phones in the phone caddies at the start of class, or adhering to any other teacher expectation where cell phones are concerned (see Cell Phones)
17. Be responsive to the requests and directions of classroom teachers and staff
18. Completing assigned tasks
19. Bringing the appropriate and necessary materials to class
20. Remaining awake and attentive for the entire period
21. Refraining from behavior that disrupts the teaching and/or learning environment
22. Adhering to any rules and/or guidelines specific to a particular class/laboratory

## **Category II**

A student who commits an infraction from the list below will be referred to the office, and subject to any of the following; a warning will not be issued:

- Parent Meeting
- Restorative Practices
- Revocation of Privileges/Social Suspension
- Teacher Detention
- Office Detention
- In-school or out-of-school Suspension

Subsequent, repeated, and/or deliberate violations of any of the expectations listed below may result in a decision to suspend the student from school for a period of time lasting between one (1) and three (3) school days should documented alternative interventions not result in a change in student behavior. Depending on the infraction, and at the discretion of the administration, in-school suspension may be substituted or incorporated into the resulting discipline.

1. Disruptive, insolent, rude, and/or discourteous behavior
2. Truancy
3. Leaving the school building and grounds without permission (see *Class Cuts and/or Truancy*)
4. Forging, falsifying, or otherwise altering any school-related document or record
5. Directing intimidating, threatening, vulgar, and/or abusive language or gestures at another student (see *Harassment and/or Discrimination, Bullying and Cyber-Bullying*)
6. Repeatedly cutting class (see *Class Cuts and/or Truancy*)
7. Entering or exiting the building during school hours through side or back doors, and/or opening for someone to enter the building or propping a door. Students must use the main entrance when entering the building after 8:05 and for all dismissals.
8. Refusing to identify oneself upon request, or giving a false name to a staff member
9. Repeated cell phone violations
10. Ordering meal delivery service (e.g. DoorDash) during school hours or leaving campus to obtain a meal
11. Enabling unapproved access to the school building to non-school personnel, or to students who do not attend Sharon High School
12. Misbehaving/causing a disturbance or failing to follow the rules at a co-curricular activity or event, on a field trip, or at an interscholastic athletic contest
13. Misbehaving/causing a disturbance or failing to follow the rules on school-provided transportation
14. Lying to a member of the faculty or staff, or defying the authority of a member of the faculty or staff through willful non-compliance or insubordination
15. Repeated and/or deliberate violations of Category I expectations

### **Category III**

A student who commits an infraction from the list below will be suspended from school for a period of time lasting up to five (5) school days. Depending on the nature and severity of the conduct in question, a referral to the police department may also be made. Depending on the infraction, and at the discretion of the administration, in-school suspension or Saturday School may be incorporated into the resulting discipline. The student will also be subject to losing any privileges, as well as social suspension.

1. Using smoking-related products on school grounds (see *Smoking and Smokeless Tobacco*)
2. Fighting (see *Fighting*)
3. Stealing, or being found to be in possession of stolen personal or school property
4. Participating in the practice of hazing (see *Hazing*)
5. Engaging in extortion, coercion, or other manipulative-like behavior
6. Gambling, or partaking in a game of chance for stakes
7. Vandalizing and/or destroying school property (see *Vandalism*)
8. Directing intimidating, threatening, vulgar and/or abusive language or gestures at another student or member of the faculty or staff
9. Trespassing on school property when the school is closed, or when no events/activities are being hosted on school grounds
10. Taking and/or posting or disseminating (electronically, through social media, or through other means) photographs and/or audio or video recordings of students and/or staff without permission
11. Repeated and/or extreme offenses of Category II conduct violations

### **Category IV**

A student who engages in any of the behaviors listed below will be suspended from school for a period of time lasting no less than ten (10) school days. The student may also be subject to an expulsion hearing (see *Long-Term Suspension*), and an immediate referral to the police department will be made which may result in court appearances and further court-ordered discipline. In-school suspension and Saturday School are not options for the behaviors listed below. The student will also be subject to losing any privileges, as well as social suspension.

1. Using, possessing, distributing, or selling controlled or banned substances, or items purported to be controlled or banned substances, including but not limited to: illicit or prescription drugs and paraphernalia, marijuana or cannabis products or paraphernalia, alcohol, dangerous weapons, and pyrotechnics (see *Substance Abuse* and *Long-Term Suspension*)
2. Arson, or starting a fire
3. Assaulting or threatening serious bodily harm to a member of the faculty, staff, or other adult persons authorized to be on school property (see Chapter 71, section 37H and 37H ½) (see *Long-Term Suspension*)

4. Any assault or threat of violence that disrupts the operation of the school and/or requires the intervention of the police or other law enforcement
5. Repeated and/or extreme offenses of Category III conduct violations

### **Cell Phones/Use of Personal Technology**

Cell phones and personal technology can both enrich and disrupt the learning environment. Used in a responsible fashion, they can complement learning, so teachers have the discretion to allow students to take advantage of this kind of technology in the classroom when it makes sense. Students and their families should also remain mindful of the school’s concerns about cheating (see *Cheating and Plagiarism*) and the practice of storing cell phones such as the case is during all national standardized assessments.

During passing time and in the cafeteria during lunch, students may check their cell phones. **However, at all times during class periods unless permission is granted by the teacher, cell phones must be silenced and secured in a designated phone holder, including during trips to the restroom/water fountain, this includes during the Academic Enrichment and Support Period and Directed Studies.** At the conclusion of class or when the teacher permits, cell phones can be retrieved. Taking someone else’s cell phone will initially be treated as theft by the administration. It should also be understood that using cell phones to take video, audio, or photographs at any time without explicit permission is illegal and in addition to being a Category III offense above, could become a police matter. Any student who refuses to turn over a cell phone to a staff member or administrator for inappropriate use will be disciplined according to the Category I offenses described above. .

Students found using a cell phone irresponsibly will be subject to the following consequences:

<b>1st offense:</b>	Cell phone is confiscated, turned into the main office, and returned to the student at the end of the school day
<b>2nd offense:</b>	Cell phone is confiscated and parent/guardian is required to retrieve it

The school is not responsible for lost or stolen property. Students who find items of value, such as a cell phone, should bring it to the office.

### **Computer, Internet, and E-mail**

All individuals who use school computers and school-based Internet or e-mail resources must abide by the district’s [Acceptable Use Policy](#), which outlines terms, and conditions for use. This policy requires that all users of these resources read the policy and sign the [Acceptable Use Statement](#) prior to use being granted. In the case of students, this policy must also be signed by parents/guardians once a child is enrolled in the Sharon Public Schools. Parents wishing to withdraw this authorization must notify (in writing) both the Principal and the Director of Technology.

## **SPS Chromebook Agreement**

The Sharon Public School District agrees to lend to the student one Chromebook laptop device and charger in good working order. It is the student's responsibility to care for the equipment and ensure that it is retained in a safe environment. This equipment is, and at all times remains, the Property of the Sharon Public Schools and is lent to the student for educational purposes only. We ask that online usage and websites should be monitored by parents and/or legal guardians.

### **A: Laptop Loan Arrangements**

1. The Chromebook will be provided to students on a “loan-for-use basis” from the district for the duration of the loan period.
2. Chromebook users are expected to follow all guidelines and policies established by the Student Handbook and the District Acceptable Use Policy.
3. The students may have personal access to the Chromebook, during and outside of school hours for the duration of the loan period.
4. The Chromebook and accessories remain the property of the district and will be returned at the end of the loan period.
5. The Chromebook usage may be monitored and/or checked by the district at any time for content that contravenes the Acceptable Use Policy, or other district policies for any material deemed not suitable.
6. No permanent personalization of the device or charger is acceptable under this agreement.

### **B: Termination**

***This agreement will be in place for the 2024-2025 School Year:***

1. When equipment is returned in satisfactory condition at the end of the loan period at a time designated by school leadership.
2. Where the student leaves the District prior to the end of the school year. If a student ceases to be enrolled at the school, he or she is to return the laptop to the district in full working order, including all accessories and components.
3. Where the student uses the device for inappropriate and/or offensive purposes as determined by school administration.

### **C: Access to Wireless (As Applicable)**

1. The Chromebook can be used at home and connected to home networks, district hotspots, and/or personal Internet services for student use outside of school. It is the student’s responsibility not to access or download any inappropriate material from the Internet.
2. This Chromebook does have [CIPA \(Children’s Internet Protection Act\)](#) compliant internet filtering installed for home use. However, families should monitor internet usage to ensure that students visit websites that are appropriate and for educational purposes only.

### **D: Damage and Failure to Return**

1. At the discretion of the administration, if a device is lost, stolen or accidentally damaged, the parent/guardian may be liable for the repair or replacement costs.

