



# ***A Handbook for Students And Their Families 2024-2025***

This publication summarizes many laws, policies, regulations, and practices that are important to Plymouth Public Schools. It is not intended to be a complete directory of all the laws and policies relating to staff. Federal and state laws, PPS policies, regulations, and practices at the system-wide and school building levels are subject to change.

The Plymouth Public Schools does not tolerate behavior or actions that demean an individual's dignity or interfere with their ability to learn or work. Furthermore, Plymouth Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination, bias-based intimidation, threat, retaliation, or harassment against any individuals or groups on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age. This prohibition includes all protected groups. Intimidation, threat, retaliation, or harassment include the creation and or sustaining of a pervasive atmosphere that interferes or prohibits an individual from engaging or benefitting from full access to all educational programs, activities, or working environments.

***Plymouth Public Schools reserves the right to interpret, amend, or revoke any portion of this handbook at any time, with or without notice.***

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## Message from the School Administration and the School Committee

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Students:

The Administrators, Teachers, and Staff of the Plymouth Public Schools are pleased to welcome you. We are looking forward to working with you, our students, and their families. Our goal is to help each student reach the high standards that have been established by our schools.

This **Handbook for Students and Their Families** will aid our students and their families as we work together to provide high-quality educational programs for all of our students. The handbook contains important information about our schools and can serve as a valuable reference for you. Please read the handbook and save it. You will want to use it for reference throughout the school year.

The **Handbook for Students and Their Families** is important because:

It explains many of the policies and procedures that affect students.

- **The Code of Conduct** explains how students should behave toward their teachers and their classmates and what happens when students do not meet these expectations.
- It describes the many ways that families can support their child's learning both at school and at home.
  - It describes the rights of students and their families, for example, the right to be treated equally regardless of race or disability, and the right to privacy regarding student records and it also advises parents and students about what to do if they think their rights have been violated.
- It gives helpful information on many topics including school cancellation, student transportation, attendance procedures, health services, and much more.
- It has helpful tools such as the Directory of the Plymouth Public Schools (inside front cover), a checklist for solving problems, educational resources for students and families, and the school year calendar (inside back cover).

**All of our policies and procedures have only one goal**, which is to help every student to achieve high academic standards in a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment. Together, we can achieve that goal.

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusive Practices**

Plymouth Public Schools is committed to fostering a learning environment that embraces and celebrates the rich tapestry of diversity among our students, staff, families, and community members. Our strategic plan is founded upon the principles of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging, ensuring that every individual feels valued, respected, and empowered to reach their full potential.

Diversity within our school district encompasses the myriad of identities, experiences, backgrounds, cultures, and perspectives that make up our community. We recognize and honor the unique attributes and contributions of each person, understanding that diversity enriches the educational experience and prepares our students to thrive in a global society.

Equity is at the forefront of our mission, as we strive to ensure equitable access to opportunities, resources, and support for all. We are committed to creating a level playing field where every student can succeed regardless of their socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, gender, ability, or any other characteristic.

Inclusion is the cornerstone of our vision, as we aspire to create an inclusive environment where every individual feels a sense of belonging, acceptance, and support. We actively cultivate a culture of belonging by fostering respectful dialogue, promoting empathy and understanding, and embracing differences as strengths.

Our core values guide our actions as we work towards our strategic focus areas and initiatives. Through collaboration with stakeholders, we will implement evidence-based practices and policies that promote diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging throughout our school district.

### **The Mission Statement**

The Mission Statement explains who we are and highlights our fundamental reason for existing. When others read the mission statement, they should understand what our core role is as a district. The mission creates fundamental questions for all organizations to ask:

- What is it that we do as a school district?
- Whom does the district serve?
- What are the core values of our school community?
- What are the strengths and challenges in our district?

The Strategic Planning Committee reviewed all collected data from parents, community, and staff and then engaged in a great deal of conversation regarding the aforementioned questions and developed the following mission statement:

### **The Vision Statement**

A Vision Statement represents an aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action. It is intended to be our compass – our North Star. The vision statement should be a brief, but concise statement that clearly exemplifies the district's vision for those it serves.

## **Core Beliefs**

We believe that every student should become a (an):

- Effective Communicator
- Independent Thinker
- Problem Solver
- Responsible Citizen
- Self-Directed, Life-Long Learner
- Valuable Collaborator

## **Cancellation of Schools**

**Please do not call the Police Department, Fire Department, School Department, or radio/television stations.**

**“No School, All Schools, All Day” announcements are made on:**

- Television Stations: Channels 4, 5, 7, and 25 will be notified no later than 6:00 A.M.
- Automated Telephone Notification Service (if operational)
- District website – [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us)
- Official District Social Media Sites([www.facebook.com/PlymouthPublicSchoolsMA](https://www.facebook.com/PlymouthPublicSchoolsMA); Twitter @PlymouthSch and Instagram @plymouthpublicschools)

## **Other “No School” announcements**

In some instances, cancellations may be by:

- The school (s) within the school system
- Grade(s) within the school system
- Half-day (or another part-time period)

The announcements for these situations will specifically state the school(s) and/or grade(s), and the type of cancellation.

## **Delayed Opening**

- The school(s) of the school system so affected will be specifically noted.
- The delay will be specifically stated.
- School buses will be delayed in accordance with the delayed opening (for a two-hour delayed opening, the buses will pick up the students two hours later than the normal pick-up time).
- When there is a delayed opening, the morning Preschool session shall be canceled for that day.
- Dismissals on a delayed opening day will be at the regularly scheduled times. During the delay to the delayed opening day, the weather and other conditions will be re-examined to determine if school should be in session on that day. Parents/guardians should continue to monitor appropriate for a possible change to the closing of schools for the day.

## **Parents/Guardians, Please Note**

All decisions relative to this issue are made with the safety and well-being of all students foremost in our minds. However, due to the size and geographical differences of the area covered by our school system, you may feel that conditions in your area are not sufficiently safe to send your child to school on the day in question. Therefore, on days of questionable weather conditions when school is in session, parents/guardians are advised to use their discretion as to whether or not to send their children to school on that day (this would be considered an unexcused absence).

## ***Family-School Partnership***

Family involvement plays a key role in helping students succeed in school and in building a sense of pride in the school community. The Plymouth Public Schools (PPS) is committed to building strong partnerships among home, school, and community.

**Here are some examples of activities that schools offer to engage families in student learning:**

- individual parent-teacher conferences
- special events, such as Math and Literacy Nights
- opportunities to volunteer in classrooms, fundraising activities, and fun events
- opportunities to attend and participate in School Council and other Parent School Organizations

## ***School Councils***

At each public elementary, secondary, and independent vocational school within the district there shall be a school council consisting of the school principal, who shall co-chair the council; parents of students attending the school who shall be selected by the parents of students attending such school who will be chosen in elections held by the local recognized parent-teacher organization under the direction of the principal.

Parents shall have parity with professional personnel on the school councils; teachers who shall be selected by the teachers in such a school; other persons, not parents or teachers of students at the school, and for schools containing any of the grades nine to twelve, at least one such student; provided, however, that not more than fifty percent of the council shall be non-school members.

## ***The Responsibility of The School Council Is to Assist the Principal In:***

- Adopting educational goals for the school that are consistent with local educational policies and statewide student performance standards
- Identifying the educational needs of students attending the school
- Reviewing the annual school building budget
- Formulating a school improvement plan

It is expected that for any school that contains grades nine through twelve, the Council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect for the following school year.

## ***Other Groups for Parents***

In addition to the School Council, Plymouth Public Schools has groups for parents whose children have disabilities (Special Needs Parent Advisory Council) and whose children receive Title I services. In addition, many of our schools have a PTA or HSA. These groups provide valuable resources and opportunities for children and families. We urge parents to become involved in both district-wide and school-based organizations. Contact your school and/or visit [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us) for information.



***Please note: Reference in this handbook to the principal refers to the principal and/or his/her designee except in cases where specific statutes state otherwise.***

## ***Registration Process***

Every student must have a completed Student Registration form to attend school along with:

- 1) MA Department of Public Health regulations requires students to be vaccinated against polio, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, and varicella. The MA

Department of Public Health updates and distributes every year the most current childhood immunization recommendations and school requirements. (See MA Department of Public Health website [http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/imm/guidelines\\_sched/chiimm.pdf](http://www.mass.gov/dph/cdc/epii/imm/guidelines_sched/chiimm.pdf).) The school nurse will review your student's immunizations and health history at the time of registration. These immunizations are required for entry unless the parent/guardian wishes to seek an exemption because of medical or religious reasons.

- 2) Proof of age for the student. A birth certificate or other similar document is sufficient.
- 3) Residency Verification
- 4) Contact information for a previous non-Plymouth Public School attended (if applicable).
- 5) Please see the Student Registration page on the Plymouth Public Schools website, [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us), for all other necessary forms and enrollment information
- 6) Students should be registered at their neighborhood school as early as possible. Most schools will hold informational meetings to provide information and guided tours of the school building. Please contact your neighborhood school for more information

<p>Families registering for the Plymouth Public Schools or submitting a change of address must demonstrate Plymouth residency by presenting one document from each of three categories in the following table: <b>All applicants must present at least one document from <u>each</u> column (A, B, and C) below. No document may be used twice as verification.</b></p>		
A. Verification of Plymouth Address & School District	B. Verification of Current Residency at This Address	C. Verification of Identity
<p><b><i>Dated within the past 60 days:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from an approved government agency</li> <li>• Payroll Stub</li> <li>• Bank or credit card statement</li> <li>• Copy of Deed <b><u>OR</u></b> record of the most recent mortgage payment.</li> <li>• Copy of Lease <b><u>AND</u></b> record of most recent rent payment.</li> <li>• A legal affidavit from the property owner affirming tenancy <b><u>AND</u></b> record of most recent rent payment.</li> <li>• Section 8 Agreement</li> </ul>	<p><b>A utility bill or work order dated within the past 60 days, including:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas bill</li> <li>• Oil bill</li> <li>• Electric bill</li> <li>• Home telephone bill</li> <li>• Cable bill</li> </ul>	<p>Valid driver's license</p> <p>Current vehicle registration</p> <p>Valid Massachusetts photo identification card</p> <p>Valid passport</p> <p><b><i>Dated within the past year:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• W-2 Form</li> <li>• Excise (vehicle tax bill)</li> <li>• Property tax bill</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Dated within the past 60 days:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Letter from an approved government agency</li> <li>• Payroll stub</li> <li>• Bank or credit card statement</li> </ul>

### **A Problem-Solving Checklist**

If you have a school-related problem, we want to help solve it. For the fastest resolution to your problem, please call the individuals or offices *in the order listed below*.

### **Issues Affecting Your Child's Learning**

- Teacher(s)
- Guidance Counselor/Adjustment Counselor/School Psychologist
- School Administrator(s) or Curriculum Coordinator(s)
- Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction

### **General School Issues**

School Administrator(s)  
Assistant Superintendent for Administration and Instruction  
Superintendent/Designee

### **Discipline/Safety**

Teacher  
School Administrator(s)  
Superintendent/Designee

### **Transportation**

Routing or location of bus stops - First Student Bus Company at 508-830-4144 or  
Business Manager at 508-830-4300  
Conduct on board buses – School Administrator(s)  
Transportation/Parking Fees – School Secretary  
Special Education Transportation – Special Education Office 508-830-4343

### **Special Education Issues**

Teacher/Special Educator  
School Team Chairperson/Department Head  
Elementary Department Head, 508-830-4320  
Director of Special Education, 508-830-4343

### **Attendance**

Students who attend school regularly are more likely to have success in school and careers. Research supports the connection between regular attendance and a student's personal, social, and emotional wellness and academic success. When students are not present in school, they miss out on opportunities for social development and are often not able to make adequate academic progress; they may disengage from learning as they get further off-track and may even drop out of school.

Students and parents/guardians must abide by state laws (MGL Chapter 76 Section 2 <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/76-2.htm> ) and Plymouth Public Schools' requirements for school attendance. Massachusetts' compulsory school attendance law ([G.L. c. 76, § 1](#)) requires children between the ages of 6 and 16 to "attend a public day school in the town where the student resides or some other day school approved by the school committee...."

[General Laws chapter 76](#) outlines many aspects of compulsory attendance, including the responsibilities of parents/guardians and school committees.

#### **Parents/guardians must:**

- ensure that a child in their care attends school. [G.L. c. 76, §2](#).
- call the school at a designated number at a designated time as established by the school committee to report a child's absence and the reason for it. [G.L. c. 76, §§1A, 1B](#). Notifying the school (by phone or email) of your child's absence does not make it excused (see below for definitions of excused/unexcused absences).

\*Aspen is updated daily and parents are encouraged to check their student's attendance

#### **Schools will:**

- Notify parents/guardians of a child's absence if the school has not received notification of the absence from them
- Notify and make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent/guardian of a student who has at least 5 days in which the student has missed 2 or more periods unexcused in a school year or

who has missed 5 or more school days unexcused in a school year. The purpose of the meeting is to develop action steps for student attendance.

Massachusetts law requires every school committee to appoint one or more supervisors of attendance (SoA). [G.L. c. 76, §19](#). Massachusetts law specifies some of the duties of attendance supervisors. [G.L. c. 76, §20](#). Coordinating with school-based staff, the Plymouth Public School Supervisor of Attendance investigates attendance problems primarily outside the school environment. The supervisor works in the community, visits homes, and counsels students and their families. When necessary, the Supervisor of Attendance files and represents chronic cases in the Plymouth Juvenile Court.

SCHOOLS	DOORS OPEN FOR STUDENTS	SCHOOL DAY BEGINS	SCHOOL DAY ENDS	BEGIN DISMISSAL	END DISMISSAL	HALF-DAY DISMISSAL
High School 9-12	7:05	7:20	2:00	2:00	2:05	11:05
Middle 6-8	8:02	8:12	2:40	2:40	2:48	11:55
Elementary K-5	8:50	9:05	3:20	3:25	3:35	1:05
Preschool		9:15	11:45	AM Session		

### **Excused Absences**

#### **Excused absences may include:**

- an illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a signed physician’s note (parents/guardians have up to 5 days to send in a physician’s note)
- a death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- suspension from school
- court appearances
- school-sponsored field trips
- medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school
- religious holidays
- Juniors and seniors will be allowed three (3) documented college visits each year

### **What Is an Unexcused Absence?**

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. *This is not true.* Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a physician – within five (5) school days of the absence – verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- the student needed to babysit
- cutting class
- family vacation
- extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar
- attending driver’s education classes for road practice during the school day
- sports events and tournaments not scheduled, sanctioned, or governed by the MIAA (ie. Club Sports, Elite Tournament, College ID Camps)
- It is a student’s responsibility to see teachers personally to gather makeup work from absences of all types. The makeup work policy is located later in the handbook.

## ***Attendance Supervisor***

Coordinating with school-based staff, the Plymouth Public School Supervisor of Attendance investigates attendance problems primarily outside the school environment. The Supervisor works in the community, visits homes, and counsels students and their families. When necessary, the Supervisor of Attendance files and represents chronic cases in the Plymouth Juvenile Court.

## ***Responsibility for Personal Property/Electronic Devices***

Students are responsible for the care of all personal property. The use of any personal electronic device is not permitted during school hours. Electronic devices may include but are not limited to, CD or MP3 players, cameras, iPods, cell phones (including photos/videos and all other applications), or video games. Any disturbance (including distribution of media) caused by these devices could result in disciplinary action. School officials are not responsible for the loss or damage of such equipment. Due to safety concerns, laser pens are not permitted on buses or in school at any time and will result in confiscation and may result in further disciplinary action. Devices will only be returned to the parent/guardian. A teacher, coach, or administrator may authorize an exception to the above if the electronic device is to be used for educational purposes or during a bus ride to or from an event or field trip. The electronic device may be used only under the direct supervision of the staff member who authorizes its use. The school does not have insurance that would cover theft or loss of personal property. This statement is inclusive of personal materials brought into school, on school grounds, on the school bus, or school-related activities (e.g., field trips).

At the high school level, personal electronic devices may be in the possession of students during the school day. For educational purposes, a school staff member may allow usage of the electronic device in their classroom or instructional area at any time. The use of devices is allowed in certain common areas (i.e. cafeteria, halls, etc.). It is the students' responsibility to make themselves aware of where these areas exist within their building. Students need to remember that any disturbance (including distribution of media, cheating, inappropriate use of social media, etc.) caused by these devices could result in disciplinary action. School officials are not responsible for loss, theft, or damage to such equipment. Devices will only be returned to students on the first offense and the parent/guardian with any subsequent offenses. Graduating seniors will no longer have access to their Google Accounts after the date of their graduation. It is highly recommended that you create a new Google Account and transfer your files. Please see your guidance counselor if you need assistance.

## ***Care of School Property***

Students are responsible for the care of all school property (including lockers and school issued Chromebooks) issued and must pay for damaged or lost school property. Students must take extreme care with personal items/cash and are encouraged to leave expensive personal items and/or large amounts of money at home. The school will not assume liability in the event of such a loss.

## ***Field Trips***

Field trips are taken to enrich learning experiences. Students desiring to go on a field trip must supply written parent/guardian consent prior to the scheduled trip date and are subject to school rules and regulations while on the field trip. Students attending overnight field trips are subject to search of baggage and personal belongings.

## ***Food in Classrooms Policy***

The Plymouth Public Schools (PPS) recognizes the increasing prevalence of life-threatening allergies (LTA's) in students and the high percentage of students who are overweight in our schools as indicated in the district's *Annual Student Health Statistics (2007-2010)*. This policy intends to assure the safety of students with LTA's and to promote wellness and healthy eating habits in students during the school day. The school day is defined as the hours of the day that students attend school for their education program. This policy does not pertain to food brought in by students for personal consumption during established school snack times. Please see Plymouth Public Schools Policy, Food in Classrooms\*\*. If your child has food allergies, please be sure to notify your child's teacher and school nurse.

## **Food Services**

Plymouth Public Schools offers a daily lunch for all students in grades K-12. Students can purchase lunch daily or students have the option of purchasing lunches in advance at a reduced rate. For menu information and pricing, please refer to our website listed below. In addition, school lunch information can be found in our local newspapers. Some schools offer a breakfast program. Contact your school for availability. A student may be entitled to free or reduced-price lunches based on a family's income.

Applications are available throughout the school year at your school or <http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/FamilySupportResources/LunchProgram/tabid/463/Default.aspx>

## **Fundraising Activities**

The sponsor, including all parent organizations, must complete a "request for fundraising" form and submit the form to the building principal. The building principal and superintendent or his/her designee will approve or disapprove all fundraising requests. The School Committee will be notified of all fundraising activities approved by the building principal and superintendent or his/her designee.

It must be understood that no fundraising activity is to interfere with the educational instruction of the children. All activities are to be considered for their educational value and to be void of any commercial overtones. **NOTE: See Policy Fundraising Activities\*\*.**



**No Door-To-Door Sales or Solicitations Will Be Conducted by Any Students.**

## **Health Services**

Health services are provided by registered nurses who are assisted in some offices by health aides. All health services staff maintain certification in CPR and First Aid. A nurse leader supervises district-wide health office activities and ensures compliance with regulatory standards set by the Massachusetts Departments of Public Health (DPH) and Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). A school physician/consultant serves as an advisor to the health office staff. Our school nurses hold additional certification as a school nurse by the Department of Education.

### **Please help the school nurse care for your child by:**

- updating the phone numbers on your child's emergency card so the school can always reach you
- letting the nurse know if your child has any chronic or acute illnesses
- communicating with the nurse directly if medication, health needs change or if they have been exposed to a communicable disease
- letting the nurse know if there is an event at home or in the family that may impact your child at school such as the death of a beloved pet, serious illness, or death of a family member

### **Please keep your child home from school if:**

- he/she has vomiting or diarrhea
- he/she has a temperature of 100 degrees, or above
- strep infections of any kind, ringworm, conjunctivitis, or impetigo. These are all contagious infections and must be treated with medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school
- rash of unknown origin—may indicate many different things and should be checked by your healthcare provider
- pain should be taken seriously, especially in young children. Earaches, toothaches, and headaches should be evaluated
- not being fever-free for 24 hours without medication

If you have any questions, please call your school nurse and/or check with your healthcare provider. We invite you to visit School Health Services at [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us.com](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us.com) for more information and other health-related links.

## **Student Accident Insurance**

The School Department provides school-time Student Accident Insurance coverage for all students attending Plymouth Public Schools. Student Accident coverage compensates for covered accident expenses resulting from participation in school-supervised and sponsored activities. The School Department coverage also includes those students who are participating in extracurricular activities, interscholastic sports, and intramural athletic events. Parents/guardians may wish to consider purchasing additional 24/7 accident coverage available from the district's insurance vendor. Applications are available each school year at the Principal's Office in each building.

## **Health Insurance**

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts now requires all residents to have health insurance. If your child is without health insurance, Massachusetts has several plans that will provide uninsured children and families with affordable health care (restrictions may apply). If your child is without a healthcare provider, the school nurse can assist you. Please see your school nurse for more details

## **Illness and First Aid**

Assessment of student illness or injury occurring during school hours is a significant part of school health services. Care is provided as needed in the health office of each school building. The school will make every effort to reach the parent/guardian or emergency contact person named on the student's emergency card to notify them of any significant injuries or signs of illness that may require further observation, intervention, or follow-up with the student's health care provider. In the event of a medical emergency, local emergency medical services or an ambulance may be activated. If a student is taken to the hospital, a school employee will stay with the student until the parent/guardian arrives. Automated External Defibrillators (AED) are available in public areas of every school building and are accessible to the general public in the event of a cardiac emergency in the building when school is not in session. Please look for them when you visit your child's school. You may help save a life!

## **Screenings**

Screenings are conducted by health services staff according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health regulations. \* If a student fails a screening, a parent/guardian notification letter is sent home requesting follow-up by the student's health care provider. Screenings are typically conducted early in the school year or upon request. If you do not want your child to be screened for any or all mandatory screenings, please request it in writing and give it to your student's school nurse. A current physical exam must be on file in lieu of annual screenings.

Growth: Height and weight measurements are taken annually on students in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10. Body Mass Index (BMI) is calculated for each child as part of the screening process. Vision and Hearing: Performed annually on students in grades pre-K to 5 and in grades 7 and 10. Postural & Scoliosis: Performed annually on students in grades 5 through 9.

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) Screenings are done annually for students in grades 7 and 9. Parents/guardians/students can opt out of SBIRT Screenings.

## **Physical Exams**

- A physical exam is required upon entry for all students one year prior to school entry or within 30 days after school entry. An updated physical exam is required again in grades 3, 6, and 9.
- A current annual sports physical is required for participation in all school-sponsored athletic activities.

Please keep in mind that many health care providers need at least two weeks to copy records, particularly during the summer months. Athletic and routine physical exam forms are available in the nurse's office and online at [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us) in the School Health Services section.

## ***The Role of the School Nurse***

The role of the professional school nurse is to facilitate health and wellness, so each student has the opportunity for academic success. Responsibilities in this setting include the following:

### ***Development of an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP)***

Please talk with the school nurse if your student has a specialized medical need or diagnosis, which must be assessed, managed, and monitored during school hours such as asthma, a life-threatening allergy, diabetes, or seizure disorder.

The nurse will meet with the parent/guardian to review medical information, health care provider's orders, and current evidence-based practice. The IHCP is then reviewed and signed by the parent and physician (if necessary) and shared with appropriate school staff to ensure optimal integration of your child's health needs into the school setting.

### ***Medication Administration***

The school nurse will work with you and your child to ensure medications prescribed for administration during school hours are taken as directed. All prescription and over-the-counter medications (e.g., Tylenol, Advil, eye drops) are administered during school hours only by the registered nurse and when a current physician order and the parent/guardian consent are on file in the nurse's office. Medications are dispensed from the nurse's office only. There are, however, special situations defined by state law, such as a field trip when the school nurse can delegate a prescription medication to the student's teacher when the parent/guardian agrees and after a 1:1 training with the school nurse and teacher has taken place; when a student may carry and administer his/her own medication (self-administration) due to a specific medical need such as asthma, diabetes, cystic fibrosis, and life-threatening allergy. Self-administration may also be determined by the school nurse and parent for other medications in accordance with the district's medication policy.

#### ***For All Medications:***

The parent/guardian must bring all medications (no more than a 30-day supply) into the health office to discuss medication administration specifics and complete consent forms.

- Once the consents have been completed, replacement medication may be delivered by the parent/guardian or another responsible adult
- Do not send medications into school with your child
- Medications must be in the original labeled pharmacy container, not a plastic bag
- Always let the school nurse know if the doctor has added or changed medication or the amount of medication the child is taking

Please ask your school nurse about medication administration and our policies; for more details, visit <https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Domain/1910>.

### ***Communicable Disease Control***

According to Massachusetts state law, students must be properly immunized before they enter school. The Plymouth Public Schools require immunizations to be up to date for entry into school and up to date as per the Massachusetts Department of Public Health immunization standards. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping immunizations current and informing the school nurse when their child has received additional immunizations.

For a complete listing of immunization requirements for each grade, please ask your school nurse or visit: <https://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us/Page/719>. Monitoring of infections and other diseases are important functions of the school nurse. The school nurse works with parents, administrators, school staff, health care providers, local and regional Boards of Health, and other professionals to maintain a healthful environment. Upon recommendation by the school nurse to the building principal, students may be excluded from school to prevent transmission of the disease in the school if immunizations are not up to date or if a student has a communicable disease. For example, if there is a chickenpox outbreak at school and your child does not have documentation of having had either chickenpox or the chickenpox vaccine, your child will not be allowed to go to school for a length of time specified by the MA Department of Public Health.

## ***Concussions / Head Injuries***

Massachusetts passed concussion regulations in 2011, which mandate middle and high schools to have policies and procedures for the prevention, management, and return to academic and athletic activities for students who sustain a concussion. The purpose of these regulations is to facilitate students' recovery from a concussion and to prevent further injury that can occur if a student returns to academic and athletic activities before the concussion resolves. Medical evaluation and clearance are required for all students suspected of having a concussion prior to returning to academic or athletic activities. Students with concussions may require temporary academic accommodation. If your child is having difficulty in school following a concussion, contact your health care provider immediately, and inform your school nurse. For more details and to access forms related to concussions, visit [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us) and go to the School Health Services link, and then to Family Resources/Forms.

## ***Health Records***

An individual health record (paper and computerized) is maintained for each student throughout his/her school career. The record contains medical information submitted to the nurse, such as physical exams, immunization records, and health history completed by the parent/guardian when the student entered the school system. Screening and visits to the health office during school hours are recorded. Parents/guardians are asked to communicate student health concerns and medical reports to the school nurse. Access to this record is restricted to school health office staff and other school staff on a need-to-know basis only, as determined by the school nurse. Parents/guardians may have access to the health record upon request.

The health record is transferred with the academic record when the student moves to another school or district. Graduating seniors are given their health records at the time of graduation, or the parent/guardian may pick up the record. Unclaimed health records are maintained at the school for a maximum of seven years after the student leaves the system.

## ***Services for Pregnant Students***

A student's marital, maternal, or parental status shall not affect that student's rights and privileges to receive a public education or to take part in any extracurricular activity offered by the school. Pregnant students are encouraged to continue in school in all instances. The rights and privileges of the expectant mother to receive a public education shall not be affected. Nor shall the student's right to participate in any extracurricular activity offered by the school be affected unless the said activity is deemed hazardous to the health of the expectant mother or unborn child.

## ***Personal Dress/Appearance***

The primary responsibility for appropriate dress lies with the student and their parents or guardians, however Plymouth Public Schools encourages students to dress in an appropriate manner, which reflects professionalism, healthy habits and represents a school climate/culture of teaching and learning. Student dress, including footwear, should be safe and functional for the activities of the day, including but not limited to: academics, shop, physical education, field trips, and/or after-school activities.

### **Standards for appropriate dress are as follows:**

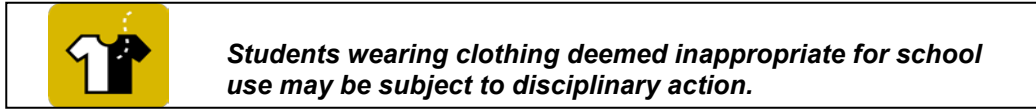
- Dress must not be destructive to school property (e.g., footwear that scratches, discolors, or marks the floor.) Obscene, profane, or demeaning language, pictures/images that are considered hostile, provocative, or antagonistic on clothing and/or jewelry are not to be worn. In addition, pictures, images, language, illegal substances or substances that are not appropriate for school are also not allowed.
- Hats, bandanas, sweatshirt hoods, and other headwear are typically not considered appropriate attire inside a school building. However, headwear that is for religious, medical, cultural, or ethnic reasons is allowable. The dress code shall not inhibit students from exhibiting hairstyles or headwear historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length and/or protective hairstyles.

- Coats and jackets designed for outside wear should not be worn in school buildings and should be placed in lockers, or student designated areas during the school day.

If a student is found in violation of the dress code the principal and/or designee are authorized to have students change their clothing and/or ask the student's parent to bring new clothes to school. School personnel are the authority regarding the standards for appropriate dress for school.

LEGAL REF.: Acts of 2022, Chapter 117 -

<https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2022/Chapter117> (M.G.L. 71:83)



## **Reporting Student Progress**

### ***Report Cards***

Report Cards are designed as a tool to communicate with parents and students. Report cards are issued twice per year for Grade K students; three times per year for Grades 1-5; and quarterly for students in grades 6-12. In grades K-5, student progress is measured by the student's ability to attain the standards set forth for the grade level in the Massachusetts Frameworks. The standards-based report card reports the students' academic performance, effort, and social development based on Plymouth grade-level standards and expectations. Standards-based report cards provide clear communication about how a student is performing against grade-level standards. Social and emotional development and work habits are also included. Please refer to the school calendar for the dates that report cards are issued.

### ***Academic Progress Updates***

Grade 6-12 students and their parents are encouraged to utilize the electronic grade book within the student information database for the most up-to-date record of academic progress. Teachers are required to update "ASPEN" regularly. Posted grades reflect your child's current academic standing within the class. The district calendar will identify quarterly dates indicating term grades. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact the school for a paper update.

### ***Parent-Teacher Conferences***

Parents may contact the school to schedule a conference regarding their children's progress at any time during the school year. Teachers may also request a conference with parents to discuss any concerns.

## **Safety and Emergencies**

### ***Student Safety is our First Priority:***

- Keep Your Child's Emergency Information Up to Date! Be sure the school has CURRENT information!
- Parent/Guardian's home, cell, and work telephone numbers
- Current address
- Current email address
- An emergency contact person with a current phone number and address (if the parent cannot be reached)
- Health insurance information
- Call the school immediately if there are any changes

### ***Release of Students to Adults Other Than the Parent/Guardian***

Plymouth Public Schools' purpose for this policy is a child's safety.

- The Plymouth Public Schools will not allow anyone other than a child's custodial parent/guardian to take the child away from school. If the custodial parent/guardian wants a relative, friend, former

spouse, another adult, or care provider to pick the child up at school, the custodial parent/guardian must give written permission in advance.

- Custodial Parents must immediately provide the principal's office with any court orders regarding the custody of the student.
- Students will not be released to a non-custodial parent, that is, a parent who does not have physical custody, without a written caregiver form signed by the custodial parent and a copy of the most recent court order.
- If there is an agreement between the parents that the non-custodial parent will be picking up the student regularly, the custodial parent must provide a caregiver form to the principal listing the time period or dates the arrangement will begin and end, and on what days the non-custodial parent will be picking up the child. The non-custodial parent will be required to show a driver's license or other government-issued photo identification prior to the child being released and will sign the Dismissal Log.
- All written permissions will be retained on file and logged.
- Plymouth Public Schools will not release a child on the basis of a telephone call or any form of electronic communication.
- The individual must show government-issued photo identification before the school will release the student.
- If a child is to be released to a parent/guardian, a verified designee, or any other person, the adult picking up the child must sign the Dismissal Log.
- The custodial parent's written caregiver consent will remain valid for the current school year and will need to be renewed annually. Plymouth Public Schools will be entitled to rely on the documentation in the student file as to releasing the student.

### ***Walkers***

Parents who wish their students to walk home from school each day must give written permission at the start of the school year. Permission will be maintained on file in the main office. **NOTE: Students must be in Grade 4 or above to walk home without an adult or older sibling unless your child's school has additional restrictions.**

### ***Bus Stop Drop-Offs***

A parent/guardian must be at the bus stop for all kindergarten, first, and second-grade students. Otherwise, the student will not be dropped off and will be returned to the school.

### ***When a Child Is Not Picked Up at School***

If a child is not picked up at school, the principal will try to reach the parent or emergency contact person. In instances where no contact with a parent can be made it will be necessary for the principal to call the Plymouth Police Department or the Department of Children and Families to ensure the child's safety.

### ***School Security***

Students should not arrive at school prior to the official opening of the school day. Walkers should plan their trip to school accordingly, and parents/guardians who elect to drive their children to school should plan to remain with them until the front doors are opened. Remember, the schools do not provide adult supervision prior to the official opening of the school day. All parents/guardians/visitors must enter the school through the main entrance and must report to the reception desk or the front office. Photo identification is required. All parents/guardians/visitors will be given a pass if proceeding to any part of the building other than the front office. Parents/guardians are encouraged to volunteer in our schools. Those who wish to volunteer must have on file at the school an approved CORI (Criminal Offender Record Information). Volunteers will report to the office each day and receive a nametag to wear while in the building.

The only students who are permitted to visit classes are those who intend to enroll in Plymouth Public School. Before any visit, permission must be granted from the administration. Any individual who is

present in the school building without permission is trespassing and may be subject to prosecution. Any students in the school building without permission may be subject to disciplinary action as well as possible prosecution.

### ***Fire Drills***

During an evacuation, students are expected to exit quietly, remain with their teacher/class, and listen for instructions. When an "all clear" is sounded, students will be allowed to return to the school building.

### ***Lockdown/Hold Passing-Stay in Place***

During a lockdown or "hold-passing/stay-in-place", students are expected to remain with their teacher/class and listen for instructions. **For a lockdown situation**, a police officer will release the class and allow students to resume their normal activities. **For a "stay in place" situation**, an announcement will be made to allow students to resume normal activities.

### ***Child Abuse and Neglect***

If school staff suspects that a student is being abused or neglected, they are required by law (Chapter 119, Section 51A) to report it to the MA Department of Children and Families (DCF). MA law requires mandated reporters to immediately make an oral report to the Department of Children and Families when in their professional capacity they have reasonable cause to believe that a child under 18 years is suffering abuse or neglect. It is within the procedures of the Plymouth Public Schools that the mandated reporter also notifies any possible abuse or neglect of a child to his/her building principal. The Plymouth Public Schools cooperates with DCF screenings and investigations.

At times DCF workers may interview school staff or they may ask to interview students during the school day. A mandated reporter must disclose relevant information to DCF. As a mandated reporter, the staff member is also required by law to file a written report to DCF within 48 hours after making the oral report. It is critical to remember that only the Department of Children and Families can determine whether an actual case of abuse or neglect has occurred. For additional information on DCF Child Abuse or Neglect procedures please call either 1-800-792-5200 or 508-732-6200.

### ***Special Programs***

#### ***Sheltered English Immersion Instruction***

The Sheltered English Immersion Program is for students who do not speak English or whose native language is not English.

All families complete a Home Language Survey when they register their child for school. If the parent states, on that survey, that the student's home language is not English, the student will be asked to take a short test to determine his/her English language skills. The school department uses this test to determine eligibility for Sheltered English Immersion Instruction. Plymouth Public Schools places students in Sheltered English Immersion classrooms, in which nearly all books and instructional materials are in English, with a modified curriculum and presentation designed for students who are learning the language based on the Massachusetts Department of Education frameworks and learning standards. Teachers may use native languages for clarification and safety purposes. An effective Sheltered English Immersion classroom is one where there are frequent opportunities for interaction and discussion between teacher and student and classmates. As per federal law, the Plymouth Public Schools assure that English language learners receive effective English language instruction and content instruction. Content and curriculum are appropriate to the age(s) and grade(s) of the students in the class. Instruction is appropriate to the student's level of English proficiency.

#### ***504 Accommodation Plan***

A 504 Accommodation Plan is a legal document falling under the provisions of the American Rehabilitation Act of 1973. This is a civil rights law to protect people with disabilities by eliminating barriers and allowing full participation in education. A 504 Accommodation Plan is designed to articulate and implement a program of instructional services, including general classroom modifications, to assist students with disabilities. A 504 plan is not an Individualized Education Program (IEP) and is a regular education entitlement. For a student to qualify for a 504 Accommodation Plan, certain requirements are set by

federal regulations. They include the following: Referral, Non-discriminatory Evaluation, Eligibility, Placement Procedures, Procedural Safeguards (Due Process), and the writing of the Individual Accommodation Plan. If a student is on an IEP, it supersedes a Section 504 plan. A student on an IEP doesn't have to receive a 504 Accommodation plan. A student with disabilities is the same as "a handicapped person." As defined under federal law, the definition is as follows:

- ***A handicapped person means any person who (i) has a physical or mental impairment, which substantially limits one or more major life activities (ii) has a record of such impairment, or (iii) is regarded as having such impairment.***

### ***Special Education Services***

Under Special Education Regulations (603 CMR 28.00), a student identified with a disability that impacts upon his or her education must be provided with a free, and appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment that includes specially designed services and/or programs that meet his or her individualized educational needs.

A student is entitled to special education services if he or she meets all three of the criteria listed below:

- The student has an identified disability
- The student is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without the provision of specially designed instruction
- The student requires specially designed instruction and/or services to make effective progress

Special education laws are grounded in six basic principles: parent and student participation; free and appropriate public education; appropriate evaluation; individualized education program (IEP); least restrictive environment; and procedural safeguards. If you believe your child may require special education services, please contact the building principal or counselor to assist you with the process. State regulations governing the Special Education process and the "Notice of Procedural Safeguards" brochure are available in all schools for review. For more information about special education, please feel free to contact the Director of Special Education.

### ***Alternative Education: Home and Hospital Instruction***

The Plymouth Public Schools provides home and hospital tutoring to students who "in the judgment of their physician, should remain at home or in the hospital on a day or overnight basis, or any combination of both, for a period of at least fourteen school days in any school year." Before a student can receive these services, a licensed physician must complete a state-required form. Forms are available at your child's school or through the Office of Special Education or Student Support Services. Students who have chronic illnesses or diseases may be eligible for Section 504 Plans, and in those instances, the 14-day requirement will be waived. With the exception of those students who have chronic, debilitating diseases or conditions, home or hospital tutoring is considered short-term (no longer than 60 days) and is not a replacement for regular attendance at school.

### ***Alternative Education: Homeschooling***

Parents who live in Plymouth and want to home school their children must apply to the Plymouth Public Schools Office of Student Support Services for approval. They must demonstrate that their home education proposal follows the Guidelines for Home Education in Massachusetts and the Plymouth Public School Home Alternative Education Policy. Students must remain in school until the School Committee approves the home school plan.

### ***Curriculum Accommodation Plans (CAP)***

For individual students who are experiencing difficulty in any area (e.g., academic, social/emotional, behavioral), school personnel may recommend the development of a Curriculum Accommodation Plan. The plan is designed to best coordinate appropriate services and support within the regular education program including, but not limited to, direct and systematic instruction in all academic areas as well as the provision of services to address the needs of children whose behavior may interfere with learning. Parents/guardians are notified of any meeting when a CAP may be developed for their children.

## **Remedial Services**

Our schools offer various remedial services. Please contact your child's school guidance counselor or school psychologist for eligibility requirements, types of services available, and any other related information.

## **Other Support Services**

Please contact your child's school and visit [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us) for information concerning additional support for students that may be available.

## **Transportation**

MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION LAW: M.G.L.c.71, § 68 requires that school districts provide free transportation once daily to and from school for students in grades K through 6 who live two or more miles from their assigned schools. The option of fee-paid bus transportation is offered to K-6 students who live within the two-mile limit and for all grades 7-12 students. If your child qualifies for free or reduced-price lunches, then the transportation fee is waived regardless of your home distance from the school or your child's grade level. All students who are NOT eligible for town-paid busing will have the option to purchase a bus pass through the "Fee-Based Transportation Program." (Those NOT eligible include K-6 students living less than two miles from their assigned school and all students grades 7-12, regardless of distance.) Passes for the school year are **\$150 per student with a \$450 family cap**. Bus fees must be paid before June 30th to be scheduled to ride during the upcoming school year. If the fee is not received by June 30th, your child will be placed on a waiting list and stops will be assigned if space is available on the bus. For route details and more fee information, please visit our school website.

## **Special Transportation**

Special transportation services may be available for students with disabilities and with medical or physical conditions that prevent them from walking to school or a bus stop. In those instances when there may be a temporary disability, original medical documentation providing the reason the child requires special needs transportation is required. For students with identified special needs, it is the special needs TEAM that determines whether or not the child requires special needs transportation.

## **Late Buses**

At the secondary level, late buses will be available as a convenience for parents to provide students the opportunity to stay for extra help or to participate in extracurricular activities. Utilizing these buses is a privilege, and all of the rules and regulations that apply to regular day buses will be in effect. Late buses will run at a predetermined time that is later than the normal dismissal and will operate according to a building-based schedule. The routes will consolidate regular day routes, servicing the main roads in town, operating on a regional basis, with the intent that parents will be able to pick their students up at a location closer to their residence.

## **Chapter 74 Non-Resident Student Application Policy**

The Plymouth School Committee in fulfilling its obligations under MGL Chapter 74, Section 7, 7A, and 8 shall:

- Any Plymouth students seeking admission to an out-of-district school with state-approved agricultural/vocational-technical education programs (Chapter 74-Approved Programs not offered in Plymouth) should consult with their guidance counselor no later than February and must submit a Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Nonresident Student Tuition Application ([www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres.app.pdf](http://www.doe.mass.edu/cte/admissions/nonres.app.pdf)) to the Superintendent of Schools no later than April 1st. There may be cases where the student may not have received notification of acceptance, rejection, or waitlisting (unaccepted status) by April 1st from his/her home district or the out-of-district school to which he/she applied. However, the Chapter 74 Vocational Technical Education Nonresident Student Tuition Application still must have been received by the Superintendent of Plymouth Public Schools by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

- If a student is planning to pursue an agricultural/vocational course of study, they are directed to make an application to Bristol County Agricultural High School. If the vocational agricultural program is not offered at Bristol County Agricultural High School, the student may apply to a different Vocational/Agricultural School (Chap. 74 approved) that does offer the specific program.
- Plymouth Public School shall pay appropriate tuition and transportation costs for approved students.
- Plymouth Public Schools shall not pay for tuition or transportation for any additional years of attendance caused by failure or non-promotion.

### ***School Bus Procedures & Regulations***

The ride to and from school is essentially an extension of the school itself. Improper conduct aboard the bus is to be treated as a school offense, subject to punishment at the discretion of the school administration. This may well mean a denial of the privilege of transportation. Continued offenses are to be accepted as cause for a hearing before the Superintendent of Schools or their designee. In the interest of the safety and well-being of all students being transported, students, parents/guardians, teachers, administrators, and bus drivers must understand and practice the procedures/regulations, which follow: The driver is in full charge of the bus and students therein. He or she shall have the right to assign students to specific seats on the bus and shall accept as his/or her responsibility the obligation to report to the administration the names of any students who seriously misbehave.

#### **All buses will be monitored with audio/video cameras.**

- There is to be no smoking and/or vaping aboard any bus at any time. This is a requirement of Massachusetts state law.
- Windows and doors are not to be opened or closed except with the permission of the bus driver. At no time are objects of any kind to be thrown on the bus or through an open window.
- Students must wait for the bus to come to a complete stop before boarding or exiting. There is to be no movement about once the bus is in motion.
- Students who must cross the street to board the school bus are reminded to wait until the bus comes to a complete stop and the driver has turned on the flashing red lights. Students, then, are to look both ways to check for traffic before crossing the street to board the bus.
- Students exiting the bus who must cross the street to proceed home are to pass in front of the bus; stop; look both ways; then cross the street with caution. (Many drivers do not obey the "flashing school bus lights rule").

Improper language is not to be tolerated and should be considered the cause for an administration report; shouting and/or screaming is not to be considered proper and is to be regarded as a cause for disciplinary action. The following are to be considered infractions of rules during transport for which students may be reported and disciplinary action invoked: refusing to obey the driver, fighting, lighting matches or cigarette lighters, hanging out of a window, bothering others, or any other behavior which distracts the driver from the safe operation of the vehicle and jeopardizes the safety of all passengers.