2. Sharon Public Schools students and families are responsible for the general care of the Chromebooks utilized at school and home. If the device is damaged and/or inoperable as a result of willful action or negligence, the student’s family may be charged a fine for repair according to the schedule below:

Complete Replacement due to destruction	\$300.00
LCD Screen	\$65.00
Keyboard and Touchpad	\$90.00
AC Adapter	\$30.00

**Fee Information**

Upon damage verification from a school administrator, a letter will be sent home via email or directly to the student explaining the fees and repairs. These fees may remain as charges on the student’s record until resolved and may result in records being held by Sharon Public Schools until the fees, fines, and charges are paid.

**E: Responsibilities**

1. Students are responsible for managing Chromebook use and care outside of school. A school-assigned Google account is necessary to log into the Chromebooks. No one other than the issued student will be allowed to log into the Chromebook.

2. Additional programs, apps, or other content may not be installed on the Chromebook by anyone other than approved district personnel. The district reserves the right to remove any content that interferes with learning or is otherwise deemed inappropriate (e.g., creates an unacceptable risk to the student, property, or district).

4. This device is not intended to be used for Social Media purposes. Visiting Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, etc. are not permitted on this device. Cyberbullying and harassment would be in direct violation of our Acceptable Use Policy.

By digitally signing off on this handbook: I agree to the guidelines and procedures outlined on this form and agree to take full responsibility for the technology device.

**Fighting**

It should be clear to all students that violence in any form will not be tolerated in school or on school grounds. Sharon High School has a number of resources to help students alleviate conflict or mediate differences (including the School Adjustment Counselor, School Counselors, School Psychologists, and administration), so fighting should never be considered as an option. Therefore, students who are found to be guilty of fighting will be subject to the following disciplinary consequences:

<b><i>1<sup>st</sup> offense:</i></b>	Up to five (5) days out-of-school suspension
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<b>2<sup>nd</sup> offense:</b>	Up to ten (10) days out-of-school suspension
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> offense:</b>	Ten (10) days out-of-school suspension <u>and</u> a mandatory expulsion hearing

Although in the majority of instances of fighting, both parties are equally at fault, upon the conclusion of any investigation into fighting, if an aggressor can be determined, then that student shall be subject to more severe consequences than the non-aggressor.

As always, the Principal reserves the right to penalize any act(s) of violence with more extreme penalties that are commensurate with the act(s) of violence committed by the student(s). Additionally, any aggressive action that results in an injury that requires medical or hospital treatment will be referred to the local police department.

### **Summary**

As noted earlier, all of the aforementioned consequences are guidelines to which students are subject if their behavior compromises the learning environment at Sharon High School.

The Principal and the principal’s designee retains the right and responsibility to all students and staff to issue penalties for acts not stated herein, to examine any mitigating factors that, in the student’s judgment, should be considered, and to employ penalties stated herein as guidelines (which may be adjusted to reflect the seriousness of the conduct in question).

Appeals to any decision may be made in accordance with the appeals process (see *Due Process and Appeals*).

## **Related Conduct Code Information, Policies, Regulations, and Laws**

### **Smoking, Vaping, and Smokeless Tobacco**

(ADC)

The use and/or possession of any nicotine or tobacco product is prohibited on school grounds and vehicles, as well at all school-sponsored events. Students should not possess any nicotine or tobacco products, including juul pods, e-cigarettes, vape pens and cartridges, or variations thereof. Students found to be in possession of nicotine or tobacco products will be subject to disciplinary action and will have the product confiscated and turned over to the School Resource Officer.

Additionally, any student found to be vaping or smoking, using a nicotine or smokeless tobacco product, or to be selling or distributing nicotine or tobacco products will be subject to the following disciplinary consequences:

<b><i>1st offense:</i></b>	Maximum three (3) day suspension with the possibility of a reduced consequence if the student agrees to enroll in a smoking/vaping cessation program.
<b><i>2nd offense &amp; all subsequent incidents</i></b>	Maximum five (5) day suspension with the possibility of a reduced consequence if the student agrees to enroll in a smoking/vaping cessation program.

Tobacco and nicotine products include, but are not limited to: cigarettes, e-cigarettes, juul pods, smokeless tobacco, cigars, cigarillos, pipes, hookahs, bidis, and kreteks.

Students who are willing to participate in, and complete, a smoking cessation program upon a first or second offense finding may have their suspensions reduced by one (1) school day. In light of the fact that some individuals may have difficulty refraining from smoking, the school will work with local health organizations to provide referrals for students to smoking cessation and substance use programs, and to offer such programs on-site as need and interest dictate.

### **Hazing**

(JICFA)

Hazing is the practice of requiring new members of a team, club, or other organization to perform embarrassing or dangerous acts as a part of their introduction to the group. Hazing in all forms is completely illegal, and any student found to be imposing hazing requirements on other students will be suspended from school for five (5) school days, and permanently suspended from the team, club, or organization. Additionally, the behavior will be reported to the local police department.

In accordance with the requirements of the [Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 269, Sections 17, 18, and 19](#) have been cited below. To further comply with the law, these sections are also distributed to each advisor and/or coach of all clubs and athletic teams at Sharon High School.

*“Section 17 – Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one-hundred days, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term “hazing” as used in this section, and in Sections 18 and 19, 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 and mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to weather, forced consumption of food, liquor, beverage, drugs, 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 to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation.*

*Section 18 – Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in Section 17, and is at the scene of such a crime, 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 five hundred dollars (\$500).*

*Section 19 – Each secondary school and public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operation on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledges or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and Sections 17 and 18. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said Sections 17 and 18, shall sign an acknowledgement stating that such group, organization, or individual has received a copy of such said Sections 17 and 18. Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall also 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 the provisions of this section, and also certifying that said school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents, and in the case of secondary schools, 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 that fails to make such report.”*

## **Vandalism**

([ECAC](#))

Any student or individual who damages, either intentionally or unintentionally, any property belonging to the school, property used by the school, or any property belonging to a school employee or member of the School Committee, will be held monetarily responsible for the repair or replacement of the damages. Additionally and when appropriate, disciplinary consequences will be imposed, and complaints will be brought to the attention of the courts, on those who have maliciously damaged such property.

## **Dress and Apparel**

([JICA](#))

In order to ensure that the educational atmosphere at Sharon High School is as conducive to learning as possible, dress and apparel appropriate for a school setting are required at all times.

Students MUST wear:

- Bottoms
- Tops
- Shoes

Students MAY NOT wear:

- Violent language or images
- Images or language depicting drugs or alcohol or any illegal item or activity or their use
- Hate speech, profanity, or pornography
- Images and/or language that creates a hostile or intimidating environment based on any protected class
- Clothing that is see-through, visible undergarments or underwear, or bathing suits
- Helmets or headgear (unless for religious purposes)
- Hoods that cover the face or ears (unless for religious purposes)
- Slippers

Any student whose dress is deemed potentially problematic or in violation of the dress and apparel guidelines as determined by a school administrator or other school official will be required to change into something appropriate. If the student cannot adequately change in school, parents will be called and the student will be sent home to comply. An administrator (or designated school official) of the same sex will speak with the student in a private setting so that the student is not embarrassed.

Any school dress code enforcement actions should minimize the potential loss of educational time. Administration and enforcement of the dress policy shall be consistent with the Sharon Public Schools equity policies on race, gender, religion, and sexual orientation.

## **Substance Abuse**

[\(ADB\)](#)

Sharon High School strictly prohibits the following conduct on School property and/or during School-sponsored events, including but not limited to extracurricular and athletic activities. (For purposes of this Policy, "School property," is defined as the buildings and premises of any school within the School Department, school buses and other school-owned or provided vehicles, and any other locations at which extracurricular activities sponsored by the Sharon School Department take place.)

Sharon High School is committed to providing and maintaining a learning environment that is drug and alcohol free. In accordance with local, state, and federal laws, a student may not use, be under the influence of, possess, distribute, or sell, a controlled or banned substance on school property, or at a school-related function/event off of school property.

If a student or member of the faculty or staff suspects that a student is in possession of a controlled or banned substance, or suspects that a student is using or under the influence of a controlled or banned substance, or suspects that a student is distributing or selling a controlled or banned substance, then that student should be reported to the administration, at which point the student will be questioned by the administration as to the cause for the suspicion.

If the student's explanation satisfies the administration, then the matter will be closed, and the student will be free to continue the student's day without fear of penalty; however, a parent/guardian will be notified as to the nature of the administration's inquiry. If, on the other hand, the student's explanation does not satisfy the administration, and there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the student is not being forthcoming, then the student will be subject to a search of the student's person, as well as a search of all items under the student's immediate control, including the student's bag(s), locker, and vehicle parked in the student-designated parking areas. Refusal to be searched will constitute an admission of guilt and the student will face appropriate consequences.