Objects which may be considered a safety hazard (as determined by the school administration), or any animals, are not to be brought on school buses at any time. Skateboards and inline/traditional skates are not to be brought on school buses. Students must be at their proper bus stops and on time according to the established schedule. They are to wait for the bus at a point designated by the bus driver and are to conduct themselves in a manner that causes no inconvenience to neighbors in the loading area. Students are to ride only on that bus to which they have been assigned. Damage to the school bus should be considered the same as damage to any school property. Those who deface or otherwise destroy such property shall be held responsible for its repair or replacement and may be subject to discipline.

Students will not be allowed to transfer to another bus for social reasons (e.g., parties, after-school visits). A student may be allowed, at the discretion of building administration, to transfer to another bus for daycare, babysitting, and emergency purposes only. This transfer is allowed if there is space available, and the drop-off point is on an existing bus route. The parent/guardian must send in a note of request to the building administration, including telephone numbers of persons to be contacted in case of emergency.

Should space cease to exist, transportation will become the responsibility of the parent/guardian.

Bus discipline forms will be used by the drivers and administrators, as needed.

### ***Withdrawal from School***

Any student who wishes to leave school should notify his/her counselor and the principal of such intentions. No student under the age of 18 will be allowed to withdraw from school without written authorization from his/her parent/guardian. If a student is under 16, he/she may not withdraw from school. If a student is 16-17, he/she must have parent/guardian permission. If a student is 18 or over, he/she may withdraw from school. It is our goal to conduct an exit meeting with any student who withdraws or transfers from a school to determine the reason for withdrawal or transfer. The purpose of this meeting is to provide the student and parent with information on any options available to finish school, including the ability to return to high school.

### ***Work Permits***

Any person under the age of 18 must obtain a work permit from their school whenever he/she obtains a position for the first time or makes a change in employment. Consult with the school regarding the appropriate time and location.



## **The Code of Conduct**

The Plymouth Public Schools believe that good school discipline promotes equal educational opportunity and a safe and effective educational environment. Students need a safe and orderly environment in which to learn. Students have the responsibility to behave appropriately. Students may not disrupt the educational process or endanger or deprive others of their rights to an education. Fair and reasonable procedures will be followed to assure students of their rights. Students must recognize that to maintain an atmosphere conducive to learning, school officials must exercise reasonable authority. Any references to potential disciplinary consequences contained in the student handbook or other school policies are guidelines to provide a framework for sanctions. The school principal or designee shall have the discretion to impose more or less severe sanctions in his or her discretion based on the individualized circumstances.

### ***Don't Miss Out on School Privileges!***


Students have the opportunity to participate in many special school functions and activities, such as field trips, celebrations, performances, class days, proms, and graduation ceremonies, among others. Participation in such activities is a privilege to be earned—not a “right.” By violating level-based rules, the Code of Conduct, or by engaging in illegal or illicit activities outside of school, a student may lose these privileges. The principal has the authority to limit or deny a student’s participation in special functions and activities.

### ***Attitude-Behavior and Language***

Students are expected to be respectful and courteous to everybody at all times while on school grounds, on the school bus, and during school-related activities.

#### **Rules:**

- Students are expected to obey any reasonable request made by a staff member.
- Students are expected to use proper language (no rude, profane, or obscene language) in school at all times.
- Students are to be respectful towards fellow students, staff members, or guests.

	<b><i>Students are not to commit any act, which places the health or safety of the students and staff in jeopardy.</i></b>
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### ***Cafeteria***

To make the cafeteria a pleasant and safe place for everyone, we expect responsible behavior.

#### **Rules:**

- Students must enter in an orderly manner.
- Students are expected to be courteous and respectful at all times.
- Students must not touch the food or belongings of others.
- When finished with lunch, students will dispose of garbage and wait until dismissal.
- Students must leave table areas clean.
- Students are to use accepted table manners and etiquette.
- Students must remain seated unless permitted to do otherwise.
- Students may not take food or beverages of any kind into the hallway.
- Students must receive permission from one of the supervising teachers and/or aides to leave the cafeteria
- Students will be dismissed by signal at the end of lunch and are to proceed to the next

- assigned class in an orderly manner.
- Students need to form an orderly line when making any cafeteria purchase.
- Delivery methods such as DoorDash of outside food are disruptive to the educational environment and are prohibited.

### ***Denial of Transportation***

The Plymouth Public Schools considers the school bus to be “an extension of the classroom.” We have the same standards of behavior on the school bus as we do in school. For example, students should remain in their seats; and they should not hang out of windows, push or fight with other students, throw things, or try to distract the driver. Students who violate the Code of Conduct while on the bus may be disciplined and may be denied transportation. Some school buses are equipped with video cameras. The videotapes may be used as evidence in disciplining students who misbehave on the bus.

### ***False Fire/Bomb Alarm and/or Tampering with Fire Equipment***

A student found responsible for a false fire alarm, including a bomb scare, or tampering with fire equipment will be suspended from school, with a mandatory parent/guardian conference with a building administrator (which may lead to further disciplinary action up to and including possible expulsion from school). In addition, the school will notify the Plymouth Police Department of any such incident.

### ***Fighting***

The nature of the school is such that fighting anywhere within the school boundaries (hallways, classrooms, school grounds, or any other part of the school) is not allowed. Fighting is so dangerous and disruptive that suspension may be needed as a consequence to discourage it from being considered a solution.

### ***Public Displays of Affection***

Public displays of affection are inappropriate in school and will not be tolerated. Please refer to the handbook section on Sexual Harassment for more information.

## **Suspension/Expulsion**

### ***Suspension General Information***

Suspension involves the exclusion of a student from school and/or school-sponsored activities. As administered by the Plymouth Public Schools, a suspension may include: in-school suspension for part or all of the school day; removal of the student from the school building, or balance of the school day (if the student's parent or guardian can be contacted); and the continued exclusion of the student from school, school grounds, or attendance or participation in school-sponsored activities until the period of suspension has been completed and the student has been readmitted to school. Parents will be notified of any in-school suspension via phone followed by a formal in-school suspension letter. Parents will be provided with a reasonable opportunity to participate in a hearing before a student is suspended from school. Suspensions are excused absences from school. Students will be provided with make-up work for out-of-school suspension and given specific deadlines to submit work and make-up assessments in accordance with the school-wide Education Services Plan.

### ***Offenses for Suspension or Expulsion***

***The Code of Conduct says a student MAY be suspended or expelled for serious offenses, including but not limited to:***

- possessing a firearm;

- use of a dangerous weapon or object in a threatening manner;
- assault and battery on school staff resulting in physical injury;
- sexual assault;
- selling or distributing a controlled substance (including illegal drugs), or possessing a controlled substance with intent to sell or distribute it;
- assault and battery on school staff or another person—this means harming, attempting to harm, or threatening to harm another person, with or without a weapon or dangerous object;
- possession/use of a controlled substance, alcohol, or any kind of intoxicant;
- bringing a weapon or weapon facsimile to school;
- possession/use of tobacco products;
- threatening another person with a mock gun or a dangerous object;
- setting or attempting to set a fire, possession of the incendiary device(s);
- damaging or stealing private or school property (or threatening to do so);
- making a bomb threat or pulling/reporting a false fire alarm;
- violating the civil rights of others including, but not limited to using racial or ethnic slurs;
- obscene behavior including, but not limited to gestures, drawings, and language;
- harassment/stalking/bullying;
- sexually harassing another person;
- physical altercation;
- verbal abuse/profanity;
- breaking the rules for acceptable use of e-mail and the Internet;
- disrupting school or classroom activity, including unauthorized use of cell phones;
- insubordination/refusing to follow a reasonable request;
- tampering with school records;
- cheating/plagiarism (including the use of Artificial Intelligence modalities);
- cutting detention;
- leaving the school without permission or cutting class(es);
- Recording or taking photos of staff and/or students during school settings without their knowledge and/or consent;
- Posting recordings of staff and/or students during a school setting to **any platform** and/or message groups without their knowledge and consent, or with the intention of harassment;
- Harmful misuse of technology that results in school disruption;
- Image Alteration: Students cannot intentionally alter any likeness of any member of the PPS school community using any form of image alteration programs (such as, but not limited to, DeepFake/FaceSwap/ReFace, etc.) in an effort to discredit, harass, bully or intimidate that individual. If applicable, the Harassment/Sexual Harassment and/or Bullying policy may come into effect;
- Instigating a fight/harassment/bullying either in or out of school through social media, text messaging, or any form of digital communication.

In certain circumstances, a student may be suspended or expelled for conduct unrelated to school or school activities, such as when the student is charged with or convicted of a felony and the principal determines the student's continued presence would disrupt the school.

***NOTE:*** *The list above is intended to serve as a general guideline only and shall not limit the authority of the principal to impose discipline for other acts of misconduct. Any incident deemed inappropriate by the principal or designee may result in a suspension or expulsion. In certain instances, referral might be made to the police department for further investigation.*

## **Disciplinary Due Process**

### ***Due Process under M.G.L. 71, Section 37H $\frac{3}{4}$***

*(For all offenses except for possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, assault on staff, and felony offenses)*

### ***Definitions under M.G.L. c. 37H $\frac{3}{4}$***

**Superintendent:** the Superintendent or designee for disciplinary purposes.

**Expulsion:** the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) consecutive school days.

**In-School Suspension:** the removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. \*Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

**Long-Term Suspension:** the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Suspensions or exclusions are pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §§37H and 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$  do not count towards the calculation of the number of days of suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ . Similarly, days of emergency removal do not count as days of suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ .

**Principal:** the primary administrator of the school or the Principal's designee for disciplinary purposes.

**Written Notice:** Written correspondence sent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

***(Please note: these due process procedures apply to M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  only. For due process procedures for offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$  please see the appropriate sections below)***

In every case of student misconduct under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

**Emergency Removals;** M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  - A principal may remove a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. In such a case, the principal shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal and the reason for it, and describe the danger presented by the student. The temporary removal shall not exceed two (2) school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of (1) the emergency removal; (2) the reason for the need for emergency removal; (3) the disciplinary offense; (4) the basis for the charge; (5) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; (6) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; (7) the date, time, and location of the hearing; and (8) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpret services at the hearing if needed to participate. Before the expiration of the two school days, unless an extension of time for a hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent, the Principal must provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies

with either the short-term due process or long-term due process set forth below, as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing. Additionally, the Principal is required to render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of notice of the decision for short-term suspension or long-term suspension as set forth below, whichever is applicable. A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

**In-School Suspension**, M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  - Removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than (10) consecutive school days, or no more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten (10) days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension. If a student is placed on in-school suspension for more than ten (10) days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes under 603 C.M.R. 53.00.

**Due Process for In-School Suspension**; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : Prior to the imposition of an In-School Suspension, the student will be informed of the disciplinary offense and provided with an opportunity to respond. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal will provide oral notice to the student and parent of the length of the In-School Suspension and will make reasonable efforts to meet with the parent.

**Principal's Decision – In-School Suspension**; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : – On or before the day of suspension, the principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the In-School Suspension, including the reason and the length of the In-School Suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 C.M.R. 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred.

The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or by other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. Students have the right to appeal an In-School Suspension that will result in their In-School Suspension for more than ten (10) school days in a school year.

**Short-Term Suspension**; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten (10) consecutive school days or less. A principal may, at his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

**Due Process for Short-Term Suspension**; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of a suspension.

**Notice – Short-Term Suspension**; M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : Except as provided in cases of In-School Suspension or Emergency Removal, a principal may not suspend as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing. The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language: the disciplinary offense; the basis for the charge; the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension; the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing; the date, time, and location of the hearing; the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate.

The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts

to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two (2) attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

**Principal's Hearing - Short-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : At the Principal's hearing, the student and parents (if participating) may dispute the charge(s) against the student and present information, including mitigating facts, for the principal's consideration in determining consequences for the student.

**Principal's Decision – Short-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of the suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, 21. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice. The principal's decision shall be final with no opportunity for appeal. If the student is in a public preschool program or grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

**Long-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten (10) consecutive school days, or more than ten (10) school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, at his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in subsections (a) or (b) of G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or in section 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$  of G.L. c. 71, no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than ninety (90) school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

**Due Process for Long-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : In the case of disciplinary offenses not involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student and parents will be given oral and written notice of the disciplinary offense with which the student is charged and the opportunity to participate in a hearing prior to the imposition of an out-of-school suspension.

**Notice - Long-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : Written notice of the date and time for the hearing will be provided in English and the primary language of the Student's home and will identify the disciplinary offense with which the student has been charged, the basis for the charge, the potential length of the student's suspension, and inform the parent and student of the right to interpreter services if necessary to participate in the hearing.

Where a student may be subject to a Long-Term Suspension, the Principal will also notify the student and parent of the following rights: (1) in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in deciding to suspend the student or not; (2) the right to be represented by counsel or a layperson of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense; (3) the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; (4) the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school; and (5) the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio recording will be made, and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

**Principal's Hearing - Long-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  : The student will have the rights identified in the written notice and the principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

**Principal's Decision – Long-Term Suspension:** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating

circumstances and alternatives to suspension, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a Long-Term Suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: (1) identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal; identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; (5) inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language: (a) the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that (b) the Long-Term Suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

**Superintendent Appeals – Long-Term Suspension;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : A student who is placed on Long-Term Suspension under M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the Superintendent. The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent within five (5) calendar days of the effective date of the Long-Term Suspension; provided that within the five (5) calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the Superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days. If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent may deny the appeal or may allow the appeal at his or her discretion, for good cause.

**Superintendent Appeal Hearing;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : The Superintendent shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent shall grant the extension. The Superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The Superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if he or she has made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and Superintendent to participate. The Superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing. The Superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The Superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request.

The Superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension as identified above.

**Superintendent's Decision;** M.G.L c. 71, § 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ : The Superintendent shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which: (1) identifies the disciplinary offense and the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; (2) sets out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Superintendent; (3) identifies the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; (4) includes notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in M.G.L. c. 76, § 21; and (5) notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate.

If the Superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal but shall not suspend greater than that imposed by the principal's decision. The decision of the Superintendent shall be the final decision of Plymouth Public Schools with regard to the long-term suspension.

## ***Due Process under M.G.L. 71, Sections 37H and 37H ½ Offenses***

*(For offenses involving dangerous weapons, drugs, assaults on staff, and felony offenses)*

**Short-Term Suspension;** M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½ - For disciplinary offenses involving: a) possession of a dangerous weapon; b) possession of a controlled substance; c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, the student will be given oral notice of the violation with which the student is charged and an opportunity to respond thereto, prior to the Principal's imposition of a short-term suspension or an interim suspension of less than ten (10) consecutive days pending formal proceedings. Upon imposition of a short-term or interim suspension of ten (10) consecutive days or less pending further disciplinary proceedings, the student and parents will be provided with written notice of the suspension and the date and time of the formal disciplinary hearing.

**Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion;** M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½ - Unlike M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ¾, for offenses that fall within M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½, a principal may long-term suspend a student for more than ninety (90) days or permanently expel a student. Long term suspension/expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for possession of a dangerous weapon; (2) possession of a controlled substance; (3) assault on a member of the educational staff; or (4) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in G.L. c. 71, §§37H, or 37H½.

The Principal's Hearing and appeals process identified below applies to suspensions under M.G.L. c. §§ 37H and 37H ½ in cases of suspension for more than ten (10) consecutive days.

### ***Dangerous Weapons, Drugs, and Assaults on Staff - M.G.L. c. 71, §37H***

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

**Principal's Hearing, Long-Term Exclusion – 37H** - Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraphs 1 or 2 shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the Principal. After said hearing, the principal may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraphs 1 or 2 above.

**Appeal to the Superintendent – Long-Term Exclusion – 37H** - Any student who has been expelled from the Plymouth Public Schools pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the Superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the Superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the Superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section. Suspensions or expulsions are decisions that must consider a student's due process rights. Building Principals or designees are required to report to the police department the presence of any weapon on school premises.

### ***Felony Complaints - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½***

Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

**Notice of Principal's Hearing/Decision – Long-Term Exclusion – 37H ½** - The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After the hearing, the principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

**Appeal to the Superintendent- Long-Term Exclusion - 37H ½** - The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the Superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal.

At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the student's own expense. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student.

The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of Plymouth Public Schools with regard to the suspension.

**Adjudication of Delinquency, Admission of Guilt or Conviction** - Upon a student being convicted of a felony or felony delinquency charge or upon adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

**Notice of Principal's Hearing – Long-Term Exclusion - 37H ½** - The student shall receive written notification of the charges notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal. After the hearing, the principal shall issue a written decision. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent.

**Superintendent's Appeal – Long-Term Exclusion/Expulsion - 37H ½** - The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the Superintendent. The student shall notify the Superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the student's own expense. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the Plymouth Public Schools with regard to the expulsion.

### ***School-Wide Educational Services Plan***

Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan which is explained below. During the period of long-term suspension or expulsion, the principal must ensure that the student has the opportunity to access educational services in order to continue to make academic progress.

This opportunity includes the ability to make up assignments, homework, quizzes, exams, papers, and projects in order to earn credits missed. The options for the provision of educational services will be outlined in the school-wide education service plan. The principal or designee will provide the student and the parent or guardian with a list of alternative education services offered by the school district. The district default option for long-term suspension is a blended independent study and tutoring program tailored to the individual student's needs.

- Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or

expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, makeup assignments, tests, papers, and other schoolwork as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school.

- The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.
- Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.
- Each school has a process for developing school-wide education service plans for education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days. Each plan is individualized to the needs of each student and is developed in collaboration with the guidance department, special education department, and classroom teachers, as applicable. Students and their parents will be notified of the process for developing and arranging such services at the time of suspension/expulsion. Education services shall be based on and be provided in a manner consistent with the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L c69 SS1D and 1F.

Plymouth Public Schools has a specific school-wide education plan. Based on the student's needs, this plan will be modified accordingly. Please see below for more details:

- Coordination of workflow between student and teacher
- Access to online coursework if already enrolled in an online course
- Tutoring
- Additional services may be available on an individual basis

At the secondary level, the school guidance counselor in conjunction with the building administration will facilitate this process. At the elementary school level, a school administrator, school psychologist, or school adjustment counselor will act as a facilitator.

### ***Discipline and Students with Disabilities***

Students with disabilities may be excluded from their programs for up to ten (10) school days to the extent that such sanctions would be applied to all students. Before a student with a disability can be excluded from his/her program for more than ten (10) consecutive days in a given school year, or is subjected to a series of short-term removals that constitute a pattern of removal that exceeds ten (10) school days, and are considered to constitute a disciplinary change in placement, building administrators, relevant members of the Student's IEP or 504 Team, and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will meet to conduct a Manifestation Determination Review. At the Manifestation Determination Review, the Team will consider whether the violation for which the student is subject to discipline is directly and substantially related to the student's disability or was the direct result of a failure to implement the student's IEP or Section 504 Plan.

If the Team determines that the behavior is NOT a manifestation of the disability, the student may be disciplined in accordance with the policies and procedures applicable to all students except that students eligible for special education services shall be entitled to a free appropriate public education as of the eleventh (11th) day of disciplinary exclusion in the school year. Such services are not available to students under Section 504. If the Team determines that the behavior IS a manifestation of the disability, then the district will conduct a functional behavior assessment or review any existing behavior intervention plan and takes steps (with the consent of the parent) to modify the IEP/504 Plan, the placement, or the behavior intervention plan as appropriate and the student will not be suspended for more than 10 days (either consecutive or constituting a pattern of removal) for the violation found to be a manifestation of his/her disability. Regardless of the result of the Manifestation Determination, if a student possesses, uses, sells, or solicits illegal drugs or a controlled substance on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; possesses a weapon on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily injury upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event, the school district may place the student in an interim alternative educational setting (IAES) for up to forty-five (45) school days. The interim alternative setting must

enable the student to participate in the general curriculum, progress toward the goals in the IEP, and receive the special education and related services contained in the student's IEP. The interim alternative setting must also provide services and modifications designed to address the behavior giving rise to the removal and to prevent the behavior from reoccurring. If a student has been placed in an interim alternative education setting because of disciplinary action, the student may remain in the interim setting for a period not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, the student will return to the previously agreed-upon educational placement unless the parent (or student if 18+) consents to an extension of the IAES, the parent and the school agree to another placement, or the parent or the district has initiated a hearing on the disciplinary action that the district took and a hearing officer orders another placement. The parent shall have the right to appeal the Team's manifestation determination, the imposition of a disciplinary change in placement, and the student's placement in an interim alternative educational setting to the Bureau of Special Education Appeals. The student will remain in the disciplinary placement imposed by school authorities pending a decision on the appeal or until the expiration of the disciplinary sanction, whichever comes first. A student not yet determined eligible for special education has these protections if the district had knowledge that the student was a "child with a disability" before the behavior that led to the discipline occurred. 34 CFR § 300.534

**A district is considered to have knowledge if:**

- Parent has expressed concern in writing to a teacher or supervisory or administrative personnel of the district that student need special education and/or related services;
- Parent has requested an evaluation of student for special education needs; or
- Teachers or other school personnel have expressed specific concern about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the student directly to the director of special education or to other supervisory personnel in the district.

**A student is not protected if:**

- The parent doesn't allow evaluation; or
- The parent refuses special education services; or
- The student was evaluated and found not eligible

### ***How Parents Can Help***

As a parent, you can help your child obey the rules and help keep the school safe by:

- reading the school handbook with your child;
- sharing the responsibility for the behavior of your child in school, at school-sponsored activities, and on the way to and from school;
- preparing your child to take responsibility for attending school and for his or her own behavior;
- fostering in your child positive attitudes toward himself or herself, others, the school, and the community;
- communicating with school staff about your child;
- attending individual or group conferences;
- recognizing that school staff has the right to enforce the policies of the Plymouth School Committee;
- behaving in a civil and non-disruptive manner when visiting the school;
- being sure your child brings to school only those things that are appropriate in a school setting;
- monitoring your child's cell phone and digital communications; and
- reinforcing school cell phone policies at home.



## **Policies, Laws, and Regulations**

## ***Student Internet Safety and Technology Acceptable Use (AUP)***

Plymouth Public Schools provides Internet access for educational purposes for their students, ensuring that students develop global communication and 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills.