All searches of a student's person will be conducted by an administrator (or designated school official), and within the presence of a third party school official. If a controlled or banned substance is found, then that substance will be confiscated, placed into a container or envelope, retained by the Principal, and then turned over to the Sharon Police Department at the earliest convenience. If no controlled or banned substance is found, the matter may or may not be closed depending on the nature of the circumstances involved in the inquiry. The decision to continue any investigation is at the discretion of the administration; regardless, a parent/guardian will be notified as to the reason for the inquiry, and the reason for any continued investigative scrutiny.

At any time, should a student exhibit uncooperative or unresponsive behavior that would indicate to a neutral observer that the student is either not being forthcoming about plausible evidence, or that the student is likely under the influence of a controlled or banned substance, the matter will be immediately turned over to the Sharon Police Department. The school administration will contact the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) at this time, and if they cannot be reached so that the student can be taken home, or if they are unwilling to take the student home, then the student will be placed into the protective custody of the Sharon Police Department. At a future date, the student, in the presence of the student's parents, will have to explain the student's exhibited behavior to the school administration, and in all likelihood, disciplinary consequences that are in the interest and spirit of the school's rules and mission will be imposed.

Once a student is considered guilty of violating the school's substance abuse policy because the student was found to be in possession of a controlled or banned substance, or because the student was found to be using or under the influence of a controlled or banned substance, or because the student was found to have distributed or sold a controlled or banned substance, then the student's parents/guardians will be notified, the Superintendent of Schools will be notified, and the Sharon Police Department will also be notified.

Pending any additional hearings, the student will be suspended from school for ten (10) days and subject to a mandatory expulsion hearing.

It should be known that Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Massachusetts General Laws, specifically states the following:

*"Any student, who is found on school premises, or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of.....a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C, including but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal."*

In the interest of ensuring that the learning environment at Sharon High School is drug and alcohol-free, the administration may work cooperatively with the Sharon Police Department, and other law enforcement agencies, to conduct a comprehensive search of the school building and grounds. Drug-detection dogs may be used to indicate reasonable suspicion of the evidence of a controlled or banned substance in lockers, bags, and vehicles parked in the student-designated parking areas. Upon the discovery of a controlled or banned substance that has resulted from the in-depth and reasonable search of a suspected item, the individual who owns that item will be subject to the aforementioned consequences that are associated with the possession of a controlled or banned substance.

In keeping with the school's belief that it has a responsibility to educate students about the dangers associated with drug and alcohol abuse, the faculty and staff at Sharon High School are committed to making positive, compassionate, and individualized efforts to assist students and their families who might be dealing with a drug or alcohol issue. In fact, Sharon High School will provide, without penalty, assistance to any student who voluntarily comes forward seeking drug or alcohol treatment or advice. When appropriate, the student's parent(s)/guardian(s) will become involved, and confidentiality will always be maintained.

In all cases, the best available resources that can help and/or protect the student will be considered, including but not limited to: counseling from the school's clinical staff, or referrals to private or community agencies, including the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families and the Massachusetts Juvenile Court Department.

## **Harassment and/or Discrimination**

(ACH, JB)

Sharon High School takes harassment and/or discrimination very seriously and regards any form of harassment and/or discrimination as a possible violation of an individual's civil rights. Per definition, harassment and/or discrimination is the willful and malicious engagement in a knowing pattern of conduct, or series of acts, directed at a specific person (or group) over a period of time that annoys, alarms, or torments that person (or group), and causes that person (or group) to suffer emotional distress.

Harassment and/or discrimination can be verbal or physical, and includes behavior that is perpetrated by telephonic or telecommunication devices, including but not limited to any electronic communication. In addition, the use of inappropriate terms, as well as signs or symbols of a racial, religious, ethnic, sexual, or gender-based bias, that are meant to dehumanize and cause pain to an individual or group, will be considered as a form of harassment and/or discrimination as well.

In light of the fact that the high school feels very strongly about the inappropriateness of harassment and/or discrimination, and because proactive efforts to prevent harassment and/or discrimination by regularly educating the student body about it are made on an annual basis, any student or individual who witnesses, or who feels that they are the target of harassment and/or discrimination, are strongly encouraged to report any knowledge of this kind of behavior to a trusted adult. The individual who has been provided with this information should immediately convey this information to an administrator, who will subsequently inform the alleged victim of the student's options, which include:

- Requesting that a counselor or administrator intervene on behalf of the alleged target by addressing the incident(s) and/or offensive behavior(s) with the alleged harasser

- Filing an immediate and written grievance with the Principal (*mandatory for any complaint involving an adult as the alleged harasser, or an allegation that places a target in physical or emotional danger*)

Regardless of the option that an alleged target pursues, any complaints will be guarded with confidentiality.

If any steps taken by a counselor or administrator fail to resolve the issue, or if the alleged harassment and/or discrimination continues, or if there is any evidence of retaliation, the alleged target, and/or the individual communicating on behalf of the alleged target should submit an immediate and written grievance to the Principal. Upon receipt of a written grievance, the Principal will inform all necessary parties, including the Superintendent and the appropriate parent(s)/guardian(s), that the student has received a written grievance, and that the student will begin a formal investigation into the alleged conduct.

During the Principal's investigation, due process and confidentiality rights will be honored. Upon completion of the investigation, the Principal will communicate the student's decision to the appropriate individual(s), and the student will also render the student's decision in writing. Where necessary and appropriate, disciplinary action will be imposed; it may include, but it is not limited to:

- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to legal and/or court authorities
- Mandatory counseling and/or educational programming

## **Bullying and Cyber-Bullying**

([JICFA](#), [JICFB](#), [JJNDB](#))

The Sharon Public Schools are committed to working with students, staff, families, law enforcement agencies and the community to prevent instances of violence. The school department shall exercise its legal right and responsibility to take action to protect targets, to notify parents and police, to assign consequences including discipline, to any perpetrator. In consultation with these constituencies, we have established this Plan for preventing, intervening and responding to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation.

As leaders, educators and parents in Sharon, we need to convince all those in our community to SOAR like an Eagle.

## **Support Others, Act Responsibly!**

The Sharon Public Schools expects that all members of the school community will treat each other in a kind manner and demonstrate respect for diversity. The benchmark terms that describe our actions toward each other will be represented as part of a culture of respect. Staff model behavior and recognize and respond to gateway behaviors. This way, students can learn to police their own behavior.

Our policy ([JICFB](#)) states that the Sharon School Department is committed to creating a safe, caring, and respectful learning environment for all students. Our Acceptable Use Policy ([JJNDB](#)) specifically states that it is a violation "to use electronic resources for harassment, bullying or stalking other individuals"

and that “Any use of internet or technology resources that results in a disruption to the school environment is subject to school disciplinary policies.” In addition to the personal and emotional harm they inflict, bullying and harassment distract, interfere, and prevent students from learning. We are committed to treating all members of our community with civility and respect in an inclusive environment. We strictly enforce a prohibition against the bullying and other harassment of any of our students or staff.

In collaboration with Sharon teachers, families and community members, we have developed and will implement a plan for education and discipline, including curriculum, to prevent bullying and to help adults and students to respond effectively to allegations and incidents of bullying and other harassment.

[The Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan](#) is a comprehensive approach to specifically addressing the issues related to bullying, and cyber-bullying. This Policy applies and extends to all Sharon students, School Committee members, school employees, independent contractors, school volunteers, visitors, parents and legal guardians of students.

**Bullying** is defined by [M.G.L. c. 71, § 370](#) law as “the repeated use by one or more students [or persons] of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person on more than one occasion. It can include physical bullying such as hitting, or verbal bullying such as name-calling, spreading rumors, making threats, stalking, or making harassing, and annoying, or inappropriate electronic communications.

Bullying is NOT a situation where there is mutual conflict – i.e. in situations where a balance of power exists and where people are both upset and are looking for a resolution to a problem.

**Cyber-bullying** is defined as “bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, the Internet [and other digital devices]. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages and Internet postings. See [M.G.L. c. 71, § 370](#) for the legal definition of cyber-bullying. In accord with Massachusetts law, “cyber-bullying” under this Policy “shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions in... the definition of bullying” enumerated above.

The examples below illustrate (but do not to limit) the behavior that this Policy prohibits:

1. A person intimidates another person, physically, psychologically, or emotionally.
2. A person threatens another person, whether that threat is stated or implied verbally, direct or indirect, or physical, emotional, or psychological in nature.
3. A person attempts to attack or actually assaults another person, including those that are communicated, transmitted, or otherwise expressed verbally, physically, psychologically, electronically, or in writing.
4. A person attempts to attack or actually attacks or inflicts damage on another person's personal property.
5. A person attacks, intimidates, threatens or assaults another person if carried out against the target at the request or instruction of a bully; and/or,
6. A person creates an unwelcoming or hostile environment at school for another person or group of people.
7. A person creates a social media account, web page, blog or similar communication media in which the creator assumes the identity of another person, or,
8. A person knowingly impersonates another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in ... the definition of bullying above.
9. A person uses intimidation, insult, or ridicule that is sufficiently severe or pervasive as to alter the conditions of a student's education or to create a hostile environment.

## **Prohibition of Bullying**

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are explicitly prohibited:

- On school grounds and property immediately adjacent to school grounds
- At a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program, whether on or off school grounds
- At a school bus stop
- On a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school
- At a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related
- Through the use of technology or an electronic device, which is not owned, leased, or used by a school district or school, if the acts create a hostile environment at school for the target or witnesses; infringe on their rights at school; or materially, and substantially, disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying may occur in the following scenarios: student to student and staff to student. Protections are afforded to all students regardless of their legal status.

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

## **Policies and Procedures**

Hazing or bullying of any kind is prohibited by School Committee Policies [JICFA](#) and [JICFB](#), respectively. Any student, district employee, or third party who engages in prohibited conduct as described in the policy shall be subject to disciplinary action, which may include but is not limited to, termination from employment or expulsion from school, or exclusion from all district property and programs and/or from doing business with the district.

**What the schools will do:** Sharon Schools will track bullying behavior referrals to identify repeat referrals. A bullying prevention summary statement will be included in each handbook, and the community will have access to this Plan. Students will be encouraged to report incidents of bullying that they witness. All staff will be required to report and to respond when they witness incidents of bullying. Administration and staff need to take steps to protect targets of bullying and to train parents to support efforts to stop bullying behavior.

The school or district will:

- Include a copy of the [Incident Reporting Form \(IRF\)](#) in each student handbook for students and parents or guardians;
- Make the [IRF](#) available in the school's main office, school counselor offices, psychologist offices, the school nurse's office and other locations determined by the principal or designee; and
- Post it on the school's website. Upon request, the [Incident Reporting Form](#) will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

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

#### **A. Reporting Bullying or Retaliation**

**Reporting an Incident:** By reporting an incident of bullying and/or harassment, you are playing an important role in protecting others and building an environment that is safe and comfortable for all.

If you are a target or a witness to bullying and/or harassment, you should report the incident to an adult (teacher, staff member, administrator, principal or assistant principal, parent, guardian). All adults employed by the school district are mandated reporters.

Staff, students, parents, guardians, or others may make reports of bullying or retaliation. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded by that staff member in writing. A school or district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation that the staff member becomes aware of or that is witnessed.

**Gateway Behaviors:** In order to encourage a positive climate and prevent incidents of teasing, which may lead to conduct that can be identified as bullying, all staff members will respond to any gateway behaviors (eye-rolling, staring, snickering, secret whispering, etc.) that they witness by indicating their unhappiness with the behavior. Staff members will report to the principal or designee any incidents

of teasing (name calling, inappropriate comments, etc.) or aggressive actions, so that patterns of behavior of an individual may be documented.

### **Reporting by Staff**

A staff member will report to the principal or designee conduct that *may indicate* bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the principal or designee does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline. It is the responsibility of each staff member to respond to any situation that places a student at risk for physical or emotional harm. That responsibility extends to any “gateway” behaviors that undermine school climate.

### **Reporting by Students, Parents, Guardians and Others**

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

Reports made by students, parents, guardians, or other individuals, who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously. There are a variety of reporting resources available.

### **Making a Report:**

1. Contact an adult in the building to discuss the situation and/or obtain an [Incident Report Form](#) or the School/Community Report Form. Forms may be obtained in the Main Office, School Counseling Office and Library or on the school district website.
2. Complete the [Incident Report Form](#) and return to either the Main Office or School Counseling Office. This form can be left with a secretary. Include as much information as possible on the form.
3. A person making a report may call any school and use the extension HELP (4357) to provide the information over the telephone. Information must include date(s), time(s), name(s) and age(s) of students involved, and the names of any witnesses. The report should be as specific as possible about what was witnessed.
4. A report of an incident may be made anonymously but the report needs to include enough information to enable an investigation by the principal. The [Incident Report Form](#) may be mailed to any PRINCIPAL in any of our schools or to the Superintendent at 75 Mountain Street.

Use of an [Incident Report Form](#) or the School/Community Report Form is not required as a condition of making a report.

### **Process:**

All reported incidents would be investigated by the principal or the principal’s designee. Interviews will be held with the named target, aggressor and witness(es). The principal or the principal’s designee will determine the severity of the incident and decide the resulting actions that may include:

1. Educational and/or Therapeutic Intervention

2. School Discipline: including, but not limited to, detention, suspension, and expulsion.
3. Police Intervention

## **B. Response to a Report of Bullying or Retaliation**

### **Student/Staff Safety**

Before fully investigating the allegations of bullying or retaliation, the principal or designee will take steps to assess the need to restore a sense of safety to the alleged target and/or to protect the alleged target from possible further incidents. Responses to promote safety may include, but not be limited to:

1. Pre-determining seating arrangements for the target and/or the alleged aggressor in the classroom, at lunch or on the bus;
2. Identifying a staff member who will act as a “safe person” for the target;
3. Altering the alleged aggressor’s access to the target;
4. Alerting all staff working with the alleged aggressor and target so that they are more watchful of the interaction and are more prepared to intervene if necessary;
5. Continuing "check- ins" with the target to assure that they have a safe place to discuss the incident and any ensuing circumstances.

The principal or designee will take additional steps to promote safety during the course of, and after, the investigation, as necessary.

The principal or designee will implement appropriate strategies, as necessary, for protecting the following from bullying or retaliation, any student or staff who:

1. Has reported bullying or retaliation,
2. Has witnessed bullying or retaliation,
3. Provides information during an investigation or
4. Has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation.

## **C. Investigation**

If a report of bullying appears credible, parents will be notified that an investigation is underway.

The principal or designee will promptly investigate any reports of bullying or retaliation considering all available information, including the nature of the allegation, the age(s) of the student(s) involved and any corroborating evidence (social media pages, copies of text messaging, electronic messages and representations, written threats, etc.) The principal or designee will also note whether the incident involves an imbalance of power or relational aggression. During an investigation the principal or designee will interview students, staff, witnesses, parents, guardians and others, as necessary.

The principal or designee will remind the alleged aggressor, target and witnesses that any form of retaliation is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action. All witnesses, the target and the aggressor will also be notified of the expectation of confidentiality. This means there will be no discussion among students about the situation in school or online.

The principal or designee, or other staff members as determined by the principal or designee, may conduct interviews and will maintain confidentiality during the investigation to the extent that is practical. The principal or designee will maintain a written record of the investigation. It is always the case that a school counselor, school psychologist, or nurse may be included when interviewing someone who may be uncomfortable when being interviewed.

#### **D. Results of Investigation**

The principal or designee will determine based upon the facts and circumstances whether bullying or retaliation has occurred. If so, the principal or designee will take steps, reasonably calculated, to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities.

The principal or designee will determine what remedial, and/or responsive and/or disciplinary action is required (See Consequences Charts in Appendix). If there is no substantiation, then the principal will make certain that the initial complaint was made in good faith and will give appropriate warnings or discipline, as appropriate, to any student involved in any kind of inappropriate behavior – even if it was not labeled as bullying or retaliation. A safety plan might still be considered to assist students who feel unsafe.

#### **E. Next Steps**

When the principal or designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the principal (or the student's designee) may employ a wide range of responses that balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior. The principal or designee will consider what adjustments, if any, are needed in the school environment to enhance the sense of safety for the target and anyone else who may have been affected. If it has been determined that bullying has taken place on the school grounds, the principal or designee will take measures to increase adult supervision at transition times and in locations where bullying is known to have occurred or is likely to occur.

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

**To assist the target** to recover, the following efforts may be made depending on the individual needs of the student or staff:

- A school counselor or school psychologist will meet with the target (regularly if needed) to discuss the student's sense of safety and to address strategies that could be helpful to encourage improved social skills, and/or resilience as needed. If the target chooses not to participate, then the school counselor or school psychologist will check in occasionally with the target to see how the student is doing and to determine whether there has been any recurrence of the prohibited conduct. If so, the adult will report the information to the principal or designee.

- The counselor or psychologist will also communicate with the target's parents or supervisors about the target's progress.
- The parent or supervisor should be involved in conversations about helping the target to identify and develop positive social skills when necessary.
- The target may be paired with a 'safe person' or 'friend' or older student or mentor if the target is willing to do so.
- Staff and supervisors will be vigilant about the target's presentation and connections to other persons (e.g. is the student alone at lunch? Is the targeted staff member still concerned?).