Plymouth Public Schools filters the Internet in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA). Student use of the network, associated Plymouth Public Schools' technology devices, and Plymouth Public Schools applications, programs, or accounts is restricted to educational purposes only. Personal electronic devices are subject to the same restrictions.

### **Scope of Acceptable Use Policy**

This policy and all Plymouth Public Schools technology policies, guidelines, and rules refer to all computing and electronic devices (including but not limited to: computers, mobile web-enabled devices, Chromebooks, iPads, MP3 players, portable memory storage devices, calculators with interfacing capability, cell phones, digital cameras, etc.) peripheral devices (including but not limited to devices for printing, storing, duplicating and receiving information), technology infrastructure, and/or software.

Further, this policy and all Plymouth Public Schools technology policies, guidelines, and rules apply to any and all computing or electronic communication devices owned by, leased by, in the possession of, or being used by students and/or staff that are operated on the grounds of any district facility or connected to any equipment at any district facility by means of web connection, direct connection, or any other type of connection.

This policy and all Plymouth Public Schools technology policies, guidelines, and rules apply to all computing, network access, and network infrastructure, regardless of whether it is accessed from school or off-campus and regardless of whether it is accessed during or after school hours.

This policy and the Acceptable Use Policy Agreement also apply to any online service provided directly or indirectly by the Plymouth Public Schools for student and/or staff use, including but not limited to: Google Apps for Education accounts, Email, Calendar, and Aspen.

The privilege of using Plymouth Public Schools technology resources is not transferable or extendable by students to people and/or to groups outside the district and terminates when a student is no longer enrolled in Plymouth Public Schools.

Due to the changing nature of information technology, not all circumstances may be anticipated or addressed in this policy and the associated Acceptable Use Agreement. All users are expected to comply with both this policy as written and the spirit of this policy and show good judgment in their use of technology resources.

### **District Responsibilities**

The Coordinator of Educational Technology and Instructional Media (CETIM) and the Technology Systems Engineer or their designee(s) will oversee access to the network and will establish processes for the following: individual and/or class accounts, authorization for software installation; backup and archiving of databases; virus protection; and compliance with filtering laws and regulations.

The principal or designee will maintain signed user agreements and be responsible for enforcing the Technology AUP.

When using the internet for class activities, teachers will make every attempt to preview and select material appropriate to the students and relevant to the course objectives. Teachers will provide guidelines and resources to assist their students in developing the necessary critical thinking skills to access online information.

## **Access to the System**

The Technology AUP will govern all utilization of the network. Student use of the system will also be governed by applicable sections of the Plymouth School Committee Policy Handbook and the Student Handbook.

Parents/Guardians may specifically request that their children not be provided such access by checking the appropriate box on the signature page of the AUP Agreement and returning it to their child's school. Upon receipt of that form, Plymouth Public Schools will make its best effort to restrict internet access.

The internet will be for educational purposes only. Students will be educated about appropriate internet and technology behaviors, including cyberbullying awareness and response. Furthermore, accessing or knowingly and willingly causing or providing access to data or computer software through a computer, computer system, or computer network within the scope of the district school system is prohibited (see Plymouth Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy 6.15).

## **District Limitation of Liability**

Plymouth Public Schools makes no guarantees of any kind, whether expressed or implied, that the functions or the services provided by or through its network, network infrastructure, or district-owned or leased devices will be error-free or without defect. The district will not be responsible for any damages users may suffer, including but not limited to, loss of data or interruptions of service caused by any reason, or personal physical, psychological, or monetary damages.

The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of the information obtained through or stored on the system. The district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations arising through the use of the system. Parents or guardians agree to accept financial responsibility for any expenses or damages incurred as a result of their student's inappropriate, prohibited, or illegal activities on the Plymouth Public Schools network, and the Plymouth Public Schools will not be responsible for financial obligations arising through the use of technology, including but not limited to the district's network.

Parents and guardians agree to reimburse the Plymouth Public Schools for any expenses or damages incurred in the use of district-owned or -leased devices such as Chromebooks, mobile electronic devices, or other devices provided to the student.

## **Due Process**

When using the network, the user agrees to take full responsibility for his or her actions. The Plymouth Public Schools will not be held liable for the actions of anyone connecting to the internet through this network. Therefore, all users shall assume full liability, legal, financial, or otherwise, for their use of the network.

Violations of the Technology AUP could result in the immediate suspension of the user's privileges, suspension, and/or expulsion. Further disciplinary action may be taken by the Administration of the Plymouth Public Schools and/or Town, County, State, or Federal authorities. Any questions or allegations concerning adherence to the Technology Acceptable Use Policy should be brought to the attention of the building administration.

## **Monitoring and Privacy**

The network is the property of the school department, and its storage systems are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. System users have a limited privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files stored on or accessed through the network. Records of electronic device use may be subject to public records law and may be discoverable in criminal or civil proceedings.

All Plymouth Public Schools email and files, either downloaded or copied from the Plymouth Public Schools system, that are accessed through a user's home computer or any other non-Plymouth Public Schools computer or device, are Plymouth Public Schools' property and should be used and protected according to this policy and other applicable policies and laws governing information confidentiality and security.

An individual search will be conducted if there is suspicion that a user has violated the AUP, the law, or the disciplinary code. The nature of the investigation will be in the context of the nature of the alleged violation.

Technicians and computer system administrators maintain full access rights to all storage devices and may need to access/manage such storage devices as part of their duties.

The Plymouth Public Schools prohibits the use of camera and audio recording functions on any equipment, including but not limited to personal cameras, personal camera telephones, and/or school-issued devices, at school or school-sponsored events, except when specifically authorized by school administration or staff and with knowledge and consent of the participants. In no event should any photographs or video be taken of confidential information, nor should photographs, audio, or video recordings be made without knowledge of the subjects. Audio recording without the consent of the individuals recorded may result in criminal felony charges. M.G.L. c. 272 § 99.

### **Unacceptable Use**

The user of any Plymouth Public Schools network, Plymouth Public Schools owned or leased electronic device, or any personal electronic device connected to the Plymouth Public Schools network is expected to abide by this policy, along with the Code of Conduct and rules set forth in the Student Handbook. The user will not use the Plymouth Public Schools network, Plymouth Public Schools owned or leased electronic device, or any personal electronic device connected to the Plymouth Public Schools network for any unacceptable purpose including, but not limited to the following:

- using obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
  - engaging in personal attacks, including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks.
  - knowingly or recklessly disseminating false or defamatory information, recordings, and/or photos about a student, staff member, person, or organization or posting information to **any platform** that could cause damage or disruption; this includes, but is not limited to, the posting of broadcast messages or other actions that cause congestion of the network or interfere with the work of others.
  - installing or downloading unauthorized software, applications, extensions, routers, or joining listservs or newsgroups without expressed permission of instructional staff.
  - attempting to go beyond his or her authorized access, making deliberate attempts to disrupt system performance or destroy data (by spreading computer viruses or by any other means), or engaging in other illegal activities.
  - disseminating passwords, codes, access telephone numbers, or account numbers to unauthorized persons.
  - using the network to access or send material that is profane or obscene (e.g., pornography), advocates illegal acts, or advocates violence or discrimination towards other people (e.g., hate literature).
  - changing in any way the configuration of a computer or network without permission of instructional staff.
- engaging in plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty.
- damaging or vandalizing computers, computer systems, or networks.
- trespassing in another's folders, work, or files or using another's password.
- using computers/internet to play non-educational games or other non-academic activities.
- participating in any type of teleconferencing or chat without permission of instructional staff.
- using e-mail without instructional staff permission/supervision.

- the network may not be used for personal and commercial purposes, such as, but not limited to, offering or purchasing goods and/or services for personal use.
- engaging in electronic forgery, credit card fraud, or other illegal behavior.
- recording staff and/or students without their knowledge and/or consent

## **Safety**

The safety of the internet user is of utmost concern. Users should never provide personal information about themselves or anyone else. Users will not agree to meet with someone they have met online without parent/guardian approval and participation. Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or other school employees any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

## **Web Publishing**

The Plymouth Public Schools website is designed to provide a portal to enable communication among teachers, students, staff, administration, and the community, both local and global. Material posted on the district's website must reflect the high educational standards of Plymouth Public Schools.

**To ensure the safety of our students and the accuracy and security of district information the guidelines and procedures listed below must be followed:**

- No student's personal information, such as SIMS (Student Information Management Systems) data, last name, home address, and telephone number may be posted publicly. Students must submit a signed permission form from their parent/guardian granting permission to post the student's work or picture.
- Requests to post material on the Plymouth Public Schools' Web site must have prior approval of the principal or designee.
- Student directory information may not be published.
- The creator of a home page on the district's network is responsible for ensuring that the information contained therein is of the highest editorial standards (spelling, punctuation, grammar, style, etc.). The information should be factually accurate and current. If errors are observed, the CETIM or designated school page editor should be contacted to make the necessary corrections.

*\* It should be noted that the Plymouth Public Schools name or logo may not be used on a personal web page without the permission of the Superintendent.*

## **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement**

Existing copyright law will govern the use of material accessed through the network. The user will not plagiarize works found on the Internet. Plagiarism is taking the ideas or writings of others and presenting them as if they were yours. All copyrighted material used must have the express written permission or appropriate citation of the person or organization that owns the copyright. Plymouth Public Schools will cooperate with copyright protection agencies to investigate copyright infringement by users of the computer systems and networks of the Plymouth Public Schools.

## **Use of Plymouth Public Schools Owned or Leased Devices**

Plymouth Public Schools may provide a 1:1 electronic device (such as a Chromebook) to students through a 1:1 electronic device initiative to promote equitable access to technology, enhance the Plymouth Public Schools learning environment, and allow for seamless integration of technology under the direction of the school staff.

Use of a 1:1 device requires Parent/Guardian (and Students over 18) agreement to the terms of the Plymouth Public Schools' Loan of Technology Agreement, this Acceptable Use Policy and Associated Agreement, the 1:1 Chromebook Handbook for Students and Families, and the Plymouth Public Schools Student Handbook.

All devices and accessories remain the property of Plymouth Public Schools. Any information accessed through the Plymouth Public Schools network or on a Plymouth Public Schools device may be monitored and/or reviewed by Plymouth Public Schools. All files stored on the student's loaned device or in the student's Plymouth Public Schools account are subject to individual review and monitoring.

Students may only log in under their assigned username. Students may not share their passwords or login information with any other student.

Parent supervision of the use of 1:1 devices and regular communication with school staff is strongly encouraged. While Plymouth Public Schools filters the content accessible to students, the ability to filter all internet content is not perfect. Parents are encouraged to supervise device usage during non-school hours given the 24/7 availability of the 1:1 device.

Devices that malfunction, are lost, stolen, or otherwise require repair must be reported immediately to the school Building Technology Designee.

### **Use of Personal Electronic Devices (Bring Your Own Device)**

Students may be permitted to utilize their own mobile electronic device at school and during school-related educational activities to assist and enhance their learning experiences, subject to the terms of this Acceptable Use Policy and the Procedures and Rules established by each building Principal. Each school's administrative team may set forth rules and guidelines to fit the needs of the school learning community, however, any changes may not supersede the guidelines set forth in this School Committee Acceptable Use Policy.

Student use of personal electronic devices is a privilege that may be taken away by school personnel.

Only the network connection provided by the Plymouth Public Schools may be accessed from a student's personal device while on campus.

Plymouth Public Schools is not responsible for the security or maintenance of students' personal electronic devices.

### **Student Technology AUP Access Agreement**

Your signature on this document is legally binding and indicates that you have read the terms and conditions carefully and understand their significance and consequences. This policy is further supported by the rules and regulations found in each school's student handbook and discipline policies.

### ***Student Google Apps for Education Acknowledgement***

The Plymouth Public Schools has chosen Google Apps for Education as an integrated communication and collaboration solution. It is available 24/7 from any Internet-connected device. This suite of applications allows students to create, edit, collaborate, peer review, store, and share files between students and teachers. Google Apps for Education is configured as a self-contained environment maintained by Google and managed by the Plymouth Public Schools Technology Department. In our efforts to prepare students for a global society, Google Apps provides 21st Century tools, allowing teachers more resources to effectively integrate technology into the curriculum for collaborative teaching and learning. In Plymouth Public Schools, Google Apps for Education accounts are utilized for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12. Email capability is enabled for students in Grade 6 through Grade 12. This district-created student email account is subject to the Acceptable Use Policy. These accounts will be used at school and home for school-related projects and accounts. The effective and proper use of email communication and the use of web-based collaborative tools by students in part of the Department of Education and Secondary Education Instructional Technology Frameworks. All users should treat electronically stored information in their accounts as confidential and private. Users of student email are prohibited from accessing files and information other than their own. Access to and use of student email is considered a privilege. The district maintains the right to immediately withdraw the access and use of

student email when there is a reason to believe that a violation of District policies or the law has occurred. Students are assigned a Google Apps for Education account by the Technology Department. A student can opt out of participating in the Google Apps program.

### ***Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment of 2008***

The Plymouth Public Schools meets individual student needs in accordance with the American Disabilities Act Amendment Act of 2008, which prohibits the discriminatory assignment of students with disabilities to segregated classes or facilities based solely on the student's disability. The Americans with Disabilities Act parallels Section 504 with regard to public schools. The law was amended in 2008 and has added additional language for which students may meet qualifications. **The law defines a major life activity to include, but are not limited to** caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, working, and non-volitional bodily functions.

Additional amendments in the law prohibit the use of mitigating measures in evaluating whether a person has a disability. Students in public schools may not be excluded from eligibility because of the use of prescribed medication or other measures, such as but not limited to medical supplies, equipment, or appliances; low vision devices (which do not include eyeglasses or contact lenses), prosthetics, hearing aids and cochlear implants or other implantable hearing devices, mobility devices; oxygen therapy equipment and supplies; use of assistive technology; reasonable accommodations or auxiliary aids or services; and learned behavioral or adaptive neurological modifications.

ADAAA 2008 provides that major bodily functions include but are not limited to functions of the immune system, normal cell growth, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions. This list is not exhaustive.

A temporary impairment does not constitute a disability for purposes of eligibility unless its severity is such that it results in a substantial limitation of one or more major life activities for an extended period of time. An impairment that is episodic or in remission is a disability if it would substantially limit a major life activity when active. For further information regarding these laws, contact your child's guidance counselor or school psychologist (elementary) or the Director of Pupil Personnel Services at 508-830-4343.

### ***Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986***

The Plymouth Public Schools complies with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986. For further information, please refer to the Principal's Office or the homepage of the Plymouth Public Schools website at [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us).

### ***Anti-Bullying Policy***

Plymouth Public Schools is committed to providing a safe, positive, and productive educational environment where students can achieve the highest academic standards. No student shall be subjected to harassment, intimidation, bullying, or cyber-bullying.

#### **Definitions:**

**"Bullying"** is the repeated use by one or more students or school staff members 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 themselves, or of damage to their property; creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

**"Cyber-bullying"** means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a:

- wire radio
- electromagnetic
- photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

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

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

**Bullying** and **cyber-bullying** may occur in and out of school, during and after school hours, at home, and in locations outside of the home. When bullying and cyber-bullying are alleged, the full cooperation and assistance of parents/guardians and families are expected.

For the purpose of this policy, whenever the term bullying is used it is to denote either **bullying** or **cyber-bullying**.

### **Prohibition against Bullying**

#### ***Bullying is 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 vehicles owned, leased, or used by the school district; or,
- through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased, or used by the school district;

Bullying and cyber-bullying are prohibited 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 school district 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.

### **Prevention and Intervention Plan**

The Superintendent and/or their designee shall oversee the development of a prevention and intervention plan, in consultation with all district stakeholders, which may include teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians, consistent with the requirements of this policy, as well as state and federal laws. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be reviewed and updated at least biennially. The principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

## **Reporting**

Students who believe that they are a target of bullying, observe an act of bullying, or who have reasonable grounds to believe that these behaviors are taking place, are obligated to report incidents to a member of the school staff. The target shall, however, not be subject to discipline for failing to report. Each school shall have a means for anonymous reporting by students of incidents of bullying. No formal disciplinary action shall be taken solely on the basis of an anonymous report. Any student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying may be subject to disciplinary action. Parents or guardians, or members of the community, are encouraged to report an incident of bullying as soon as possible. A member of a school staff shall immediately report any instance of bullying the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the school principal or their designee.

## **Investigation Procedures**

The principal or their designee, upon receipt of a report which, if true, would constitute bullying as defined by M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, shall promptly contact the parents or guardians of a student who has been the alleged target or alleged perpetrator of bullying. The actions being taken to prevent further acts of bullying shall be discussed.

The school Principal or a designee shall promptly investigate the report of bullying in accordance with the Plymouth Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan. Disciplinary actions for students who have committed an act of bullying or retaliation shall be in accordance with district disciplinary policies.

## **Retaliation**

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

## **Training and Assessment**

Annual training shall be provided for school employees in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying in accordance with the Plymouth Public Schools' Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan.

## ***Education Reform Act of 1993, M.G.L. c.71, § 37H***

The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district. Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures ensuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to the discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violations of other student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as the procedures used to develop codes, shall be filed with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for informational purposes only. In each school building containing grades nine to twelve, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provision:

- a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- b) Any student, who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.
- c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at a said hearing before the principal. *After said hearing, a principal may, at his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to violate either paragraph (a) or (b).*
- d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten (10) days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has a right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination or whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.
- e) When a student is expelled under the provisions of this section, no school or school district within the commonwealth shall be required to admit such a student or to provide educational services to said student. If the student does apply for admission to another school or school district, the superintendent of a school district to which the application is made may request and shall receive from the superintendent of the school expelling said student a written statement of the reasons for said expulsion. *Added by St.1972, 467 amended by St. 1973, c.430, s.5; St.1987, c285; St1989, c603; St1992, c.133, s.430; St.1993, c71, s.26: St.1993. c380,s.1; St1994, c.51*

### **Education Reform Act of 1993, M.G.L. c.71, § 37H ½**

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

- a) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of this right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five (5) calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.
- b) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon the adjudication of admission in court of

guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantially detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school.

c) The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to the appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent. The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five (5) calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three (3) calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five(5) calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to expulsion. Upon expulsion of such a student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to the student. *Added by St.1993, c380, s2.*

### ***M.G.L. c.71, § 37H $\frac{3}{4}$***

Section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  Amends G.L. c. 71 by adding a new section that addresses all suspensions and expulsions for reasons other than those covered in section 37H (dangerous weapons, controlled substances, and assaults on education staff) and section 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$  (felony complaint). Section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ , directs school decision-makers at student disciplinary meetings or hearings to 1) exercise discretion in deciding consequences for the student; 2) consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process, and 3) avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been tried.

Section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$ , requires that districts provide 1) written notice to the student and parent or guardian of the reasons for suspension or expulsion in English and the primary language spoken in the home of the student, and 2) the opportunity for the student to meet with the principal or headmaster to discuss the reasons for suspension or expulsion before the suspension or expulsion takes effect. The principal or headmaster must also make reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in the meeting with the student.

Section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  further defines the process that school officials must follow if the decision is made after the meeting to suspend or expel the student, including notice of the student's appeal rights, if applicable, and the appeal process. Suspensions or expulsions under section 37H  $\frac{3}{4}$  are limited to 90 school days. Furthermore, the principal or headmaster must notify the superintendent in writing of the out-of-school suspension of any student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3, the alleged misconduct, and the reasons for the out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect. Students must be provided an opportunity to make academic progress while suspended or expelled. Section 37 H  $\frac{3}{4}$  amends sections 37H and 37H  $\frac{1}{2}$  to require districts and charter schools to continue to provide educational services to any student suspended or expelled under these sections, and requires principals and headmasters to create a "school-wide education service plan" for all students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school so that students have an opportunity to make academic progress. Education service plans may include but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. Students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive school days, whether in or out of school, must be provided an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, make up assignments, and to earn credits missed. If a student moves to another district during a period of suspension or expulsion, the new district must either admit the student or provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or exclusion. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has published regulations to implement the law which are set out in 603 CMR 53.00 and can be found at <http://www.doe.mass.edu/lawsregs/603cmr53.html>

## ***Hazing Law and Policy***

Hazing, as defined in Chapter 269 under the Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is prohibited in the Plymouth Public Schools.

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269; Section 17 Hazing; organizing or participating; hazing defined**

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand (1,000) dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one hundred (100) days, or by both such fine and imprisonment. The term "hazing" as used in this section and sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or another person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical health or safety of any such student or another person, or which subjects such student or another person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. (Added by St. 1985, c.536)

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 18 Failure to report hazing**

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such a crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand (1,000) dollars. (Added by St. 1985, c.536; Amended by St. 1987, c.665)

### **M.G.L. Chapter 269: Section 19 Copy of secs. 17-19; issuance to students and student groups, teams, and organizations; report**

Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required

Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of post-secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team, or student organization that is part of such an institution or is recognized by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team, or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution's compliance with this section's requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated groups, teams, or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams, or organizations. Each such group, team, or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each group, team, or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgment stating that such group, team, or organization has received a copy of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team, or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

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

Any person(s) found engaged in hazing may be subject to suspension or exclusion dependent upon the seriousness of the hazing offense.

### ***Homeless Students: Enrollment Rights and Services***

As required by law, the district will work with homeless children and youth and unaccompanied youth (collectively, "homeless students") as well as their families or legal guardians to provide stability in school

attendance and other services. Special attention will be given to ensuring the enrollment and attendance of homeless students not currently attending school. Homeless students will be provided district services for which they are eligible, including Head Start and comparable preschool programs, Title I, similar state programs, special education, bilingual education, vocational and technical education programs, gifted and talented programs, school nutrition programs, summer programming, and extracurricular activities. Homeless students are defined as lacking a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, including:

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

### ***Students Remaining in Schools of Origin***

It is presumed to be in the best interest of homeless students to remain in their schools of origin, i.e. the school that the student was attending at the time he or she became homeless, or the last school the student attended prior to becoming homeless. Homeless students may continue to attend their school of origin for as long as they remain homeless or until the end of the academic year in which they obtain permanent housing. For homeless students who complete the final grade level served by the school of origin, the term “school of origin” shall also include the receiving school in the same school district educating students at the next grade level. Homeless students are entitled to transportation comparable to that provided for all other students attending school in the district. The district will transport students who are sheltered or temporarily residing within the district to the students’ school of origin. For homeless students attending a school of origin located outside the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, the district in which the school of origin is located will coordinate with the district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to provide the transportation services necessary for the student, and these districts will divide the cost equally. Formerly homeless students who find permanent housing in the mid-school year will continue to receive transportation services until the end of the school year.