**To provide remediation for the aggressor** in order to change the student's negative pattern of behavior, the following efforts may be made depending on the needs of the aggressor and the severity of the offense:

- A school counselor or school psychologist will meet regularly with the aggressor to discuss the student's attitudes, to address strategies that could be helpful to encourage improved social skills and to help the student to develop deeper empathy.
- The counselor or psychologist will help the aggressor to address the question: *What could the student have done differently?*
- The aggressor may be asked to complete some community service or to perform research on the impact of bullying.
- Parents/guardians/supervisors will be asked to monitor the aggressor's use of technology and access to influences that could encourage disrespectful or hurtful behaviors.
- The aggressor's parents will be asked to meet with the principal and/or school counseling staff.

**Other strategies** that the principal or designee may consider include:

- Offering individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- Providing relevant educational activities for individual aggressor or groups of aggressors, in consultation with school counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implementing a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help aggressors understand prosocial ways to achieve their goals;
- Meeting with parents, guardians or supervisors to engage support, to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home or in the workplace, and to discuss possible outside influences on a aggressor's behavior;
- Adopting behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- Making a referral for a special education evaluation or safety evaluation that the principal or designee may consider to be needed.

## **F. Disciplinary Action**

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

In addition, the following will be considered:

- The school schedule of the aggressor(s) or target(s) may be changed to reduce contact with the target.
- Discipline for bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation may include either in-school or out of school suspension because staff and students have been educated about behavior expectations and have been warned about using technology inappropriately.
- Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the Federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA), which will be rendered in compliance with state laws regarding student discipline. (This does not mean that students with disabilities are not subject to consequences for their action with respect to bullying, retaliation, or other negative behavior. It does mean that their disabilities must be considered and IDEA steps followed.)
- If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **G. Notifications (Reporting)**

#### **Notice to parents or guardians:**

The principal or designee will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of an investigation. This will include a written determination letter. If bullying or retaliation is found to have occurred, the parents or guardian of the target will also be told what actions are being taken to keep the target(s) safe at school. The aggressor's parents will be notified about what consequences their child will receive as well as what further steps the school will take to help the student improve the student's behavior.

All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, school officials are generally prohibited from informing the complainant of specific disciplinary action taken against a student—unless it involves a “stay away” order or other directive that the target should be aware of so as to report violations.

#### **Notice to another school district:**

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

#### **Notice to Law Enforcement:**

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal or designee has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against

the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal or designee shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor. In all cases where Law Enforcement is notified, parents will be contacted at once.

#### **H. Access to Resources and Services**

Identifying Student Resources. Any student who is at risk for being bullied will be referred to an appropriate counselor. The counselor will assess the issue(s) and if appropriate will provide the student with ongoing emotional support and coping strategies. The counselor, in conjunction with the building administration, may refer the student and/or family to outside agencies for more intensive services. When necessary, the counselor will connect the student with a principal or assistant principal who will assume responsibility for dealing with any administrative needs associated with the issue.

In order to enhance the capacity of the school to prevent, intervene, and respond effectively to bullying, the following resources will be made available to address the social emotional needs of the targets and aggressors.

- Referral to school based services
- Referral to outside agencies (available through school based professionals)
- Behavior Plans
- Social skills groups

#### **I. Identifying Staff Resources**

Any staff member who is at risk for being bullied will be referred to an appropriate administrator who will assess the issue(s) and if appropriate will provide the staff member support and strategies to deal with the event. The building administration may refer the staff member to outside agencies for more intensive services if appropriate.

#### **J. Students with Disabilities**

As required by [M.G.L. c. 71B, § 3](#), as amended by [Chapter 92 of the Acts of 2010](#), when an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of the student's disability, the Team will consider what should be included in the IEP to develop the skills needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing.

#### **K. Referral to Outside Services**

The Sharon Public School district frequently updates and annually reviews a district-wide Counseling Referral List composed of local and state agencies, as well as private therapists. Referrals to outside service providers are made when deemed necessary by the District.

## L. Definitions:

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from [M.G.L. c. 71, § 370](#), as noted below.

**Aggressor:** a student or a school staff member who engages in bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation behavior toward a student.

**Bullying:** As defined in Massachusetts General Law MGL, c. 71, § 370, “bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students or a member of school staff of a written, verbal or electronic expression – including cyberbullying or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

Bullying may occur in the following scenarios: student to student and staff to student. Protections are afforded to all students regardless of their legal status.

Acts of bullying, which include cyber-bullying, are explicitly prohibited:

- on school grounds;
- on property immediately adjacent to school grounds;
- at school-sponsored or school-related activities
- at functions or programs whether on or off school grounds;
- at school bus stops;
- on school buses or other vehicle owned, leased, or used by a school district or school; or,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school.

The Sharon Public Schools will take appropriate action when the conduct occurs at a location, activity, function, or program that is not school-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Sharon School district only if the act or acts in question:

- create a hostile environment at school for the target
- infringe on the rights of the target at school; and/or,
- materially, and substantially disrupt the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

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

**Gateway Behaviors:** Microaggressive behavior directed at a targeted child or group. Behaviors include (but are not limited to):

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| ● attacking the target’s reputation      | ● shaming                          |
| ● demanding friends exclude target       | ● snickering                       |
| ● eye-rolling                            | ● social exclusion and ostracizing |
| ● gossiping, starting rumors             | ● staring                          |
| ● name calling                           | ● swearing                         |
| ● preventing new friendships with target | ● teasing                          |
| ● secret whispering                      | ● threats (direct or subtle)       |
| ● giving target the silent treatment     | ● yelling                          |

**Hostile Environment:** As defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school

environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

**Relational Aggression:** a form of bullying intended to harm a target through deliberate manipulation of their social standing and relationships. Uses gateway behaviors to harm others.

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

**School Staff:** Includes, but is not limited to, teachers, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, substitute teachers, or instructional assistants (paraprofessionals).

**Target:** a student against whom bullying, cyber-bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated (the victim).

**Upstander:** a person of character who witnesses bullying behavior and, either speaks up for the target or, reports it in confidence to a trusted adult for follow-up.

## **Sexual Harassment and/or Discrimination**

([ACAB](#), [GBA](#), [JB](#))

By law, all institutions must adopt a separate harassment and/or discrimination policy that specifically addresses issues pertinent to sexual harassment and/or discrimination. Therefore, this policy is being communicated in accordance with the law, and with the intent of developing and maintaining a safe and trusting school environment that not only enhances each individual's sense of self-confidence and self-esteem, but that ensures that individuals who attend Sharon High School understand what sexual harassment and/or discrimination is, know how to identify it, and are aware of the protocol for reporting such behavior.

Per definition, sexual harassment and/or discrimination constitutes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive environment. It is defined by the victim (who may be a student or a member of the faculty/staff), and the definition covers a range of behaviors, including but not limited to: sexual insults and name-calling, gossip, jokes, intimidation by words or actions, offensive touching, and pressure for sexual activity. Sexual harassment and/or discrimination can also be subtle and ambiguous, or direct and overt, and it should be known that all genders, both young and old, could be victims.

Because sexual harassment and/or discrimination, like harassment and/or discrimination, is prohibited by both federal and state statutes, it should be understood that, like any form of harassment and/or discrimination, it will not be tolerated, and that any person found to be guilty of sexual harassment and/or discrimination will be subject to severe disciplinary consequences, as well as any applicable state or federal laws. Furthermore, in any case where there is the suspicion of the sexual abuse of an

individual under the age of eighteen, staff is required to report such incidents to the Massachusetts Department of Children & Families.

In light of the aforementioned, any student who feels that the student is a victim of sexual harassment and/or discrimination is encouraged to report the incident(s) to a trusted adult. The individual who has been provided with this information should immediately convey this information to an administrator, who will subsequently inform the alleged victim of the student's options, which include:

- Requesting that a counselor or administrator intervene on behalf of the alleged victim by addressing the incident(s) and/or offensive behavior(s) with the alleged harasser
- Filing an immediate and written grievance with the Principal (*mandatory for any complaint involving an adult as the alleged harasser, or an allegation that places a victim in physical or emotional danger*)

Regardless of the option that an alleged victim pursues, it should be reiterated that any complaints of sexual harassment and/or discrimination would be guarded with confidentiality.

If any steps taken by a counselor or administrator fail to resolve the issue, or if the alleged harassment and/or discrimination continues, or if there is any evidence of retaliation, the alleged victim and/or the individual communicating on behalf of the alleged victim should submit an immediate and written grievance to the Principal. Upon receipt of a written grievance, the Principal will inform all necessary parties, including the Superintendent and the appropriate parent(s)/guardian(s), that the student has received a written grievance, and that the student will begin a formal investigation into the alleged conduct.