### ***Students Enrolling in District Where Sheltered or Temporarily Residing***

Parents or guardians may elect to enroll homeless students in the school district in which the student is sheltered or temporarily residing, rather than having the student remain in the school of origin. Enrollment changes for homeless students should take place immediately. If homeless students are unable to provide written proof of their shelter or temporary residence in the district, the homeless liaison will work with the family seeking enrollment to determine homelessness. Information regarding a homeless student’s living arrangement should be considered a student education record, and not directory information. Records containing information about the homeless student’s living arrangement may not be disclosed without the consent of the parent or satisfaction of another student-privacy-related exemption. If the student does not have immediate access to immunization records, the student shall be permitted to enroll under a personal exception. Students and families should be encouraged to obtain current immunization records or immunizations as soon as possible, and the district liaison is directed to assist. Emergency contact information is required at the time of enrollment consistent with district policies, including compliance with the state’s address confidentiality program when necessary. After enrollment, the district will immediately request available records from the student’s previous school. Attendance rights by living in attendance areas, other student assignment policies, or intra and inter-district choice options are available to homeless families on the same terms as families who reside in the district. Accordingly, the district will provide transportation services to the school in a manner comparable to the transportation provided for all other students in the district.

## ***Dispute Resolution***

If the district disagrees with a parent or guardian's decision to keep a student enrolled in the school of origin and considers enrollment in the district where the student is sheltered or temporarily residing to be in the student's best interest, the district will explain to the parent, in writing and in a language the parent can understand, the rationale for its determination and provide the parent with written notice of their rights to appeal the district's determination to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. During the pendency of any such appeal, the student should remain enrolled in the school selected by the parent or guardian, receiving transportation to school and access to other available services and programs. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Advisory on Homeless Education Assistance contains additional information about educating homeless students and the appeal process. This advisory is available at the following link: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/mv/haa/mckinney-vento.docx>

## ***Homeless Liaison***

The Superintendent shall designate an appropriate staff person to be the district's liaison for homeless students and their families. The district's liaison for homeless students and their families shall coordinate with local social service agencies that provide services to homeless children and youths and their families; other school districts on issues of transportation and records transfers; and state and local housing agencies responsible for comprehensive housing affordability strategies. This coordination includes providing public notice of the educational rights of homeless students in locations such as schools, family shelters, and soup kitchens. The district's liaison will also review and recommend amendments to district policies that may act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless students. The liaison shall ensure district staff receives professional development and other support on issues involving homeless students.

## ***Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)***

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law on December 10, 2015, reauthorized the most recent reauthorization of ESEA, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The ESSA plan advances the Commonwealth's vision of increasing equity and excellence for all students in Massachusetts, particularly disadvantaged and high-need students. Massachusetts' strategies align closely with ESSA's priority areas: academic standards that help students become ready for post-secondary education and employment; world-class academic assessments that enable educators to identify and provide support for schools and districts; ensuring effective educators; and supporting all aspects of our student's lives. Our ESSA plan is designed to strengthen the quality and breadth of the instructional program our students experience, especially for English language learners, students receiving special education services, and students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. This focus includes special attention to:

- Enhancing literacy skills in the elementary grades
- Enhancing mathematics skills in the middle grades
- Providing multiple high-quality pathways to educational and career opportunities after secondary school

For more information regarding ESSA, please refer to the Department of Elementary and Secondary website: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/titlei/essa/>

## ***Nondiscrimination Policy***

The Plymouth Public Schools does not tolerate behavior or actions that demean an individual's dignity or interfere with their ability to learn or work. Furthermore, Plymouth Public Schools does not tolerate discrimination, bias-based intimidation, threat, retaliation, or harassment against any individuals or groups on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service

member, disability, or age. This prohibition includes all protected groups. Intimidation, threat, retaliation, or harassment include the creation and or sustaining of a pervasive atmosphere that interferes or prohibits an individual from engaging or benefitting from full access to all educational programs, activities, or working environments.

The Superintendent shall designate at least one administrator to serve as the compliance officer for the District's non-discrimination policies in education-related activities, including but not limited to responding to inquiries related to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; M.G.L. c. 151B and 151C; and 603 C.M.R. § 26.00. Inquiries about the application of Title IX to the District may be referred to the District's Title IX Coordinator, to the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, or both.

The Plymouth School Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and other individuals with whom it does business; no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in employment, admission to a public school of the District or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study within Plymouth Public Schools on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities.

The School Committee further supports nondiscrimination by adhering to and following all state, federal, and judicial laws and regulations. Furthermore, when necessary the School Committee will seek guidance from governmental groups and other public and private entities, to assist with such efforts.

- Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the state and federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
- Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth, and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various economic, racial, and ethnic groups.
- Support a more inclusive society where all people regardless of their unique status feel they belong and are welcomed and respected.
- Insist that all decisions made within the school system will assess the potential benefits or consequences for all groups. Equity is paramount in all decisions.
- Ensure the continual process of reviewing district policies and practices to ensure equal access to any and all K-12 programming within the Plymouth Public Schools.

In addition to designating at least one administrator to handle inquiries regarding the district's non-discrimination policies, the Superintendent shall adopt and publish one or more grievance procedures for addressing reports of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation under the protected classes identified in this policy.

Any individual can file a complaint of discrimination. These complaints shall address issues of discrimination based on race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age. Complaints can address discrimination against any/all protected groups. These complaints should be filed in accordance with the district's grievance procedures for discrimination, harassment, and retaliation.

The student handbooks and grievance procedures shall identify the name, office address, and telephone number of the compliance officer(s) for the above-referenced statutes and this policy and be posted on the district's website.

## ***Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy***

### **Purpose**

The Plymouth Public Schools (“the district”) seeks to ensure that every student is free from the use of physical restraint that is inconsistent with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.00. Physical restraint is an emergency measure of last resort. It may be administered only when necessary to protect a student and/or school community member from assault or imminent, serious physical harm. When, based on this standard, physical restraint is necessary, staff will strive to prevent or minimize any harm to the student as a result of the use of physical restraint. The district will annually review its Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures, provide it to all district staff, and make it available to parents of enrolled students.

### **Definitions**

**Mechanical Restraint:** the use of any device or equipment to restrict a student’s freedom of movement. The term does not include devices implemented by trained school personnel, or utilized by a student that has been prescribed by an appropriate medical or related services professional and are used for the specific and approved positioning or protective purposes for which such devices were designed.

**Medication Restraint:** the administration of medication for the purpose of temporarily controlling behavior. Medication prescribed by a licensed physician and authorized by the parent for administration in the school setting is not medication restraint.

**Physical Escort:** a temporary touching or holding, without the use of force, of the hand, wrist, arm, shoulder, or back for the purpose of inducing a student who is agitated to walk to a safe location.

**Physical Restraint:** direct physical contact that prevents or significantly restricts a student’s freedom of movement. Physical restraint does not include brief physical contact to promote student safety, providing physical guidance or prompting when teaching a skill, redirecting attention, providing comfort, or a physical escort.

**Principal:** instructional leader of a public-school education program or his or her designee.

**Prone Restraint:** a physical restraint in which a student is placed face down on the floor or another surface, and physical pressure is applied to the student’s body to keep the student in the face-down position.

**Seclusion:** involuntary confinement of a student alone in a room or area from which the student is physically prevented from leaving. Seclusion does not include a time-out as defined below.

**Time-Out:** a behavioral support strategy, developed pursuant to 603 CMR 46.04(1), in which a student temporarily separates from the learning activity or the classroom, either by choice or by direction from staff, for the purpose of calming. During a time-out, a student must be continuously observed by a staff member. Staff shall be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for the purpose of calming. Time-out shall cease as soon as the student has calmed.

### **Prohibitions**

Chemical restraint, mechanical restraint, and seclusion are prohibited in all public-school education programs.

### **Specific Rights**

Neither 603 C.M.R. 46.00 nor this policy prohibits (1) any teacher, employee, or agent of the District from using reasonable force to protect students, others, or themselves from imminent, serious, physical harm; (2) any individual from reporting to appropriate authorities a crime committed by a student or other individual; (3) law enforcement, judicial authorities or school security personnel from exercising

their responsibilities, including the physical detainment of a student or person alleged to have committed a crime or posing a security risk; or (4) an individual from reporting neglect or abuse to the appropriate state agency, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 119, § 51A.

### **Requirements for the Use of Time-out**

Time-out may be used only for the purpose of calming, it must be terminated as soon as the student has calmed, and it may not extend beyond thirty (30) minutes without the approval of the principal. A Principal may grant an extension beyond thirty (30) minutes based only on the individual student's continuing agitation. During a time-out, the student must be continuously observed by a staff member. The staff members will either be with the student or immediately available to the student at all times. The space used for time-out must be clean, safe, sanitary, and appropriate for calming. The student may not be involuntarily confined alone in a room or in an area from which the student is prevented from leaving, as this would constitute seclusion, which is prohibited at all times.

### **Requirements for the Use of Physical Restraint**

Physical restraint is considered an emergency procedure of last resort. This means that it may be used only when the student's behavior poses a threat of assault or imminent, serious, physical harm to self and/or others; *and* the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions, or such interventions are deemed to be inappropriate under the circumstances.

- Physical restraint may never be used for punishment. Physical restraint may not be used as a response to a student's property damage, disruption of school order, refusal to comply with rules/directions, or verbal threats unless the above harm standard is also met.
- Physical restraint may not be used as a standard response for any student. No IEP or written behavioral plan may include physical restraint as a standard response to any behavior.
- Safety: To ensure student safety, staff will review and consider a student's medical and psychological limitations, known or suspected trauma history, and/or behavior intervention plans. Physical restraint will not be used when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, communication-related disorders, asthma, seizures, cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, or risk of vomiting.
- During a physical restraint, staff will continuously monitor the student's physical status, including skin temperature, color, and respiration, and make certain that the student can breathe and speak. Staff will use the safest physical restraint method available and appropriate for the situation and will use only the amount of force necessary to protect the student or others from physical injury or harm. Whenever possible, another adult who is not a participant in the restraint will witness the administration of the restraint.
- Duration: A physical restraint must be terminated as soon as the student is no longer an immediate danger to himself or others, or the student demonstrates or expresses significant physical distress (e.g., difficulty breathing, sustained or prolonged crying, sustained or prolonged coughing). If a student demonstrates or expresses significant physical distress, staff will release the restraint and seek medical assistance immediately.
- For any student to be restrained for more than twenty (20) minutes, staff must obtain the principal's approval. This approval must be based on the student's continued agitation justifying the need for continued restraint.
- Follow-up: Follow-up procedures will be implemented after the release of the student from physical restraint. These will include reviewing the incident with the student to address the precipitating behavior, reviewing the incident with the staff who administered the restraint to discuss whether proper restraint procedures were followed, and considering whether any follow-up is appropriate for students who witnessed the incident.
- Prone and Floor Restraint: Prone restraints are prohibited, except on an individual basis and when all of the following conditions, which require specific documentation, are met: (1) the

student has a documented history of repeatedly causing serious self-injuries and/or injuries to other students or staff; (2) all other forms of physical restraint have failed to ensure the safety of the student and/or others; (3) there are no medical contraindications, as documented by a licensed physician; (4) there is psychological or behavioral justification for the use of prone restraint and no psychological or behavioral contraindications, as documented by a licensed mental health professional; (5) the program has obtained consent to use prone restraint in an emergency as set out in 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), and the use of prone restraint is approved in writing by the Principal; and (6) the program has documented all of the above before using prone restraint and maintains the documentation. The only staff authorized to administer a prone restraint are staff who have received in-depth restraint training in accordance with 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3).

Floor restraints are prohibited unless the staff administering the restraint has received in-depth training in accordance with 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3), and these trained staff members determine that such method of restraint is required to provide safety for the student or others.

## **Reporting of Physical Restraint Use**

All physical restraints, regardless of duration, will be reported.

**Reporting within School and to Parents:** The reporting process within the school and to the student's parents is as follows: The staff will immediately verbally inform the principal, and the principal will make reasonable efforts to verbally inform the student's parents within 24 hours of the restraint. The staff will file a detailed written report no later than the next school day, and the principal will provide the written report to the parents within three (3) school days of the restraint. There are no individual waivers permitted for these reporting requirements.

**Report Contents:** The report will include: the names and job titles of those involved, including observers; the date and time the restraint began and ended; the name of the administrator who was verbally informed; the name of the Principal or designee who approved extending the restraint beyond twenty (20) minutes, when such approval was obtained; what was happening before the restraint; the efforts staff used to prevent escalation of the student's behavior, including the specific de-escalation strategies that the staff used; the alternatives to restraint that staff attempted; the justification for initiating the restraint; a description of the holds used and why they were necessary; a description of the student's behavior and reaction during the restraint, and any medical care is given; information regarding any further actions the school has taken or may take; and information regarding opportunities for the student's parents to discuss the restraint with the school.

**Reporting to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:** The reporting process to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is as follows: The District will report to DESE all restraints that result in serious injury to either a student or a staff member within three (3) working days of the restraint. Additionally, the District will provide DESE with an annual report of its physical restraint use.

## **Administrative Reviews of Physical Restraint**

Two types of administrative reviews will be conducted in regard to the use of physical restraint. The principal will conduct a Weekly Individual Student Review and a Monthly School-Wide Review.

**Weekly Individual Student Review:** A Weekly Individual Student Review will be conducted in regard to any student who has been restrained multiple times during the week. The principal will convene a review team to assess the progress and needs of any such student, with the goal of reducing or eliminating future restraint. This team will review and discuss the written restraint reports, analyze the factors that led to the restraint, consider the factors that may have contributed to the escalation of the student's behavior, and develop a written action plan.

**Monthly School-Wide Review:** A Monthly School-Wide Review will also be conducted by the principal. In this review, the principal will consider patterns of restraints, the number of restraints,

duration of restraints, and any injuries caused by restraints. The principal will assess whether the restraint prevention and management policy needs to be modified and/or whether there is a need for additional staff training on restraint reduction and restraint prevention strategies or to take other action as appropriate.

## **Training Requirements**

**General Training:** The Principal will ensure that all staff receive training on the District's Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Policy and Procedures and the requirements for the use of restraint. This training will comply with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.04(2).

**In-Depth Training:** The Principal will identify and authorize certain staff to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring the proper administration of physical restraint. These identified staff will participate in an in-depth training course that complies with the requirements of 603 C.M.R. 46.04(3) and 603 C.M.R. 46.04(4).

## **Specific Procedures**

Building principals will develop procedures that identify:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention.
- Methods to prevent student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide (individual crisis planning, de-escalation techniques)
- Alternatives to physical restraint (verbal prompting, physical escort, time-out, de-escalation techniques)
- Description of physical restraints used in emergency situations
- Restraint complaint procedure (how it is filed, how it is investigated)
- Methods to engage parents in discussions about restraint prevention and the use of restraint solely as an emergency measure

## ***Procedures Related to a Public Health Emergency and/or Pandemic***

The School Committee recommends that during a Public Health Emergency certain procedures, policies and other standard educational traditions and actions will need to be modified to promote public safety, and specifically, the safety, health, and well-being of our students, their families, and our faculty and staff. To that end, the following procedural adjustments can be applied:

### ***Superintendent actions following and during State of a Public Health emergency as declared by the Governor and/or other Federal, State, County, and Local officials:***

- Superintendent may propose modifications or suspensions of district policies regarding attendance by students;
- Superintendent may limit or suspend admission of the public into school buildings and attendance at other school affairs such as sporting events, performances, art presentations, assemblies, and other similar programs or events;
- Subject to law, regulations, and other standards established by a legitimate regulatory body, such as the MIAA, the Superintendent may propose changes to district policies and protocols regarding student participation in extracurricular activities and athletics;
- Superintendent shall report to the School Committee any and all changes in the status of the SRO and the impact that the Public Health Emergency may have on the MOU before the Plymouth Police Department and Plymouth Public Schools;
- When necessary, the Superintendent can make modifications to the requirement of mask-wearing for certain student cohorts;
- Subject to current law, regulations, and guidance from Federal, State, County, and/or local officials, the Superintendent may suspend or modify policies or procedures related to the transportation of students;

- Subject to provisions in the law, guidance from Federal, State, County, or Local officials, and collective bargaining agreements the Superintendent may suspend or amend current policy and procedures or norms in order to ensure the safe and efficient operation of the business functions and maintenance of school buildings and other such offices the district maintains;
- Contact tracing and testing protocols as necessary and appropriate shall be established by the Superintendent;
- Subject to the guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the provisions of the Collective Bargaining Agreement, the Superintendent may suspend or revise the school calendar with the approval of the School Committee;
- Subject to the guidance from DESE, the Superintendent may suspend or revise the assignment of students to schools, including the assignment of new students for such a period as the Public Health Emergency is in force;
- During the period of the Public Health Emergency and following approval of the School Committee, the Superintendent can modify the policies, procedures, and norms relating to the grading and retention of students;
- In accordance with guidance from DESE and subject to the approval of the School Committee, the Superintendent may make modifications to the policies, procedures, and norms pertaining to the graduation requirements;
- The Superintendent may revise job descriptions for the district staff considering the provisions of the current collective bargaining agreement. The potential changes shall be related to the health and safety of all students and staff. These changes include but are not limited to student transportation, food services, materials, and specific job descriptions. The Superintendent will inform the School Committee of any such changes. Any changes to job descriptions shall expire at the end of the Public Health Emergency as determined by the Governor and/or State, County, and Local Public Health officials; The Superintendent will identify and designate the most appropriate staff members to oversee the implementation of policy and procedures to be enforced during the Public Health Emergency;
- Subject to the guidance from DESE and the provisions of collective bargaining agreements, the Superintendent may suspend or amend requirements for the time-on-learning for the duration of the Public Health Emergency.

### ***Privacy & Confidentiality***

During the Public Health Emergency, the rights to privacy held by our students and their families shall not be abridged by the Plymouth Public Schools. However, confidential conversations between the Administration of the Plymouth Public Schools and specific teachers are permitted when the teacher needs to know. The sharing of protected information between the Administration and teachers is only permitted when the health and safety of students and staff can be compromised by not sharing the information.

### ***Student Discipline***

The Superintendent will make recommendations regarding the policies, procedures, and protocols regarding the disciplining of students during the Public Health Emergency. In some cases, the Superintendent may set aside the district Code of Discipline and related consequences.

### ***Back to School Plan***

- The School Committee will authorize the Superintendent to continually reevaluate develop, and modify as necessary a back-to-school plan;
- During a Public Health Emergency, Plymouth Public Schools under the recommendation of the Governor and/or other State, County, and Local public health officials and subject to

guidelines from DESE, the School Committee shall authorize the Superintendent to create for approval a back-to-school plan in the safest and most efficient manner possible.

- According to the Superintendent's recommendation and in keeping in line with guidelines from DESE, the back-to-school plan can be modified or suspended for those students with specific educational and/or social-emotional needs.

### ***Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA)***

The Plymouth Public Schools in keeping with the regulations set out in the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment requires notification to students, parents, and/or students under the following conditions:

- Instructional materials are made available for inspection by parents if those materials will be used in connection with a federal U.S. Department of Education or another publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation in which their children participate; and that schools obtain prior written parental consent before minor students are required to participate in any U.S. Department of Education or another publicly funded survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning:
  - Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
  - Mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
  - Sex behavior or attitudes;
  - Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
  - Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
  - Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, or ministers;
  - Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent; or
  - Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program).
- The right of parents to inspect, upon request, any instructional material used as part of the educational curriculum for students. This term does not include academic tests or academic assessments.
- The right to prior knowledge and consent if the school district administers physical examinations or screenings. This does not include hearing, vision, or scoliosis screening.
- The right to prior knowledge of the school district's collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or selling, or otherwise providing the information to others for that purpose.
- The right to inspect, upon request, any instrument used in the collection of personal information.

The Plymouth Public Schools will notify parents, guardians, and/or eligible students of the specific or approximate dates during the school year if and when these activities are scheduled. Such notification will be provided through specific notices, newsletters, and/or the Plymouth Public Schools website. The federal requirement is not intended to preempt applicable provisions of state law that require parental notification. The law does not apply to any physical examination or screening that is permitted or required by state law, including such examinations or screenings without parental notification. The requirements of PPRA do not apply to a survey administered to a student in accordance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The requirements under PPRA do not supersede any of the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

### ***Audio and Video Surveillance on School Buses***

Video cameras may be used on Plymouth Public School buses and transportation vehicles (collectively referred to hereinafter as a "bus" or "buses") to monitor student behavior. Audio recordings in conjunction

with video recordings may also be captured. The Superintendent or his/her designee will ensure that there is a sign prominently displayed on the school buses informing the occupants of the school buses that such video and audio recordings are occurring. Recordings -The District will retain copies of the video and audio recordings until they are erased in the regular course of business, which may be accomplished by either deletion or copying over with a new recording. Viewings of recordings must be expressly authorized by the Superintendent and are limited to the Superintendent, Superintendent designee, Director of Transportation, School Principal or Director of Special Education, or other individual authorized by the Superintendent. Parents of a student against whom a recording is being used as part of a disciplinary proceeding will be permitted to view and listen to the recording in the presence of the school administration. No other individuals shall be entitled to view or listen to the recording without the authorization of the Superintendent. Generally, the audio or video recording of a student on a bus is not a student record. In the event an audio or video recording is used as part of a student discipline proceeding, such recording may become part of a student's educational record. If an audio or video recording does become part of a student's educational record, state and federal laws governing educational records shall apply.

### ***Video Surveillance on School Property***

Plymouth Public Schools utilizes video cameras on all school campuses for the purpose of enhancing school safety and security. Security camera recordings will be viewable in each building by authorized designees only. Security cameras are installed in public areas only. These areas include grounds, athletic areas, exterior entrances or exits to school buildings, and large gathering spaces, including but not limited to corridors, cafeteria, gymnasium, lobby, and main entries. Security camera usage is prohibited in any space where there is a reasonable expectation for privacy. Restrooms, changing rooms, private offices, nurse's offices, and locker rooms are excluded from security camera use. The Superintendent or his/her expressly authorized designee shall oversee video surveillance. The camera system will be in operation and may be monitored by school personnel throughout the year. In compliance with applicable federal and state laws and regulations, recorded information will be available for use as necessary by appropriate school officials, and/or law enforcement personnel. All video recordings are stored in a secure place to avoid tampering and ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Information obtained through video surveillance may only be used for disciplinary investigations, security, or law enforcement purposes. No sound is monitored or recorded in connection with the video surveillance system. Any video recordings used for security purposes in school buildings or on school grounds are the sole property of the Plymouth Public Schools. Release of such videos will be made only as permitted pursuant to applicable law and with the permission of the Superintendent or his/her designee.