During the Principal's investigation, due process and confidentiality rights will be honored. Upon completion of the investigation, the Principal will communicate the student's decision to the appropriate individual(s), and the student will also render the student's decision in writing. Where necessary and appropriate, disciplinary action will be imposed; it may include, but it is not limited to:

- Out-of-school suspension
- Referral to legal and/or court authorities
- Mandatory counseling and/or educational programming

## **Transportation**

### **Buses and Vans**

([EEAA](#), [EEAAE](#))

School buses and vans are used to transport students to and from school, as well as to and from co-curricular events and interscholastic athletic practices and/or competitions. In light of the fact that the safe operation of the bus/van and safety of the students on the bus/van is the primary concern of the driver, it is incumbent upon all students to conduct themselves in a way that does not distract the driver or jeopardize the safety of other passengers.

Sharon High School students using school bus or van transportation are expected to adhere to all of the school's expectations and guidelines for proper behavior, as well as those of the bus company. Students who do not, or students who compromise the safety and well-being of the driver and/or other passengers, will be subject to disciplinary consequences, and may be suspended from riding the school bus or van for a period of time deemed appropriate by the administration. All school buses are equipped with security cameras that record video and may also record audio. If warranted, recordings from security cameras may be used as part of disciplinary inquiries.

In all cases involving a student who has misbehaved on a school bus or van, the parent/guardian will be notified of the infraction, and the consequences will be communicated in writing.

It should be noted that there is a mandatory fee for students who elect to be transported to and from school on a school bus, and at no time may a student who is not registered with the school department ride the school bus to get to or from school without the expressed written consent of either the administration or a representative from the bus company.

Any student whose actions warrant a permanent removal from school bus and/or van transportation should know that the fee associated with riding the school bus is not refundable, and it will be incumbent upon a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) to arrange transportation for the student to and from school, co-curricular events and interscholastic athletic practices and/or competitions.

## **Late Buses**

([EEAA](#))

Due to the large number of students who participate in after-school activities and who access the school's available resources once the regular school day is over, arrangements have been made for late buses to make afternoon runs.

The late buses operate Monday and Wednesday, and the pickup at the high school is at approximately 3:45 p.m. next to the main entrance. Students who have elected to be transported to and from school by paying the mandatory fee do not need any special permission to ride; however, any student who has not paid the mandatory fee must be granted written permission by an administrator prior to being allowed to ride the late bus. This permission may only be granted three (3) times per month, and each time a request is made, \$5.00, as well as parent or guardian notification to the high school's main office, must accompany it.

Students who ride the bus daily should take note that late bus drop-offs are generally not at the usual pick-up or drop-off point. They are, however, in the general vicinity.

## **Cafeteria**

The cafeteria at Sharon High School is open for breakfast and for lunch on all school days. Breakfast is offered between 7:30 a.m. and 8:00 a.m., and lunch is offered between 10:47 a.m. and 12:32 p.m. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has made universal free breakfast and lunch available to all public

school students permanent. Students may bring their own breakfast and/or lunch, and are always allowed to purchase the food and beverage items that are available. Students may not order food for delivery (e.g., DoorDash) or leave campus for lunch. This is a safety issue. Any violations of this policy will result in disciplinary action.

In order to ensure that food service is efficient and that those eating may do so in a relaxed and social setting, all students are expected to adhere to the following rules and guidelines:

- There are no reserved seats and tables should be left clean
- Cutting others who are waiting in line is not allowed
- Food/drink must be consumed in the cafeteria or on the patio [when it is opened]: food is not to be taken from the cafeteria or consumed in any other areas of the building
- The throwing of food is strictly prohibited
- Personal conduct must be in accordance with the school's behavioral expectations

Any student observed violating any of these rules and guidelines will be subject to disciplinary consequences, including but not limited to, cleanup duty in the cafeteria, office detention, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension.

## **Dances**

Periodically throughout the year, Sharon High School will host student dances (with limited capacity) at locations either on or off of the school's campus. Like at all school-sponsored or school-related events and activities, students are expected to adhere to all aspects of the school's civic and social expectations, as well as to all components of the school's guidelines for student behavior.

Sharon High School students may bring guests to dances; however, they may not bring more than one guest, and the guest cannot be twenty-one (21) years of age or older. Prior to the dance, the school must have on record the guest's name, as well as contact information for the student's parent(s)/guardian(s). This information must be detailed on the Guest Contract for Dances and submitted to the administration prior to the dance, or the guest will not be admitted to the dance when the student shows up. The Guest Contract for Dances may be obtained in the main office, and it is the responsibility of the Sharon High School student bringing the guest to communicate the school's expectations and guidelines to them before arriving at the dance.

Students and their guests are required to arrive at any scheduled dance no later than 30 minutes after the publicized start. Those who fail to arrive on time will not be admitted to the dance, and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted immediately to inform them of this fact. Also, once a student and/or guest decides to leave the dance, the student may not return to the dance.

Once at the dance, any student or guest who refuses to comply with Sharon High School's civic and social expectations, or who violates Sharon High School's guidelines for student behavior will be required to leave the dance immediately. In the interest of safety, the administration is authorized to conduct breathalyzer tests (if necessary) in accordance with any approved School Committee policy and/or protocol. Separately but on a related note, if any exhibited behavior or condition of a student

warrants administrative intervention, then that student may be placed in the immediate custody of the administration and/or local police until a parent/guardian can be notified. Additionally, in the case of a Sharon High School student who does not adhere to the school's expectations or rules, it should be known that the student is subject to additional disciplinary consequences upon returning to school, including: revocation of privileges, social suspension, office detention, in or out-of-school suspension, and/or expulsion.

With regard to proms, the following guidelines/rules have also been established:

- Students and their guests who plan on attending the Prom must be transported by district-provided bus to and from the designated host site; all buses will leave from (and return to) the school at a pre-determined and communicated time

All classes have set aside funds that can be used to offset some of the related expenses of these events. Students wishing to access these funds may do so confidentially and privately by approaching or contacting a member of the administration.

### **Bulletin Boards and Display Cases**

Throughout the building, there are bulletin boards and display cases that may be used to promote school-related events, raise awareness of club activities or athletic competitions, or showcase and recognize student work and accomplishments. Students are required to obtain verbal approval from an administrator, or teacher/advisor/coach, before placing anything on a bulletin board or in a display case.

At no time should there be anything posted on the interior or exterior walls or windows of the school without the prior consent of an administrator. In order to ensure compliance with local fire codes and ordinances, anything that has not received prior approval will be removed.

### **Library**

The library is open each day until 3:00 p.m. It houses, among other things, numerous books, reference materials, periodicals, and computers and is used regularly by faculty and students. All members of the Sharon High School community are encouraged to take advantage of the space, as well as the available resources, to enhance the learning experience, conduct any necessary research, and improve study skills.

During the school day, students wishing to use the library unaccompanied by a member of the faculty/staff may do so by completing a SmartPass. Upon arrival, the student must sign in at the circulation desk.

When a student is using the library, the student must be attentive to the fact that the library is intended to be a place of learning where students and faculty/staff can complete work. It is expected that all visitors to the library will respect the environment and the need of others to conduct research and/or study. Any failure to do so will be reason for an individual's removal from the library. The

student will then also be subject to any appropriate disciplinary consequences, including the possible loss of library privileges.

Books from the general collection may be checked out for a period of two weeks. Students are expected to return all borrowed materials within the allotted time frame. Students are financially responsible for any lost or damaged materials.

## **Lockers**

There are a limited number of lockers available for student use. If a student wants to use a locker, they must request one from the administration. Requests can be made through [this Google Form](#). Students may not change their requested locker until the start of a new school year. Students should make sure that their lockers are secure at all times because the school is not responsible for lost or stolen property.

Lockers are also available in the changing areas associated with the physical education and interscholastic athletic program. Students participating in physical education classes or in athletics are strongly encouraged to use a locker. Students will also need to request a gym locker and a lock will be provided. Students may ***not*** use their own locks on any lockers in the building as it poses a safety issue.

Lockers and locks are the property of the school, and the administration reserves the right to search student lockers when reasonable cause exists. At the conclusion of each school year, any items left in a hallway or changing area locker will be discarded or donated.

## **Lost and Found**

All items found, regardless of their value, should be turned into the main office. Students who lose something should notify the main office as soon as possible. If the item is eventually found, it will be returned to the student as soon as possible, and students who have lost something may at any time inquire about the status of the lost item.

Students are encouraged to label their personal belongings and to keep the serial numbers and receipts of items of significant monetary value at home. Since the school is not responsible for lost or stolen property, students should make every effort to leave items of significant value at home. Items found that are not claimed by the end of the school year will be discarded or donated.

## **Textbooks**

Each school year, students are loaned textbooks for the classes in which they are enrolled, unless there is no prescribed textbook. All students are expected to use the textbooks that they are loaned in a responsible manner, and in a way that ensures that their learning experience is enhanced. As a valuable resource to complement the curricular content covered in each course, the textbook can be a very useful tool.

Because textbooks are the property of the school and are loaned to pupils, all textbooks must be returned in an acceptable condition, or the student will be held financially responsible. Teachers are required to keep a record of the exact book that a student was loaned, and at the conclusion of a course, the same book must be returned. Students who do not return the book that was loaned to them are obligated to pay for the missing book. It should be noted that until restitution is made, participation in commencement exercises may be denied.

Parents of current students who are interested in borrowing one or more textbooks (in any subject area) during the summer months may do so by contacting the Main Office prior to the conclusion of the school year. Before one or more textbooks are loaned, a check covering the costs of the requested textbook(s) must be submitted to the Main Office. Assuming the books are returned by a prescribed deadline prior to the new school year, the check will not be cashed and it will be returned upon receipt of the borrowed textbook(s). Refunds will be predicated on the textbook(s) being returned in the condition in which the textbook(s) was/were issued.

## **Student Resources and Services**

### **School Counseling**

All students are assigned a school counselor in Grade 9. You may request to see your school counselor by leaving a note with the school counseling department secretary, requesting an appointment by contacting their counselor through email, Schoology, or SmartPass. Students may not go to the school counseling office during school hours without a pass from a counselor.

Counseling services are designed to serve students' needs in preparation of their academic schedules, long-range school programs, vocational or college planning, course adjustment, and personal matters. Group counseling is also available.

Students who have a disability and may require accommodations to access any aspect of daily school activities may be eligible for a Section 504 plan. Parents or guardians may request a 504 eligibility determination meeting through their school counselor.

### **School Adjustment Counselor**

The school adjustment counselor provides:

**Counseling and structured lessons** designed to help students who require specific, additional support to attain coping skills and build competencies. They work with individuals and small affinity groups to address targeted issues interfering with academic growth and achievement.

**Community support integration:** Based on student and school community need, the adjustment counselor partners with local and state agencies, courts, and therapeutic supports to provide resources and assistance to students and their families requiring out-of-school support.

**Responsive services:** Adjustment counselors provides support and interventions for vulnerable students and families in need or crisis. They work with community service providers to ensure safety and well-being is at the heart of all decisions affecting the student.

### **Health Services and Records**

The School Nurse is available to discuss any health concerns., large or small. She serves as a resource for students and parents/guardians in preventing or identifying health-related problems. She also collaborates with students, caregivers, parents and staff to see that health needs are met with minimal interference in the educational process. The School Nurse makes referrals to other health care providers as appropriate.

Individual health records are kept in a locked file cabinet in the nurse's office. Medical information that the nurse feels is necessary for safety (e.g. anaphylactic allergies to insect stings or foods, asthma, diabetes, etc.) will be shared with staff. A list is distributed to teachers, specialists, and the main office and is kept confidentially in the classroom for substitutes. If you have questions or concerns about sharing any information, please contact the school nurse.

### **Medications**

([JLCD](#))

It is expected that if you are on medication, you will take your required dose at home before and/or after school hours. In cases where it is absolutely necessary for you to take medicine during the school day, you should observe the following procedures as set forth by the School Committee policy and state regulations:

1. Medication may not be carried in school. Exceptions include epi-pens, inhalers (for students w/asthma or respiratory diseases), and enzyme supplements (for students w/cystic fibrosis). Glucose monitoring tests and insulin delivery systems may also be carried (by students w/diabetes). In all cases, the required doctor's order and parent/guardian permission must be on file in the nurse's office.
2. All other medications must be kept in the nurse's office and be dispensed by the nurse. Acetaminophen (Tylenol) and Ibuprofen (Advil) are available from the nurse if a signed parent/guardian permission form is on file.
3. Any other medications require a doctor's order and parent/guardian permission. Forms are available in the nurse's office.
4. Medication must come in a prescription-labeled container or original packaging.
5. Orders and permissions for medication must be renewed each school year.

A student possessing or using prescription or over-the-counter drugs, medicines, or controlled substances on school premises for the treatment of an existing medical condition will not be considered in violation of the substance abuse policy. However, the use or possession of such prescription and over-the-counter drugs must be in accordance with the Sharon School Department Medication Policy.

### **Immunizations and Assessments**

([JLCB](#))

Health laws for attendance require certain immunizations in order to attend school. The nurse oversees the immunization records and health assessments. Students should consult her if they have any questions in these matters, and any student with an incomplete immunization record may be excluded from school.

All Grade 10 students must have a Physical Examination done by their primary care provider. Exams for camp or sports may be used if done within the same calendar year. Any student without a Physical Examination on file will be scheduled for an examination by the School Physician.

### **Contagious Disease Notification**

[JLCC---Communicable-Diseases.pdf](#)

Parents/caregivers must contact the school nurse if their child has been diagnosed with ANY contagious disease. This information protects staff and students at risk and helps control the spread of the disease.

### **Illness, Injuries, and Accidents Occurring in School**

- Students must report to the Health Office if an illness, injury, or accident occurs during school.
- The nurse will call a parent or caregiver if a student needs to be dismissed for these reasons.
- In emergencies, a student may be transported to the nearest hospital by ambulance.

### **Immunization**

[JLCB---Immunization-of-Students SC approval 9.22.21.pdf](#)

- All immunizations must be current as Massachusetts General Law specifies.
- The nurse will notify the parent(s)/caregiver(s) of the date when documentation of immunizations is due.
- Students without the proper documentation will be excluded from school per state law.
- The [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#) requires all children six months of age or older attending Massachusetts child care, preschool, kindergarten, K-12, and colleges and universities to receive influenza immunization. Send documentation to the school nurse.

### **New Students**

- All new students must have the necessary immunizations and a current physical exam.
- Students transferring from out of state/country have four (4) months to provide a recent physical exam.

### **Required Physicals**

[JLCA---Physical-Examination-of-Students.pdf](#)

- All students transferring to Sharon Public Schools must submit a physical dated six months before or within five months after entry.
- Any student who has not submitted a physical by February 1 will be excluded from school.
- Students participating in interscholastic sports must have documentation of an up-to-date physical exam on file in the health room.

## **Health Screenings**

- According to Massachusetts general laws, all students must have a vision, hearing, body mass index (BMI), postural screenings, and Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) at certain grade levels in Sharon Middle School. Parents/Caregivers may opt out of any screening.
- If there is any reason a student should not participate, parent(s)/caregiver(s) must notify the school nurse in writing. Please call the school nurse if you have any questions regarding health issues.

## **COVID Protocols**

The Sharon Public Schools is following the CDC guidelines and recommendations that have been updated March 1, 2024. A full list of recommendations is available with this [LINK](#).

Staff/Students that test positive are able to return to work or school after being fever free for 24 hours or if no fever is present and illness symptoms have lessened or are improving. We ask that people consider wearing a mask for an additional 5 days at school upon their return after being fever free for 24 hours. For those that retest after 5 days and are NEGATIVE, a mask is not requested!

## **Compliance Information**

Sharon High School makes every effort to ensure that its policies and procedures are aligned with state and federal statutes. Outlined on the ensuing pages are summaries of some of the more notable laws that students, as well as their parents or guardians, should be aware of and may want to familiarize themselves with. At any time, additional information relative to these statutes can be ascertained at the main office.

## **Equal Access Act of 1984**

Sharon Public Schools offers educational and recreational opportunities for all students both during and after the traditional school day. All students receiving special education, regardless of placement, shall have an equal opportunity to participate in and, if appropriate, receive credit for the vocational, supportive, or remedial services that may be available as part of the general education program as well as the non-academic and extracurricular programs of the school.

Programs, services, and activities include, but are not limited to: art and music; vocational education, industrial arts, and consumer and homemaking education; work study and employment opportunities; counseling services available at all levels in the district; health services; transportation; recess and physical education, including adapted physical education; athletics and recreational activities; school-sponsored groups or clubs; and meals.

## **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. This statute ensures that individuals are not excluded from participation in programs or activities receiving federal funds (or the benefits of) on account of their membership in one of these protected categories (42 USC S2000d). This statute has

been interpreted to prohibit the denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

### **Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides that no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX requires that schools adopt and publish a policy against sex discrimination and have a grievance procedure through which students can complain of alleged sex discrimination, including sexual harassment. The Title IX Officer is Ellen Whittemore, Assistant Superintendent for Administration & Finance. State law requires Massachusetts's employers to have a policy against sexual harassment. ([M.G.L. Ch. 151B, S3A](#))

### **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973**

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall solely by reason of the student's disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. The regulations implementing Section 504 require that public schools provide a free and appropriate public education to each qualified handicapped person who is in the recipient's jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's handicap. ([34 CFR 104.33](#))

### **American with Disabilities Act of 1990**

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

### **Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974**

The Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 prohibits states from denying equal educational opportunities to an individual based on certain protected classifications including national origin. It specifically prohibits denying equal educational opportunities by failing to take appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in its instructional programs. (20 USC S1203(f))

### **Mass. General Laws Ch. 76, Section 5 (Chapter 622)**

This state law provides that "no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of each public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation."