### ***Search and Seizure***

The Plymouth Public Schools recognizes and respects the privacy of its students in their persons and belongings. However, the school administration and staff must maintain a proper, safe, and secure educational environment where learning can take place. Possession of contraband in violation of the law or school rules is prohibited on school premises. Such items include, but are not limited to, cigarettes, nicotine and tobacco products, vaping devices, drugs (without a proper prescription), weapons, and other items that pose a danger to the safety of the school community or which would disturb or disrupt the process of education. In certain circumstances, it may be necessary to search for an individual student or group of students and to seize contraband items. Where the school principal, or his/her designee, has reasonable grounds for suspecting that a student has violated, or is violating, either the law or rules of the school, the suspected student or students may be searched for evidence that the student has violated or is violating either the law or rules of the school. Searches of students, book bags, purses, clothing, other containers, and student lockers may be conducted when appropriate. When the principal, or his/her designee, has reason to believe that contraband items are present on school premises, locker inspections may take place without notice to students. A student's right to possession of a locker, or lockers, is nonexclusive as against the school and its officials. Students are hereby put on notice that they should not keep personal items in their lockers if they do not wish them to be discovered by school personnel during a locker inspection conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section. Contraband items discovered during any such inspection will be seized. In addition, at various times throughout the school year, school administrators may use dogs trained to detect contraband to conduct random searches for contraband in student lockers, other common areas of school buildings, and vehicles parked on school grounds. A qualified and authorized trainer

and a school administrator or designee shall accompany each dog. If a dog indicates that contraband is present on school property, school administrators can conduct a further search. Any contraband items discovered and seized during an inspection or search conducted under the provisions of this section may be turned over to the police when the possession of such items may constitute a violation of any state or federal law. In all cases where illicit drugs or weapons are discovered as a result of inspections or searches conducted in accordance with the provisions of this section, the police will be contacted and any and all items will be turned over to the police department. If there are any questions regarding whether a particular item may be brought to school, please ask the principal.

### ***Sex Education (MGL Ch. 71 §32A)***

Schools are required by law to notify parents/guardians about any classes that will be held on human sexual education or sexual issues. The notice must inform parents/guardians of how they can review the content and materials for the class/classes and must inform parents of their right to exempt their children from such classes and the process for exemption. **Please read and return the sign-off page entitled “Commonwealth of Massachusetts: An Act Relative to Sex Education” to your building principal.**

### ***Special Needs Policy***

It is the policy of the Plymouth Public Schools to provide a free and appropriate public education for all children in the school district within the legal parameters of federal and state law recognizing that children with special needs require modifications, accommodations, and interventions in the provision of their individualized educational programs. The Plymouth Public Schools will ensure that children with special needs are allowed to be educated with peers and have access to an appropriate curriculum and the same opportunities in co-curricular activities to the extent possible. It is the goal of the district to ensure that children with special needs have those services, interventions, modifications, and accommodations that they are entitled to under both the federal and state statutes and regulations. The Plymouth Public Schools will conduct an annual evaluation of its programs and support. In addition, the Special Education Department will provide an annual update to the School Committee highlighting its programs and the success of its services.

### ***Student Record Regulations and Confidentiality***

#### ***FERPA***

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students over 18 years of age (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. They are:

- The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within a reasonable amount of time but not to exceed 45 days from the day the district receives an access request. Parents or eligible students should submit to the school principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The principal will arrange for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
- The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate or misleading. Parents or eligible students may ask Plymouth Public Schools to amend a record they want to be changed and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading. If the district decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the district will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
- The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent. One exception, which permits disclosure without consent, is disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the district as an administrator, supervisor, instructor, or support staff member (including health or medical staff and law enforcement

unit personnel); a person serving on the School Committee; a person or company with whom the district has contracted to perform a special task (such as an attorney, auditor, medical consultant, or therapist); or a parent or a student serving on an official committee, such as disciplinary or grievance committee, or assisting another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

- The parent/guardian has the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the district to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA is:

***Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Avenue  
SW Washington, D.C. 20202-5920***

FERPA requires that the Plymouth Public Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, the Plymouth Public Schools may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised the district to the contrary in accordance with District procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the Plymouth Public Schools to include this type of information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's, guardian's, and/or student's prior consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks. In addition, two federal laws require school districts receiving federal funds to provide military recruiters, upon request, with three directory information categories - names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents, guardians, and/or students have advised the school district that they do not want their information disclosed without their prior written consent. If you do not want Plymouth Public Schools to disclose directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify the school district in writing by September 15<sup>th</sup> of each school year. The Plymouth Public Schools has designated the following information as directory information:

- Student's name
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Address
- Telephone listing
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Electronic mail address
- Photograph
- Degrees, honors, and awards received
- Date and place of birth
- Major field of study
- Dates of attendance
- Grade level and the most recent school attended

### ***Massachusetts Student Records Regulation***

State regulations governing student records are briefly summarized below. These regulations are available at each public school and the superintendent's office for review. Parents may access the student records regulations through the Massachusetts Department of Education website. A student's record consists of his or her school transcript and a temporary record. The temporary record includes all information, which is organized based on the student's name, is relevant to the educational needs of the student, and is kept by the school. A student's parent or guardian or an eligible student (who is 14 years old or has entered the ninth grade), has the right to inspect all portions of the student's record upon written request to the principal. The record must be made available to the parent, guardian, or eligible student not later than ten (10) consecutive

workdays after the request is made, unless the parent, guardian, or eligible student consents to a delay. The parent, guardian, or eligible student may request copies of any part of the record. A fee may be charged for the cost of copying.

### ***Confidentiality of Records***

No individual or organization other than the parent, guardian, eligible student, or school personnel working directly with the student is allowed access to a student's record without the specific written consent of the parent, guardian, or eligible student except in limited instances as specified by the state or federal regulations governing student records.

### ***Amendment or Deletion of Records***

The parent, guardian, or eligible student has the right to add relevant comments, information, or other written material to the student's record. In addition, the parent, guardian, or eligible student has the right to request that information contained in the record be amended or deleted except for information inserted in the record by a special needs or Section 504 evaluation. The parent, guardian, or eligible student has a right to a conference with the school principal for the purpose of the information contained in the school record. Within a week after such a conference, the principal must render a decision in writing on the objection. If the parent, guardian, or eligible student is not satisfied with the principal's decision, he or she may appeal such a decision to the Superintendent of Schools and ultimately, to the School Committee.

### ***Destruction of Records***

A student's temporary record shall be destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system. The school system may offer the student, parent, or guardian the temporary record upon graduation or leaving school as long as the student, parent, or guardian acknowledges and accepts the temporary record by written consent. A student's transcript may be destroyed no sooner than 60 years after the student leaves the school system. A school principal or his or her designee may destroy misleading, outdated, or irrelevant information contained in the temporary record during the time the student is enrolled in the school district, provided the parent, guardian, or eligible student has been notified in writing and given the opportunity to inspect and copy any of the information prior to destruction. All parents/guardians of children in the Plymouth Schools have the right to inspection of their children's records in accordance with [M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 34D](#), and [M.G.L Chapter 71, Section 34E](#). Also, a student, eighteen years of age or older, has the right of access to all records relative to him/her in accordance with M.G.L. Ch.71, Sections 34D, 34E. M.G.L. Chapter 71, specifies detailed procedures that govern access to student records by parents who do not have physical custody of their children. For more information, please contact the principal. Courtesy and the need for maintenance of order suggest that anyone interested in exercising the above right make his/her request in writing for an appointment with the principal so that possible questions may be answered.

### ***Non-Custodial Parent Access to Student Records***

The Massachusetts Board of Education has amended Student Records Regulations concerning access to student records by non-custodial parents. As set forth in the amended regulation, 603 CMR 23.07(5), 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 visitation, 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, or
- The parent has been denied visitation, or
- 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, or
- There is an order of a probate and family court judge, which prohibits the distribution of student records to the parent.

## ***Tobacco Use***

In accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 37H of the Education Reform Act of 1993, the use of any tobacco products (and/or paraphernalia) within the school buildings, the school facilities, on the school grounds or school buses, and at all school functions regardless of location by any individual, including students, school and/or non-school personnel, shall be prohibited.

## ***Use and/or Possession of Alcoholic Beverages or Drugs***

### **Including Over-the-Counter Drugs/Inhalants and "Look-Alike Drugs"**

The Plymouth Schools have recognized the importance of maintaining a workplace, which is drug and alcohol-free to enhance the welfare of employees and students. A federal law, The Drug-Free Workplace Act, requires the Plymouth Schools to certify that they maintain a drug-free workplace as a condition of receiving federal grants and contracts. The requirements of this law allow the Plymouth Schools to reaffirm the following policy and their commitment to a workplace free of drugs and alcohol. It is the policy of Plymouth Schools to maintain an alcohol-free and drug-free workplace. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances or alcohol is prohibited while on duty or school department property. Any violations of this policy will be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including immediate suspension and dismissal.

***Over-the-counter drugs/items*** may be such items as caffeine pills, breath sprays, inhalants, cough syrups with alcohol content, aspirin, etc. No such over-the-counter drugs are allowed in school except under the supervision of the school nurse.

***Look-alike drugs*** are just that and generally sold as such. These substances are not allowed in school at all. Procedures to be taken when a student is found or suspected (due to manifested behavior) of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol:

- A student suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol and no contraband found. (In instances of manifested behavior suggesting that a student is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the student shall be escorted to the nurse's office where the condition will be attended to, and action taken as described.)
- A student is sent home under parental/guardian supervision.
- Conference with parent/guardian to determine facts and determine the outcome.
- Counselor assists in identifying programs available to help the student and family if the outcome of the conference finds the student under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

### **Use of Controlled Substance, Over-the-Counter Drug/Item, Look-Alike Drug, and/or Alcoholic Beverage**

#### **First Offense:**

- Notification of parent/guardian.
- Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
- Notification of police (only for controlled substances or alcohol). Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and building administrator, which may lead to further disciplinary action including expulsion.
- Counselor assists in identifying programs available to help students and families.

#### **Second Offense:**

- Notification of parent/guardian.

- Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
- Notification of police (only for controlled substances or alcohol). Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and principal, which may lead to further disciplinary action including expulsion.

**Possession of a Controlled Substance, Over-the-Counter Drug/Item, Look-Alike Drug, and/or Alcohol Beverage**

**First Offense:**

- Notification of parent/guardian.
- Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
- Notification of police (only for controlled substances or alcohol).
- Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and building administrator, which may result in further disciplinary action including expulsion.
- Counselor assists in identifying programs available to help students and families.

**Second Offense:**

- Notification of parent/guardian.
- Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
- Notification of police (only for controlled substances or alcohol).
- Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and principal, which may result in further disciplinary action including expulsion.

**Distribution of and/or Sale of a Controlled Substance, Look-Alike, Over-the-Counter Drug/Item, and/or Alcoholic Beverage**

- Notification of parent/guardian.
- Suspension of five (5) or more school days.
- Notification of police.
- Mandatory conference with parent/guardian and principal, which may result in expulsion.

**Paraphernalia used in drug activity shall be considered contraband and will be confiscated. If found in the possession of a student, it will result in:**

- Notification of parent/guardian
- Suspension of five (5) or more school days
- Notification of police

***Use of and/or Possession of Dangerous Objects***

Objects or substances, which, by their nature or misuse, constitute a threat to the safety of students, are forbidden. These objects include, but are not limited to, toy weapons or other facsimiles. Students in possession of such objects may be subject to a suspension of five (5) school days or more and, at the discretion of the building principal, a Central Office hearing, which may result in further disciplinary action up to and including a possible exclusion hearing. Actions which may cause injury to oneself, another student, and/or staff member may be subject to a suspension of one (1) to five (5) school days and, at the discretion of the building principal, a Central Office hearing, which may result in further disciplinary action up to and including a possible exclusion hearing.

## ***Management of Students with Head Injuries & Concussions***

The purpose of this policy is to assure that any student who sustains a concussion or head injury is managed properly. Plymouth Public Schools recognizes the importance of educating students, parents/guardians, athletic staff, teachers, guidance counselors, school nurse educators, and designated others to recognize signs and symptoms of a concussion or head injury; and to respond appropriately to facilitate prevention, management, and safe return to academic and athletic activities in students with a concussion or head injury.

- In accordance with Massachusetts state law and MA Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations related to Head Injuries and Concussions In Extracurricular Athletic Activities, the Plymouth Public Schools shall provide standardized procedures in regard to the prevention, management, and return to academic and athletic activities in middle and high school students who incur a head injury while involved in extracurricular athletic activities. This law also applies to students in the High School Marching Band. This policy and all related procedures are in compliance with Massachusetts General Law and MA DPH regulations. Out of concern for any student suffering from a concussion/head injury, this policy will apply to all middle and high school students who sustain a concussion/head injury, regardless of whether the injury occurred related to extracurricular athletic or marching band activities.
- The Athletic Director or designated individual in each school will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and related procedures.
- At the high school level, a Concussion Team consisting of the Athletic Director, Certified Athletic Trainer, Guidance Counselor, and School Nurse Educator will assume responsibility for the implementation of procedures associated with this policy.
- At the middle school level, a Concussion Team consisting of the designated Athletic Director, Guidance Counselor, and School Nurse Educator will assume responsibility for the implementation of procedures associated with this policy.
- Communication with all involved individuals is paramount to the successful management of students with head injuries. Plymouth Public Schools will maintain open communications between staff, students, parents, healthcare providers, and others involved in order to optimize recovery for students with head injuries to return to health and succeed in their education.
- At the elementary school level, Plymouth School Health Nurses will assess, monitor, and manage elementary students with concussions in collaboration with the student's health care provider in regard to physical activity and academics.

Review and revision of this policy shall occur as needed, and at least every two years.



**Appendix A: Elementary  
School Level  
Information and Rules**

## ***Elementary School Hours***

This schedule pertains to students in all eight of Plymouth’s Elementary Schools.

<b>8:50 a.m.</b>	Students enter.
<b>9:05 a.m.</b>	Classes begin.
<b>3:20 p.m.</b>	The school day ends.
<b>3:25 p.m.</b>	Dismissal begins.

Adult supervision of students is not available before 8:50 a.m. Please do not drop off your child and leave him or her unattended. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after 9:05 a.m. Students’ attendance records are marked as an early dismissal’ if students are dismissed before 3:20 p.m.

## ***Early Dismissal Days***

There are a number of scheduled half-day sessions, or Early Dismissal days, within the school year calendar. Students in grades K – 5 are dismissed at 1:05 p.m. on these days. Please see the calendar in the handbook for specific dates.

## ***Grades K-2***

Kindergarten, first, and second-grade students acquire the foundational skills they will need to continue their growth in literacy and numeracy. Considerable time is spent each day developing students’ skills as speakers, listeners, readers, writers, and students of mathematics. The academic program at these grade levels also includes lessons in science, health education, and social studies as well as weekly lessons with specialists in the areas of art, music, library information technology, and physical education. Kindergarten students also have many opportunities to interact, work, and play with other students to enhance their social development. Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to measure student progress at regular intervals. Parents have a formal opportunity to meet with teachers during December and March. Written report cards are issued in January and June for Kindergarten; and in November, March, and June for grades 1-2. Parents and teachers may find it desirable to conference more frequently.

## ***Grades 3 and 5***

Third, fourth and fifth-grade teachers are responsible for strengthening and extending students’ abilities in the areas of reading, language arts, and mathematics. Students and teachers at these grade levels spend more time on lessons in the areas of science, health education, and social studies. Students participate in weekly art, music, library information technology, and physical education classes. Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to measure student progress at regular intervals. Parents have a formal opportunity to meet with teachers during December and March. Written report cards are issued in November, March, and June for grades 3-5. Parents and teachers may find it desirable to conference more frequently. Students in Grades 3-5 are required to participate in state assessments.

## ***Recess***

Recess provides students in grades K–5 with opportunities for cooperative play, development of social skills, and physical movement. Recess is generally part of a 45-minute period that includes both lunch and recess. Appropriate seasonal attire must be worn each day to participate in outdoor recess activities. Closed-toed shoes are recommended. Wearing open-toed shoes may limit access to recess activities.

## Assessment and Report Cards

Report Cards are designed as a tool to provide parents with clear communication about a student’s progress and performance. At the end of each marking period, students will be graded on curriculum expectations for that particular time period. The standards-based report card reports the students’ academic performance, effort, work habits, and social-emotional development based on Plymouth grade-level standards and expectations. Academic standards are derived from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for each subject area. Report cards are just one of the many ways in which teachers communicate with parents; ongoing communication and sharing of concerns or positive news are encouraged.

<b>Performance Levels (PL)</b>	
<b>E</b>	<b>E = Meeting Grade Level Expectation/Standard at Exceptional Level</b> The student demonstrates an in-depth understanding of essential and extended skills and concepts. Performance is characterized by the ability to consistently apply this knowledge to complex problem-solving situations with accuracy, independence, and a high level of quality.
<b>M</b>	<b>M = Meeting the Expectation/Standard</b> The student demonstrates proficiency in essential skills and concepts. Performance is characterized by the ability to apply this knowledge with accuracy, independence, and quality.
<b>P</b>	<b>P = Progressing Toward the Expectation/Standard</b> The student is developing some understanding of essential skills and concepts but has not yet met the standard. Performance is characterized by varied consistency, independence, and quality.
<b>N</b>	<b>N = Not Yet Progressing Toward the Expectation/Standard</b> The student has not yet begun to demonstrate an understanding of essential skills and concepts. The student is making minimal progress toward meeting the standard at this time. Considerable teacher support and guidance are needed.

Social & Emotional Development, Study Responsibility, and Work Habits are also assessed. ‘Key’ is as follows:

<b>O</b>	Outstanding
<b>S</b>	Satisfactory
<b>I</b>	Improvement Needed

Our Standards-Based Report Cards also provide ample opportunity for teachers’ comments.

### Homework

The purpose of homework is to review, practice, or extend concepts taught in school. Students may be given long-term assignments and should manage their time accordingly. Homework is not assigned on Fridays. However, long-term projects may extend over weekends and holidays. Formal homework is not generally assigned in kindergarten. Parents and guardians may be asked to reinforce at-home concepts that are taught in class. Students may be asked to bring in items from homes, such as books, pictures, or toys for use in class. **Students are also encouraged to read every night, either independently or with an adult.**

## ***Homework Tips***

The following are suggestions that parents and guardians may find helpful.

- Set a regularly scheduled time for homework each evening.
- Provide a quiet place free from distractions, such as television, phone, and other family activities.
- Check each assignment to see that your child has completed the assignment and that it is done to the best of the child's ability.
- Encourage your child to fulfill his/her homework obligation. Offer positive encouragement and then contact your child's teacher if you perceive that your child is experiencing stress when completing homework assignments.
- Recognize that each child is an individual and may develop his or her effective approach to completing homework.
- Encourage and support your child in self-study activities. These may include reading, journal writing, logic games, and research of a hobby or special interest.
- Parents may extend learning opportunities by taking children to museums, libraries, plays, programs, and cultural opportunities that are available in Plymouth and beyond.

## ***Responsibilities of Students***

The primary responsibility of all students is to assume active participation in their classes and school activities. To that end, students are expected to:

- Put forth their best effort.
- Treat all individuals in the school environment, including teachers, aides, service providers, cafeteria staff, bus drivers, guest visitors, and other students with respect.
- Act in a manner that ensures their safety and the safety of others.
- Use appropriate language at all times.
- Show good manners in all relationships at all times.
- Behave in a manner that is consistent with the rules and regulations that are drawn from federal, state, and local laws.
- Show respect for school property by using wastebaskets and trash containers to keep the school neat and clean.
- Use restrooms quickly and properly and return directly to class.
- Be silent and orderly during the fire and all emergency drills. Follow the directions of the adult(s) in charge.

## ***Responsibilities of Parents and Guardians***

Parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children. They do not relinquish the right and duty to educate but delegate a part of their responsibilities to the school. We ask those parents and guardians:

- Become familiar with the Student Handbook and its policies and procedures.
- Discuss the contents of the Handbook with their children.
- Sign and return Handbook Signature Pages
- Work with school personnel to provide the best possible education for their children.
- Communicate with their children's teachers.
- Contact their children's teachers, counselors, or building principals about concerns.
- Provide the school with emergency phone numbers and contacts.
- Avoid excessive absenteeism or tardiness.

## ***Student Behavior Guidelines***

The following rules are designed to provide a safe, respectful, and orderly environment for students and staff.

### **Classroom Rules**

- Students are expected to show respect for teachers and students in their classrooms and throughout the school.
- Students are expected to cooperate with and follow the directives of teachers.
- Students are expected to be attentive, well-behaved, and put forth their best effort in class.
- Students are expected to behave in a way that reflects an understanding of and an appreciation for the safety of oneself and others.

### **Cafeteria Rules**

- Students are expected to show respect for students and school staff in the cafeteria.
- Students are expected to cooperate with and follow the directives of school staff who provide supervision in the cafeteria.
- Students are expected to be polite, to use table manners, and to use a conversational tone of voice.
- Students are expected to remain seated until permitted to move about the cafeteria.
- Students may lose privileges to eat with other students if they do not observe the rules.

### **Playground Rules**

- Students are expected to cooperate with and follow the directives of those who provide supervision on the playground.
- Students should know and observe the boundaries of the play area.
- Students must share the playground facilities and equipment.
- Students must report all injuries, at the time they occur, to the staff members on duty.
- Students must be aware that inappropriate physical behavior will not be tolerated.
- Students may lose recess privileges if they do not observe playground rules.
- Students should wear clothing and footwear that allows for safe navigation of the playground and outdoor spaces. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of the clothing and footwear.

## ***Rules and Consequences***

While teachers and administrators expect that students will follow school rules, they also acknowledge that students sometimes fail to observe school rules. Consequences may include a loss of privileges, a loss of recess, detention either before or after school, in-school suspension, and out-of-school suspension. Consequences may also provide students with opportunities to reflect and write about their behavior and its impact on others. This time could include teaching the student ways to approach the situation positively in the future. The following chart serves as a guide for school administrators when students fail to observe rules. Principals will take into consideration the age and maturity of students when they fail to observe a rule. Principals have the right to customize the consequences, as circumstances require.