### **Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965**

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards. Staff should know that special education students are not deemed ineligible for Title I services because they receive special education services. Also, school districts must ensure that Title I funds are not being misused.

### **McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act**

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires that school districts immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records or proof of residency. Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing.

### **Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment**

This amendment is intended to protect the rights of parents and students by ensuring that schools make instructional materials available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with a U.S. Department of Education survey, analysis, or evaluation in which a student participates. Schools must obtain written parental consent prior to students being required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals income, political affiliations, sex behavior and attitudes, mental and psychological problems, illegal, anti-social, or self-incriminating behavior, religious practices, beliefs, or affiliations, legally recognized, privileged, or analogous relationships, or critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

The [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act \(FERPA\)](#) protects the privacy of a student's education records maintained by a school and gives parents and "eligible" students certain rights with respect to these records, including the right to inspect and review them, and to request that the school correct any inaccurate or misleading information. Schools may, however, disclose without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, and date/place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance to various parties. Schools must inform parents and "eligible" students annually about "directory" information and allow them a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose this kind of information about the student.

With regard to non-custodial parents and a child's education records, non-custodial parents are eligible to obtain access to their children's student records unless the school or district has been given documentation that:

- The parent has been denied legal custody or has been ordered to supervised visitations, based on a threat to the safety of the student and the threat is specifically noted in the order pertaining to custody or supervised visitation
- The parent has been denied visitation
- The parent's access to the student has been restricted by a temporary or permanent protective order, unless the protective order (or any subsequent order modifying the protective order) specifically allows access to the information contained in the student record

- There is an order of a probate and family court judge, which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

### Sharon High School Accreditation Statement

Sharon High School is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, Inc., a non-governmental, nationally recognized organization whose affiliated institutions include elementary schools through collegiate institutions offering postgraduate instruction.

Accreditation of an institution by the New England Association indicates that it meets or exceeds criteria for the assessment of institutional quality periodically applied through a peer group review process. An accredited school or college is one which has available the necessary resources to achieve its stated purposes through appropriate educational programs, is substantially doing so, and gives reasonable evidence that it will continue to do so in the foreseeable future. Institutional integrity is also addressed through accreditation.

Accreditation by the New England Association is not partial but applies to the institution as a whole. As such, it is not a guarantee of the quality of every course or program offered, or the competence of individual graduates. Rather, it provides reasonable assurance about the quality of opportunities available to students who attend the institution.

Inquiries regarding the status of an institution's accreditation by the New England Association should be directed to the administrative staff of the school or college. Individuals may also contact the Association:

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES  
209 BURLINGTON ROAD  
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730-1433  
617-271-0022  
[www.neasc.org](http://www.neasc.org)

Sharon High School was last visited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges in the spring of 2018. A summative copy of the visiting team's report is available at the high school.

**Sharon Public Schools  
School/Community Reporting Form**

**Directions:** The Sharon Public Schools is committed to providing a safe environment to all members of our community. Despite our best intentions, incidents between students do occur at times. If you wish to report a disturbing incident between two or more students, complete this form and return it to the Principal at the student's school. **If this incident represents an immediate danger, please report it to the police or call the school principal immediately.** This form can be completed anonymously by omitting the reporter's name. Every reported act of bullying will be investigated. Parents of aggressors and targets will be contacted in cases of confirmed bullying. Administration may also make the decision to contact the police as the investigation proceeds.

*(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report. You may also call in to the school number and use extension HELP (or 4357).*

**Check whether you are the:** **Target of the behavior**  
**Reporter, not the target**

**Name Of Reporter/Person Filing the Report:** \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (optional) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

I am a:    Student                  Parent/guardian                  Staff Member  
                 Administrator                  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Name of student target:** \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

School:    Cottage                  East                  Heights                  Middle                  High

**Name(s) of alleged aggressor(s) (If known):** \_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_ Grade: \_\_\_\_

School:    Cottage                  East                  Heights                  Middle                  High

**Name(s) of witness(es) (if known):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Where did the incident(s) happen (choose all that apply)?**

- |                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| On school property              | Online/via technology          |
| Via text messaging              | On a school bus                |
| On the way to/from school       | At a school-sponsored activity |
| At an event off school property | Other: _____                   |

**In your opinion, what best describes what happened (Choose all that apply.):**

- |                   |                        |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Teasing           | Threat/Property Damage |
| Stalking          | Theft/Property Damage  |
| Social exclusion  | Intimidation           |
| Physical violence | Public humiliation     |
| Retaliation       | Other: _____           |

**In your opinion, did the incident include any of the following (Choose all that apply.):**

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Race, color, ethnicity or national origin | Religion              |
| Sexual Orientation                        | Age                   |
| Disability                                | Gender discrimination |
| Other: _____                              |                       |

**In your opinion, was there an imbalance of power that led to this incident?**

- |                         |               |             |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Older vs. younger child | Social Status | Other _____ |
|-------------------------|---------------|-------------|

**What did the alleged aggressor(s) say or do? (Include dates. Attach a separate sheet if necessary)**

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## Appendix A: District Policies and State Laws

### Sharon [School Committee](#)

<a href="#">JB Equal Educational Opportunities Approved 11.02.22.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JBB Educational Equity Approved 03.30.22.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JC---Attendance-Areas.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JCA---Assignment-of-Students-to-Schools.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JEB Entrance Age Approved 7.27.23.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JF---School-Admissions.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFA---Residency-Policy-Procedure.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFA-E-1---Occupancy-Statement-Affidavit.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFA-E-2---Residency-Statement-Affidavit.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFA-E-3---Caregiver-Affidavit.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFAAA---New-Resident-Students.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFAB---Non-Resident-Student-Policy.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFABA---Student-Tuition-for-Temporary-Residents.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFABB---Exchange-Students.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFABD-Homeless Students Enrollment Rights and Services Revised 5.13.21.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFABE-Educational Opportunities for Military Children - Adopted 5.13.21.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFABF-Educational Opportunities for Children in Foster Care Adopted 5.13.21.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFBB---School-Choice.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFC---Transfers-and-Withdrawals.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFC-1---Student-Dropouts.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFCB---Students-Who-Move-During-the-School-Year.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JFF DIBA - Student Activity Accounts Approved 11.04.20.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JH---Student Absences and Excuses Policy.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JI---Student-Rights-and-Responsibilities.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JIB---Student-Involvement-in-Decision-Making-Student-Advisory-Committee.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JIBA---Student-Government.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICA---Student-Dress-Code.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICE---Student-Publications.pdf</a>

<a href="#">JICF---Gang-Activity-Secret-Societies.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICFA---Prohibition-of-Hazing.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICFB Anti-Bullying Approved 1.12.22.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICH---Alcohol Tobacco and Drug Use by Students March 2016-2.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICJ---Electronic-Devices.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JICJB---Student-Use-of-Social-Media.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JIE---Students-Who-Are-Married-Pregnant-and-or-New-Parents.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JIH---Questioning-and-Searches.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJ---ExtraCurricular-Activities.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJA---Student-Organizations.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJB---Student-Social-Events.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJC---Student-Performances.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJE---Student-Fund-Raising-Activities.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJHA---Co-Curricular-Transportation-Policy.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJHA-E-1---Transport-by-Parents-Guardians.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJHA-E-2---Self-Transport-by-Licensed-Students.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJIB---Interscholastic-Athletics.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JJIF---Concussions-and-Concussion-Recovery.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JK---Student-Discipline.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JKA---Corporal-Punishment.pdf</a>
<a href="#">KAA---Physical-Restraint---Seclusion-and-Time-Out.pdf</a>
<a href="#">KAA-E-1---603-CMR-46-00-Prevention-of-Physical-Restraint-and-Requirements-if-Used.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JKD---Student-Suspension-Policy.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JL---Student-Welfare.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JLC---Student-Health-Services-and-Requirements.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JLCA---Physical-Examination-of-Students.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JLCB---Immunization-of-Students SC approval 9.22.21.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JLCC---Communicable-Diseases.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JLCD---Administering-Medications-to-Students.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JLCDA---Condom-Policy.pdf</a>

<a href="#">JLD---Guidance-Program.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JQ---Student-Fees-Fines-and-Charges.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JRA---Student-Records.pdf</a>
<a href="#">JRA-R---Student-Records.pdf</a>