Type of Problem	Common Examples	Common Consequences
<p><b>Type 1:</b> Actions that create disturbances in and around the school. Actions that show disrespect for the health, welfare, and property of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Class disruptions</li> <li>▪ Showing disrespect to others</li> <li>▪ Throwing objects</li> <li>▪ Roughhousing</li> <li>▪ Inappropriate gestures/language</li> </ul>	<p><b>Progression of Consequences May Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Student conference</li> <li>▪ Parent/ guardian contact</li> <li>▪ Loss of recess</li> </ul>
<p><b>Type 2:</b> More serious actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Possession of tobacco products/smoking</li> <li>▪ Refusal to report to an assigned area</li> <li>▪ Excessive, unexcused tardiness</li> <li>▪ Intentionally disturbing a school function</li> </ul>	<p><b>Progression of Consequences May Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Loss of recess</li> <li>▪ In-school suspension</li> <li>▪ Parent/guardian contact</li> <li>▪ Out-of-school suspension</li> <li>▪ parent/guardian conference</li> </ul>
<p><b>Type 3:</b> Defiant behavior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fist fighting</li> <li>▪ Displaying verbal abuse toward others</li> <li>▪ Threatening or displaying physical abuse toward people or property</li> <li>▪ Sexual language</li> <li>▪ Stealing</li> <li>▪ Defacing school property</li> <li>▪ Leaving school grounds</li> <li>▪ Truancy from school/class</li> <li>▪ Identity theft</li> </ul>	<p><b>Possible Consequences May Include</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The in-school suspension may be followed by detention(s) assigned at the discretion of the principal</li> <li>▪ Parent/guardian conference</li> <li>▪ Out-of-school suspension</li> </ul> <p><b>Restitution</b> (first, second, third offense, where appropriate)</p>
<p><b>Type 4:</b> Gross Misconduct</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stealing by threat or use of force</li> <li>▪ Premeditated physical assault</li> <li>▪ Possession/use of fireworks, matches, lighters, incendiary devices</li> <li>▪ Sexual harassment</li> <li>▪ Threatening or displaying physical abuse toward others</li> <li>▪ Tampering with fire equipment; false fire alarm</li> <li>▪ Discrimination, Hazing, or Vandalism</li> </ul>	<p><b>Consequences May Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suspension, with mandatory parent/guardian conference with building administrator (which may result in further disciplinary action up to and including possible expulsion from school)</li> <li>▪ Chapter 766 referral, if not previously reported</li> <li>▪ Notification of police (where appropriate)</li> <li>▪ Restitution (where appropriate)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Type 5:</b> Possession of alcohol, drugs, dangerous objects, and/or weapons</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Objects or substances, which, by their nature or misuse, constitute a threat to the safety of students.</li> <li>▪ These objects include, but are not limited to, toy weapons or other facsimiles.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Consequences May Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Suspension, with mandatory parent/guardian conference with building administrator (which may result in further disciplinary action up to and including possible expulsion from school)</li> <li>▪ Chapter 766 referral, if not previously reported</li> <li>▪ Notification of police (where appropriate)</li> <li>▪ Expulsion</li> </ul>



**Appendix B: Middle  
School Level  
Information and Rules**

**Plymouth Community Intermediate School  
Plymouth South Middle School**

## ***Middle School Philosophy***

Plymouth Community Intermediate School and Plymouth South Middle School are committed to fostering an educational and social environment that addresses the unique needs of emerging adolescents. Further, the schools serve as bridges between the structured framework in elementary school and the self-direction in high school. A diverse set of learning experiences is provided, exposing the students to a wide range of academic, aesthetic, cultural, and occupational opportunities. In each curriculum area, basic skills are stressed to provide students with the basis for further learning. It is our professional responsibility to demand high standards of performance from our students so that they will be successful in tomorrow's world.

## ***Goals for all Students***

Success is built from a variety of different directions. Middle school students are expected to:

- Attend school every day and arrive on time
- Have all assigned work completed
- Have all appropriate materials
- Make the school community a positive learning environment through their behavior
- Be accountable for their actions and be fully cognizant of the guidelines contained in the handbook
- Respect all individuals in the school environment - teachers, aides, service workers, bus drivers, and other students

## ***Grade 6***

Students in grade 6 are assigned to a team of two or three teachers. Each team of teachers works together to teach Math, Science, Social Studies, and English Language Arts. In addition to this, students will have teachers in other off-team courses. Grade six students are ready to assume more responsibility for behavior, classwork, and homework. Teachers, guidance counselors, and house administrators are here to provide support and guidance throughout the school year. Students are encouraged to ask questions and seek advice at any time. Many opportunities for involvement in school and community service will exist. We encourage participation. Participation will help a student grow as an individual and make school a more enjoyable and successful place for everyone.

<b>Academic</b>	<b>Enrichment</b>	<b>Music Program</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● English Language Arts</li><li>● Mathematics</li><li>● Ancient Civilizations</li><li>● Science</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Visual Art</li><li>● Technology Engineering</li><li>● Health</li><li>● Exploratory Music</li><li>● Physical Education</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Band</li><li>● Orchestra</li><li>● Chorus</li></ul>

## ***Grade 7***

Students and teachers will be part of a "team" and will function almost like a "school within a school". The focus will be on cooperative learning experiences and increasing confidence to meet any goal set by the student or for the student by the teachers. By the end of seventh grade, students should have the tools to make better-informed and more independent decisions and be adequately prepared for the expectations of an eighth grader.

Academic	Enrichment	Music Program	World Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English</li> <li>Language Arts</li> <li>Mathematics</li> <li>World History &amp; Geography</li> <li>Science</li> <li>Literacy &amp; Learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual Art</li> <li>Health</li> <li>Technology Engineering</li> <li>Physical Education</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Band</li> <li>Orchestra</li> <li>Chorus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction to French</li> <li>Introduction to Spanish</li> </ul>

### Grade 8

Grade 8 is a very important year in itself, and for high school preparation. Teachers will still keep a watchful eye, but, during this year, the students are expected to become increasingly more independent in their studies. The students are expected to grow and mature both academically and personally. School responsibilities have not changed. It is still required to complete assignments and homework regularly, and showing respect for teachers, school staff, and peers is still required. Failure to follow basic guidelines will affect grades as well as relationships with others. Performance this year has a tremendous impact on a high school student's future.

Academic	Enrichment	Music Program	World Language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>English</li> <li>Language Arts</li> <li>Mathematics</li> <li>Civics</li> <li>Science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Visual Art</li> <li>Health</li> <li>Research</li> <li>Physical Education</li> <li>Make It Your Business</li> <li>Technology Engineering</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Band</li> <li>Orchestra</li> <li>Chorus</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>French I</li> <li>Spanish I</li> </ul>

### Academic Expectations

#### Grade Explanation for Grades 6, 7 and 8

Excellent Quality		Good Quality		Acceptable Quality		Poor Quality		Failing	
A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69		
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66	F	0-59
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

<b>WP</b>	<i>Withdrawn Passing</i>	<b>WDN</b>	<i>Withdrawn from School</i>
<b>WF</b>	<i>Withdrawn Failing</i>	<b>I</b>	<i>Incomplete</i>
<b>P/F</b>	<i>Pass/Fail</i>	<b>M</b>	<i>Medical</i>
<b>AUD</b>	<i>Audit</i>	<b>GNA</b>	<i>Goals Not Attained (for Special Education Students)</i>

\*A grade of incomplete (I) is assigned to signify temporary deferment of a regular final letter grade. It is used sparingly in compelling situations when a student is not able to complete work in the course by the end of the semester due to extenuating circumstances beyond the ability of the student to predict and control. Incompletes must be completed within two weeks of the close of the marking period, or earlier. If exceptions are required, they must be approved by the building administration.

### **Student Failures**

It is the practice at all Plymouth Public High Schools and Middle Schools to employ a minimum grade policy for all students. Accordingly, students will receive a minimum grade of 45% during the 1st and 3rd term of a full-year course, and the first term of a semesterised course (exceptions to terms not referenced above may be made at the principal's discretion). While anything below 60% ("F") is considered a failing grade, we strive to allow students to work toward a passing grade for the year. Students who receive a minimum grade for the term will have this noted in the comment section of their report card.

### **Minimum Grade Scale**

(Student earned versus documented) The following grade will be recorded on the report card and factored into the student's cumulative numerical average for the semester and/or year according to the policy noted above:

0 - 45 = 45%

45 or above = actual grade earned by the student

### **Honor Roll for Grades 6, 7 and 8**

An honor roll based on scholastic achievement is published at the end of each marking period. The levels of honor roll achievement and scholastic requirements for each level are as follows:

<b>High Honors (Grades 7 &amp; 8 only)</b>	<i>No letter grade below A- in every subject.</i>
<b>Honors (Grades 6, 7 &amp; 8 only)</b>	<i>No letter grade below B- in every subject.</i>
<b>Honorable Mention (Grades 6, 7 &amp; 8 only)</b>	<i>No letter grade below B- in every subject except one, which may carry a C or C+.</i>

## ***Ways to Get Academic Help***

Academic expectations and responsibilities increase for students at the middle school level. Academic work and grades can create rewards but often create frustration and fear of non-promotion. Summer school may be required for those students having excessive absences, incomplete work, or failing grades. Students and families are encouraged to take advantage of the available help. Please call your child's counselor for more information about the following opportunities.

- **Communication** of current and upcoming projects, tests, and quizzes.
- **Stay for extra help after school with subject teachers.** This is the simplest – but often least used – tool for success. Teachers list the days they stay for help. Late buses may be available.
- **Tutoring** – may be available before school
- Use of the **“agenda book”** for a list of daily assignments as well as parent, teacher, and student communication.
- **Guidance counselors** are available for help or advice with school or family issues. Each counselor aims to help students make the best decisions about their present and future. Guidance counselors are trained to provide students with ways to cope with anything in their lives that may affect how and what they do in school. Students are encouraged to get to know their counselors.
- Come to our **Parent Night Programs** and our monthly **Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)** meetings or **School Council** meetings where academic issues and school questions are often discussed.

## ***Homework Policy***

The Plymouth School Department considers homework an integral part of the academic curriculum. Homework provides an opportunity for reinforcement and expansion of classroom learning and is essential in teaching student's accountability and responsibility. Homework typically consists of but is not limited to, reading, skill development activities, writing assignments, and other appropriate learning tasks. Homework is monitored by teachers and is factored into student evaluation. Students should expect homework almost every night. Families should establish a routine that sets aside home study time every day. Assignments should be written down.

Agenda books are helpful for this purpose and are available at each school.

## ***Cheating/Plagiarism***

Any student who has cheated on any academic exercise will receive no credit for that exercise. Plagiarism is a form of cheating. A parent/guardian will be notified by the involved teacher in all instances of cheating. The investigation of the claim of cheating and plagiarism (including the use of Artificial Intelligence modalities) will involve the student, teacher, and administration.

### ***Definitions of Cheating***

Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain or aiding another to obtain credit for work or improvement in evaluation or performance by any dishonest or deceptive means. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: lying, copying from another's test or examination; discussion at any time of questions or answers on an examination or test unless such discussion is specifically authorized by the instructor; taking or using displaying notes, "cheat sheets" or other information devices inappropriate to the prescribed test conditions; allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent the same.

### ***Definition of Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were their own without giving proper credit to the source. Examples include but are not limited to the following: the submission of work, either in whole or in part completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that rightfully belong to another; failure to use quotation marks or other means of setting apart such as indentation when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence or even a part thereof; close or lengthy paraphrasing or another writing without credit or originality use of another project of the program without giving credit.

## ***Makeup Work***

Completing classwork and homework is crucial for academic progress. Students will be allowed to make up the work they missed during all absences. Students will be allowed two days for every day absent to make up work through the end of the term. In the event of an emergency or other extenuating circumstance, teachers may grant students additional time to do their make-up work. Students who are unable to complete all the work missed by the established deadline may receive partial credit for the work completed and turned in. Students who fail to make up any of their work will receive no credit. In instances when a student is absent for an extended period of time (i.e., 4 days or more), parents may make arrangements to obtain the missed work and should expect that staff will require a minimum of 24 hours to collect the missed assignments. A student should not be required to make up a test the day s/he returns from an absence. This does not apply to in-school suspensions.

## ***Class/Course Changes***

- May be initiated by the student's parent/guardian submitting a written request to the principal.
- The counselor will make a recommendation to the principal regarding the change.
- Level changes in courses may be made during the year with the approval of the guidance counselor and the principal.
- Changes to elective classes must be requested within ten (10) days of the first-class meeting.

## ***Promotion Policy***

Each student's report card indicates four-term grades and one final grade for the year in each major subject. This final grade is what is used to determine promotion. Sixth, seventh and eighth-grade students who pass their major academic subjects will be eligible for the promotion. Students failing two or more of their academic subjects may want to attend summer tutoring. Promotion or retention of any student failing two or more subjects is at the principal's discretion. We are a community dedicated to individual growth for our students. Family members or staff may request a review of a decision of non-promotion with the principal.

## ***Attendance/Absence***

Students are expected to attend every day that school is in session. School attendance is governed by state law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, Sections 1 & 2, which state that no child may exceed seven (7) days absence from school in any six months except for medical reasons). All students are required to be in attendance for 90% of the school year. Students failing to attend 90% of the school year may be referred to the supervisor of attendance and will be reviewed for non-promotion to the next grade level. Parents or guardians are required to contact the school on the morning of the day the student is absent (P.C.I.S.: 508-830-4450 or P.S.M.S.: 508-224-2725). If students are unaccounted for, the school will make every attempt to contact the parents or guardians. Students arriving at school after the first bell will be considered tardy. If at all possible, the parent/guardian should accompany the student into the school's office. If the parent/guardian cannot accompany the student to school, a note should be sent in with him/her. When returning to school after an absence, the student is expected to bring a note from home, signed by a parent/guardian, to clearly explain the date(s) and reason(s) for the absence. This note, including the full name, must be given to a homeroom teacher on the day of return. Notes must be provided even if a phone call has been made to notify the school of the absence. Students who do not bring absent notes will be considered truant. Truant students are subject to disciplinary action. Only the school administration has the authority to approve absences.

## ***Excused Absences***

Excused absences may include:

- an illness or injury that prevents the student from attending school. The illness or injury must be verified by a physician (parents/guardians have up to 5 days to send in a physician's note)
- a death in the immediate family (parent, sibling, grandparent, aunt, uncle, cousin) or other significant personal or family crisis
- suspension from school
- court appearances
  
- school-sponsored field trips
- medical or psychological tests during the school day. The parent must show evidence (such as a

- note from the health center) that the tests could not be scheduled after school
- religious holidays

## ***Tardiness***

Tardiness to school or class can have negative effects on success in school; therefore, it should be kept to a minimum. Students who are repeatedly tardy may be subject to disciplinary action. Tardiness to school after 11:30 A.M. will count as an absence from school. Tardiness of more than 10 minutes to a class (15 minutes to the first period) without a valid pass will count as an absence from that class. If tardiness to school results in missing or being more than 10 minutes late to a class(es) (15 minutes to the first period), absence(s) will be recorded for the affected class(es).

## ***What Is an Unexcused Absence?***

Some parents think that any absence will be excused as long as the parent sends a note. *This is not true.* Here are a few examples of unexcused absences—even if the parent sends a note:

- repetitive and chronic absence due to illness or injury. In these cases, for the absence to be excused, the parent must submit a letter from a physician – within five (5) school days of the absence – verifying that the student was too sick or injured to go to school.
- the student needed to babysit
- cutting class
- family vacation
- extension of a religious or cultural holiday beyond the designated day or days on the school calendar
- attending driver's education classes for road practice during the school day

## ***Coming Late and Leaving Early***

If a student misses more than twenty minutes of a class, it will count as an absence from that class. Students having nineteen absences from a class may be denied credit.

## ***Early Dismissal Procedure***

A student is asked to:

- Bring his/her dismissal note to the house secretary in the morning. The note should give the student's full name, the time to be dismissed, and the name of the person who will be picking up the student. The secretary will issue the student a dismissal pass.
- Show the dismissal pass to the teacher at the beginning of the class.
- Report to the main office at the designated time to await dismissal. A photo ID will be required of the person signing a student out of the building. If there is any court decision documentation, which would restrict dismissal to only certain identified adults, we need to know this and receive a copy of this information. If another adult is likely to pick a student up in an emergency, parents/guardians must add his/her name to the registration cards. Dental and medical appointments should not be scheduled during any part of the school day. Telephone requests for dismissal will not be honored. School dismissals will occur only in the event of illness. Students must first see the school nurse, who is authorized to dismiss any student. No student should leave the school directly from the Nurse's Office. The student must first report to and check out from the Main Office.

## ***Attendance at Extracurricular Activities***

Students who intend on participating in extra-curricular activities must attend school on the day of the activity. Emergency and unusual circumstances will be considered through administrative review. For evening activities such as performances, concerts, and cultural events in which the student is not performing, we ask that students be in the presence of an adult. We expect that our audiences will be able to view school performances without interruption or distraction. Students found disturbing the event or wandering the building may be removed or may be subject to disciplinary action.

## ***Dances/School Functions***

Throughout the school year, dances and various school functions are held and are chaperoned by school personnel. Permission slips are sent home one week before the dance and ticket sales are conducted in the cafeteria during lunches. The cost of the dance, as well as the date and times, are noted on the slip. Students must have a valid ticket to enter. No dance tickets will be sold at the door. Students are not allowed to leave the dance until its conclusion. Parents and guardians must arrange the pickup of their child promptly after the dance. For safety reasons, pickup must be on school property.

## ***Corridor Passing***

When walking in the corridors, students are to keep to the right. They are not to run or yell in the corridors. Following these rules will help to prevent confusion and keep everyone safe. A pass is always needed when traveling alone.

## ***Late Bus***

The late bus may be provided only for those students involved in school-sponsored activities. The late bus will transport students to the vicinity of their homes using the main roads in town. The late bus is essentially an extension of the school itself. Improper conduct aboard the bus is to be treated as a school offense, subject to punishment at the discretion of the school administration. This may well mean denial of the privilege of transportation. Please see pages 20-21 for more information regarding "School Bus Procedures & Regulations." Please contact your child's school for information regarding late bus routes and stops.

## ***Lockers***

Having a locker is a privilege and a serious responsibility. A few important points:

- Visits to lockers should be kept to a minimum and are up to the teacher's discretion.
- Students must not give a locker combination to anyone.
- Students must not use a locker assigned to any other student.
- A locker will be assigned on an individual or shared basis (as space permits) for as long as a student is a member of the school. The school will not be responsible for missing articles taken from any locker. Anything of importance or value should not be stored in a locker.
- Students should check with the administrator responsible for the locker assignment whenever there is a problem.
- Lockers are the property of the school department and are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. It is the responsibility of the student to keep the locker neat and clean at all times.

## ***PTA***

The Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) provides many services to students and teachers. Among its activities, the association raises money for field trips, special events, and after-school activities. We ask all parents/guardians to consider membership in their PTA and attend the monthly meetings. Our school is a better place when parents/guardians and teachers work together.

## ***Telephone/Cell Phone Use***

During the school day, the use of cell phones is prohibited. Cell Phones should remain in a designated area and may be used with teacher or administration discretion. However, in the event of an emergency, a student may use a school telephone. To use a school phone, the student should request a pass from his/her teacher to go to the house office. From there, the call can be made. Students, if at all possible, should avoid leaving class to make a call. Parents wanting to contact their child at school should call the office, not their child's cell phone, even if just to leave a message.

## ***Cafeteria***

- Students are expected to show respect for students and school staff in the cafeteria.
- Students are expected to cooperate with and follow the directives of school staff who provide supervision in the cafeteria.
- Students are expected to be polite, to use table manners, and to use a conversational tone of voice.
- Students are expected to remain seated until permitted to move about the cafeteria.
- Students may lose privileges to eat with other students if they do not observe the rules.
- Foods, drinks, and snacks that have 100mg of caffeine or more are not allowable during the school day and will be confiscated.

## ***Behavior/Consequences***

The following chart has been developed to demonstrate the possible consequences, which will follow misbehaviors such as those listed in the examples. This chart is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all problems or examples, but it is hoped that it gives the student and parent/guardian an idea of the specific areas of concern and the types of consequences which will typically follow. The goal is to apply this concept of differing levels of inappropriate behavior to all disciplinary problems in a fair, consistent manner. It is also recognized that there are extenuating circumstances, which relate to a particular problem behavior. Such circumstances may indicate that a specific incident should be dealt with more severely or less severely than the typical situation. Thus, this policy statement includes a degree of administrative discretion as is in the best interest of an individual student. The commission of, or participation in, any of the following types of activities, within the school buildings, on the school grounds, or at school-sponsored events is prohibited.

## ***Explanation of Consequences***

### **Warning:**

If an administrative warning is given, it is an indication that the behavior is inappropriate, and that continuation of this behavior may result in serious consequences.

### **Conference:**

Talking often prevents further problems. Conferences may take place with teachers, administrators, counselors, fellow students, and/or parents/guardians.

### **Essays:**

An essay may be assigned as part of any disciplinary action, with the intent that the student will use the essay to reflect on his/her more positive actions in the future.

### **Detentions:**

Detentions are assigned for not following school rules. Detentions take priority over all other activities, including after-school jobs. However, religious activities, medical appointments or counseling appointments verified by a parental note will result in a postponement of the detention. Students will be given at least twenty-four hours' notice before detention is to be served. Failure to stay for detention could result in additional disciplinary action.

## ***In-School Suspension (ISS):***

In-School Suspension occurs when a student is expected to attend school but is suspended from classes. The student will be supervised in an area outside of his/her regular classrooms and will be provided with classwork. An in-school suspension may be for all or part of a school day.

***Out-of-School Suspension (OSS):***

Out-of-School Suspension occurs when a student is suspended from school and required to remain at home. The student is restricted from the school building and grounds and may not participate in any school activity or sport while on out-of-school suspension.

***Exclusion from School:***

Exclusion is a long-term suspension from school for a duration of up to 90 school days, depending upon the judgment of the principal. The student will receive an alternate educational service, which will be coordinated between the administration, guidance counselor, and student.

***Expulsion from School:***

Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾ .


**Behavior/Consequences Chart**

Type of Problem	Common Examples	Common Consequences
<p><b>TYPE 1:</b> Actions that create disturbances in and around the school, or that show disrespect for the health, welfare, and/or property of others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chewing gum</li> <li>▪ Distribution/selling of gum/candy</li> <li>▪ Tardiness to Class</li> <li>▪ Class disruptions</li> <li>▪ Spitting</li> <li>▪ Pass Violations</li> <li>▪ Failure to stay for detention</li> <li>▪ Showing disrespect to adults and students</li> <li>▪ Throwing objects</li> <li>▪ Roughhousing</li> <li>▪ Use of rude, obscene, or improper language/gestures</li> <li>▪ Excessive, unexcused tardiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detention, parent/guardian contact</li> <li>▪ ISS</li> <li>▪ OSS one day - parent/guardian conference</li> </ul>
<p><b>TYPE 2:</b> More serious actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Refusal to report to assigned areas</li> <li>▪ Cafeteria Disturbance</li> <li>▪ Intentionally disturbing a school function</li> <li>▪ Inappropriate behavior at school events</li> <li>▪ Misrepresentation of parent/guardian/school communication</li> <li>▪ Recording and/or taking photos of staff and/or students during a school setting without their knowledge.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Detention, parent/guardian contact</li> <li>▪ ISS</li> <li>▪ OSS one day, parent/guardian contact</li> <li>▪ OSS 1 - 3 days, parent/guardian conference</li> <li>▪ Removal from school events</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Repeated Type 1 behavior(s)</li> </ul>	
<p><b>TYPE 3:</b> Openly defiant behavior and actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Verbal abuse/profanity</li> <li>▪ Possession/Use of tobacco products</li> <li>▪ Sexual language</li> <li>▪ Profanity/Civil Rights Violation</li> <li>▪ Stealing or taking what is not yours</li> <li>▪ Defacing school or anyone's property</li> <li>▪ Truancy from school or class</li> <li>▪ Leaving school grounds</li> <li>▪ Willful, repeated misbehavior</li> <li>▪ Repeated Type 1 &amp; 2 behaviors</li> <li>▪ Smoking/Vaping</li> <li>▪ Posting recordings of staff and/or student(s) during a school setting to any platform and/or message group(s) without their knowledge and consent, or with the intention of harassment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ISS</li> <li>▪ OSS one day, parent/guardian contact</li> <li>▪ OSS 1 - 3 days, parent/guardian conference</li> <li>▪ Restitution when appropriate</li> </ul>
<p><b>TYPE 4:</b> Dangerous and seriously disruptive behavior</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Actions that may cause injury to others</li> <li>▪ Fighting/Instigating a Fight</li> <li>▪ Abuse of others/discrimination/sexual harassment</li> <li>▪ Swearing at an adult</li> <li>▪ Dangerous behavior such as throwing hard objects, tripping, pulling chairs from beneath other people, etc.</li> <li>▪ Possession of and/or igniting matches or lighters</li> <li>▪ Possession/use of stink bombs</li> <li>▪ "Pantsing"</li> <li>▪ Discrimination</li> <li>▪ Repeated Type 1, 2, and 3 behaviors</li> <li>▪ Identity Theft/Harmful misuse of technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ OSS 1 - 3 Days, parent/guardian contact</li> <li>▪ OSS 1-3 days, parent/guardian conference</li> <li>▪ OSS 1-5 days with a review for further action</li> </ul>

<p><b>TYPE 5: Gross misconduct</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stealing by threat or use of force</li> <li>▪ Sexual harassment</li> <li>▪ Serious physical assault</li> <li>▪ Threatening/displaying physical abuse</li> <li>▪ Vandalism</li> <li>▪ Hazing</li> <li>▪ Destruction, damage, theft of school property or school information</li> <li>▪ Discrimination</li> <li>▪ Compromises other student information/privacy</li> <li>▪ Repeated Type 1, 2, 3, 4 behaviors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ OSS 3-10 days with a review for longer suspensions in the most serious instances.</li> <li>▪ Possible recommendation for Central Office Hearing for exclusion.</li> <li>▪ Referral to police will be made for violations of state law.</li> </ul>
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**Please note:**



- Restitution is required in addition to discipline for destruction, damage, and/or theft of property.
- Out-of-school suspensions may be used for multiple offenses of any type.
- Referral for a hearing may be made at any time during the discipline process where an out-of-school suspension has been issued.
- This is a list of common offenses. In no way is this list all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to discipline for behaviors/circumstances not listed above. Any school incident may be given more severe punishment at the discretion of the building principal or designee.



**Appendix C: High  
School Level  
Information and Rules**

**Plymouth South High School**

**Plymouth North High School**

## **Plymouth South High School Core Beliefs and Expectations**

The mission of Plymouth South High School is to deliver a rigorous, comprehensive education and expose students to authentic experiences in a caring, safe, and respectful environment. Plymouth South High School welcomes a diverse student body and prepares students to become critical thinkers, productive citizens, and independent learners in a changing society. The Plymouth South High School student will contribute to a culture of respect and will lead by example.

### ***Academic***

Successful PSHS students will:

- write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- read actively and critically for a variety of purposes.
- speak articulately and listen actively for a variety of purposes and audiences.
- use technology to acquire, create, and share information ethically and effectively.
- solve problems using critical thinking skills and creativity.
- set challenging educational and personal goals, and reflect upon their own progress towards meeting these goals.
- demonstrate academic integrity and accountability.

### ***Social***

Successful PSHS students will:

- exhibit responsibility and respect in the classroom and beyond.
- demonstrate success in collaborative and independent work.
- make healthy lifestyle decisions.

### ***Civic***

Successful PSHS students will:

- act as informed citizens with an understanding of democratic ideals and civic responsibilities
- participate in the community through volunteer opportunities, social action, and civic/school initiatives.

## **Plymouth North High School Mission Statement and Student Expectations**

### **Mission Statement for Plymouth North High School**

The mission of Plymouth North High School is to challenge all students and staff to reach their full academic and personal potential.

### ***The Plymouth North High School student is expected to:***

#### ***Academic Expectations***

- Read for understanding
- Write effectively for a variety of purposes
- Listen and speak effectively
- Employ critical thinking and problem-solving skills effectively
- Utilize appropriate technology effectively in communication, research, and problem-solving

## ***Social and Civic Expectations***

- Participate in activities and programs that heighten civic awareness and contribute positively to the school and community
- Demonstrate respect for the rights and property of others
- Demonstrate self-respect, self-discipline, and personal responsibility

## ***Why Visit the Guidance Office?***

The Guidance Department is committed to helping students by assisting and encouraging them to develop realistic concepts of themselves, as well as an awareness of the educational and career opportunities available to them, without regard to race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, or disability. Through the involvement of parents, teachers, administrators, and community resources, the members of the Guidance Department continually seek to improve the environment in which our students live and learn. Our guidance website also contains a wealth of support information, including an ongoing calendar of events, counselor contacts, and links to essential resources.

## ***College and Career Technical Education (CCTE)***

A College and Career Technical Education Program is offered to all students who wish to obtain a College and Career Technical Education certificate in addition to being able to meet their high school diploma requirements. Students enrolled in College and Career Technical Education will have the opportunity to participate at any academic level within the high school's program including Honors and Advanced Placement courses. Students will attend either Plymouth North or Plymouth South High School depending on where the CCTE program is housed. The College and Career Technical Education Program are designed to provide students with the highest quality of instruction available. Students will gain knowledge in a wide variety of careers and educational opportunities.

Options will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Apprenticeship, Internship, and Cooperative Education Programs
- Licensing where required
- Employment at entry-level and above
- Admission to post-secondary technical institutes
- Admission to both two and four-year colleges and universities

Students enrolled in the College and Career Technical Education Program completing the high school academic requirements, including MCAS and the CCTE program requirements will receive both a High School Diploma and a CCTE Certificate from Plymouth Public Schools.

### ***Requirements to obtain a CCTE Certificate:***

- Achieve a passing grade in the related theory component of the program.
- Achieve a passing grade in the specialized shop component of the program.
- Enrolled for a minimum of two years in one specific program.
- Demonstrate a level of proficiency in specific standards as determined by the CCTE Frameworks.
- Obtain the OSHA 10-Hour Health and Safety Certification.
- Certification/ServeSafe/CPR First Aid.
- Must complete their CCTE Program

### ***Requirements to remain in the CCTE Program:***

- Earn the required credits each year to be promoted to the next grade level, which includes passing all core subject area courses for the year.
- Exhibit appropriate behaviors within both the academic and college and career technical education settings within the guidelines of the school's discipline policy. Excessive discipline referrals are grounds

for removal from the program.

- Maintain acceptable attendance status within the guidelines of the school's attendance policy. Violation of the school's attendance policy may result in loss of class credit and removal from the program.

Students who do not remain academically eligible for College and Career Technical Education will be enrolled in a full academic program at their home district high school. Students may not drop a period of CTE studies to replace it with an academic course needed for credit recovery. In order to ensure equal access to the College and Career Technical Education program, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education approved College and Career Technical Education Admissions Policy has been adopted for all students. A copy of the Admissions Policy is available online at [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us).

### ***Early Graduation***

Most students find that the time required to complete their high school program is four years. Under extenuating circumstances, provisions can be made for students to be eligible to receive a diploma after three years. All course and credit requirements must be met including passing scores on all required MCAS tests, and there must be evidence of a strong record that indicates the potential for post-secondary success. Parents must request in writing that the student be considered for early graduation. The Principal and Guidance Department will consider each case individually. Any student who intends to graduate early should indicate their intention to do so in writing as soon as possible to their guidance counselor, but no later than April 1, of their sophomore year to ensure that students fulfill all of their graduation requirements.

### ***Course Changes***

- May be initiated by the student's parent/guardian submitting a written request to the principal.
- The counselor will make a recommendation to the principal regarding the change.
- Level changes in courses may be made during the year with the approval of the guidance counselor and the principal.
- Course change requests must be made within the first ten (10) school days of the semester.
- Any exception to the above can be appealed in a meeting with the building principal.

### ***Course Withdrawal***

If a course is dropped during the:

- 1<sup>st</sup> quarter – no grade is given
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter – WP (Withdrawn Passing) or WF (Withdrawn Failing) is submitted based on the course grade on the date of the drop (this applies to semester and year long courses).
- 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter – WP/WF is recorded as a final grade
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter – WP or F is recorded as a final grade

### ***Summer School***

The Summer School program allows a student to enroll in a course(s) failed during the regular academic year. The criteria for admission to such a course(s) are as follows:

- A minimum grade of 50 in the course(s) failed
- Recommendation of the teacher(s) in the course(s) failed
- Approval of the high school principal
- A maximum of two (2) courses may be taken during a summer program session
- A maximum of 20 credits earned in the summer program over a 4-year period may be applied toward the total credits needed for graduation

Summer school grades do not replace those earned during the school year. However, an earned summer school grade of not less than a "C" entitles a student to continue in courses of a sequential nature.

## Graduation and Promotion Requirements

### Promotion Requirements

GRADE LEVEL	CREDITS REQUIRED FOR PROMOTION
Grade 10	32.5
Grade 11	65
Grade 12	100
Graduation	135

*\*In addition, grade 12 students must earn 32.5 credits of coursework during their senior year and appropriately meet attendance requirements as outlined in our school attendance policy to graduate and participate in the graduation ceremony.*

### Graduation

To be eligible for a high school diploma, students must earn the above credits, as well as these minimum numbers of credits in the following areas:

ACADEMIC STUDENTS	CCTE STUDENTS
English..... 20 credits	English..... 20 credits
Social Studies..... 15 credits	Social Studies..... 15 credits
<i>(including US History 1 &amp; 2)</i>	<i>(including US History 1 &amp; 2)</i>
Mathematics.....20 credits <i>(including Algebra 2)</i>	Mathematics.....20 credits <i>(including Algebra 2)</i>
Science.....15 credits <i>(Medical Interventions is the only Biomedical course that may count towards graduation)</i>	Science.....10-15 credits <i>(Medical Interventions is the only Biomedical course that may count towards graduation)</i>
Physical Education..... 10 credits	Physical Education.....10 credits

Students are required to take Physical Education each year. Students are required to take Health Education in their freshman or sophomore year. Students are required to take English and Mathematics each year.

*Specific course requirements may be waived as a component of a student's Individualized Education Program, or by a high school principal, based on individual programs/circumstances. Subject area requirements may not be waived.*

In addition to the above, all Non-CCTE students must take at least one additional course from each column below:

Column A	Column B
<i>English</i>	<i>Art</i>
<i>Mathematics</i>	<i>World Language</i>

<i>Social Studies</i>	<i>Music</i>
	<i>Technology Education: Business Electives</i>

Unless otherwise indicated, credit for a particular course may be earned only once. Students repeating a course, or part of a course for which they have already received credit, will not be awarded duplicate credit. Students enrolled in the CTE Program must complete three years in their technical fields and meet their academic graduation requirements to be eligible for a CTE Certificate. Tech seniors must also be enrolled in at least 10 credits of coursework in addition to their Tech, five in English, and five in Math, Science, or Social Studies.

## **Plymouth HARBOR Academy**

**(Hope, Accountability, Resilience, Balance, Opportunity, Respect)**

### ***Mission Statement:***

The mission of Plymouth Harbor Academy (PHA) is to provide alternative options for students who have difficulty in traditional school settings. PHA hopes to bridge the gap between student potential and performance through an expansion of flexible academic and emotional support. PHA hopes to meet the needs of our non-traditional students through increased rigor, relevance, and relationship building, to develop lasting impacts on students' ability to define their success.

### ***Student Profile:***

PHA services students in grades 9-12 who have experienced difficulty in a traditional high school setting. The student profile of a typical PHA student is designed to be fluid and flexible. The majority of our students are marked with a history of academic, social, emotional, and/or behavioral difficulty but despite these issues still, want to graduate from Plymouth Public Schools. We understand the "large" day school environment may not be conducive to each student's success and therefore PHA offers them a smaller, more flexible setting where they can build relationships with each of our staff members. Students are recommended for placement through a child-study team process and/or through their Guidance Counselors recommendation. Students may be recommended for any or all of the following reasons: mental and behavioral health-related concerns, discipline, poor attendance, and credit deficiency. Because PHA is an alternative school experience students are expected to set personal goals in the areas of academics, social-emotional learning, and civic/community. PHA provides a small supportive environment for students in order to achieve these goals.

### ***Student Learning***

Structured learning time does not mean "seat time". Learning can happen in a variety of settings and formats. The following are examples of what makes Plymouth Harbor Academy different.

- Flexible Scheduling
- The smaller class/school environment
- A variety of pathways to meet with success
- Non-Traditional assessments and curriculum
- Increased individualized emotional and behavioral supports
  
- Counseling
- Multiple/unique learning opportunities
- Work-Study Opportunities
- Accessible Curriculum
- A caring environment that builds resilience and focuses on relationships
- Restorative Discipline
- Mentoring Program

## **Graduation and Promotion Requirements**

Each student who attends PHA has a unique set of circumstances and needs. Therefore, upon acceptance students meet with PHA staff to create their own pathway based on their vision for the future, current credit status, and state/local requirements. The following are guidelines for graduation and promotion.

### **Promotion Requirements**

Cumulative Credits for Promotion	Credits required
Grade 10	25
Grade 11	50
Grade 12	75
Graduation	100

To be eligible for a high school diploma students must earn the above credits

### **Graduation**

For students to be eligible for a high school diploma, they must earn the above number of credits, in addition to appropriate distribution in the following content areas. These core academic credits are in alignment with the credit structure of Plymouth North and South High School.

<i>Academic Requirements</i>	
English.....	20 credits
Social Studies.....	15 credits
(including US 1 & US 2)	
Mathematics.....	20 credits
(including Algebra 2)	
Science.....	15 credits
Physical Education / Wellness.....	10 credits
<b>Total Credits.....</b>	<b>100 credits</b>

*Specific course requirements may be waived as a component of a student's Individualized Education Program, or by a high school principal, based on individual programs/circumstances. Subject area requirements may not be waived.* Plymouth Harbor Academy students will only be able to transfer 5 elective credits per academic year. At the intake meeting, the team will determine which elective credits will be accepted. PHA graduating seniors can participate in senior events including graduation ceremonies at their designated home school.

## **MCAS**

Students must pass the MCAS English language arts, mathematics, and science to receive a diploma. Choices of electives may be limited because of this requirement.

## **Educational Proficiency Plan**

The state also requires an Educational Proficiency Plan for students who have not met a certain minimum score threshold on the grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts test and/or on the grade 10 MCAS Mathematics test (Science and Technology/Engineering is not part of the EPP requirement). The EPP includes:

- a review of your child's strengths and areas to improve, based on MCAS results, coursework, grades, and teacher input
- the courses your child will take and complete in grades 11 and 12
- a description of the assessments that the school will administer regularly to determine and document progress toward proficiency

## **Graduation Dress**

All students shall dress appropriately to participate in graduation exercises. Jeans, flip-flops, sneakers, shorts, and informal/casual attire are considered unacceptable for the special event of graduation exercises. A student wearing attire which violates the dress code, may be removed from graduation exercises.

## **Special Regulations for Seniors**

Seniors are reminded that all school rules stated in this handbook apply to all seniors the entire school year, up to and including graduation day. The violation of any school rules will result in consequences as defined in the handbook, as well as the possibility of being barred from graduation exercises. Any senior found to be using, in the possession of, or under the influence of a controlled substance and/or (including) alcoholic beverages, at academic convocation, the prom, or any other school-related senior event at the end of the year will be barred from attending graduation. There will be no exception to this rule. Possession includes group possession in an automobile, limousine, etc.

## **Grading Procedures/Reporting Pupil Progress**

### **Report Cards**

Report cards are issued in November, February, April, and June. Students are evaluated on their academic progress in each subject in accordance with the following rating scale:

A+ [ 97–100 ]	A [ 93–96 ]	A- [ 90–92 ]	Excellent Quality
B+ [ 87–89 ]	B [ 83–86 ]	B- [ 80–82 ]	Good Quality
C+ [ 77–79 ]	C [ 73–76 ]	C- [ 70–72 ]	Acceptable Quality
D+ [ 67–69 ]	D [ 63–66 ]	D- [ 60–62 ]	Poor Quality
		F [ 00–59 ]	Failing

*\* A grade of incomplete (I) is assigned to signify temporary deferment of a regular final letter grade. It is used sparingly in compelling situations when a student is not able to complete work in the course by the end of the semester due to extenuating circumstances beyond the ability of the student to predict and control.*

*Incompletes must be completed within two weeks of the close of the marking period, or earlier. If exceptions are required, they must be approved by the building administration.*

### **Student Failures**

It is the practice at Plymouth North and Plymouth South High Schools to employ a minimum grade policy for all high school students. Accordingly, students will receive a minimum grade of 45% during the 1st and 3rd term of a full-year course, and the first term of a semesterised course (exceptions to terms not referenced above may be made at the principal's discretion). While anything below 60% ("F") is considered a failing grade, we strive to allow students to work toward a passing grade for the year. Students who receive a minimum grade for the term will have this noted in the comment section of their report card.

### **Minimum Grade Scale**

(Student earned versus documented)The following grade will be recorded on the report card and factored into the student's cumulative numerical average for the semester and/or year according to the policy noted above:

0 - 45 = 45%

45 or above = actual grade earned by the student

### **Academic Progress Updates**

Teachers are required to update "ASPEN" regularly. Posted grades reflect your child's current academic standing within the class. The district calendar will identify quarterly dates indicating term grades. If you do not have access to a computer, please contact the school for a paper update.

### **Honor Roll for Grades 9-12**

An honor roll based on scholastic achievement is published at the end of each marking period. The levels of honor roll achievement and scholastic requirements for each level are as follows:

<b>High Honors</b>	<i>No letter grade below A- in every subject</i>
<b>Honors</b>	<i>No letter grade below B- in every subject</i>
<b>Honorable Mention</b>	<i>No letter grade below B- in every subject except one, which may carry a C or C+</i>

### **Final Examinations**

Final exams will be administered to all students in grades 9-11 in all subjects. There are no final exams for seniors. Final exams will only be administered during the scheduled exam period. Make-up examinations are only afforded to students with excused absences and must be arranged with the subject teacher. The principal must excuse all absences during exams. Final exams are worth 10% of the overall grade. Students in AP courses are exempt from the final exams in that course upon completion of the AP exam. If they do not participate in the AP Exam, the Advanced Placement credit will be removed from their transcript.

### **Advanced Placement (AP) Exams**

The Advanced Placement (AP) program of the College Board offers college-level courses and exams. It offers students the opportunity to earn advanced standing in college by earning college credit while still in high school. The Plymouth Public Schools offers AP courses in many different subject areas. Please refer to the high school Program of Studies for specific course offerings. AP courses are rigorous in nature and

culminate in a mandatory examination in May. It is required that students take the AP Exam after each course. If a student does not take the AP Exam, Honors credit will be issued in lieu of AP credit for the course(s).

### ***Attendance Policy***

Students are expected to attend every day that school is in session. School attendance is governed by state law (Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 76, and Sections 1 & 2, which state that no child may exceed seven (7) days absence from school in any six months except for medical reasons). Course credit and promotion are governed by the School Committee policy, which states that to receive credit for a course or promotion, a student must be in attendance for 90% of class sessions for that course. Success in school correlates very strongly with good attendance; therefore, every effort should be made to be present every day for every class. All absences from school or class (except for excused absences, school-sanctioned activities such as field trips, guidance/administrative meetings, school nurse visits, etc. or for documented long-term temporary disabilities (see Long-term Temporary Disabilities below) will be counted toward a student's total absence.

### ***Long-Term Temporary Disabilities***

A student may be eligible for "temporary disability" if he/she will be absent not less than fourteen or more school days because of a serious physical or mental illness or injury from an accident. Documentation of a student's long-term temporary disability should be forwarded to the principal so that arrangements can be made regarding his/her educational program and to exclude days under the "temporary disability" designation from the student's total absence. Upon the student's return from "temporary disability," an absence note should be presented.

### ***Tardiness***

Tardiness to school or class can have negative effects on success in school; therefore, it should be kept to a minimum. Tardiness to school after 10:30 A.M. will count as an absence from school. Tardiness of more than 10 minutes to a class (15 minutes to the first period) without a valid pass will count as an absence from that class. If tardiness to school results in missing or being more than 10 minutes late to a class(es) (15 minutes to the first period), absence(s) will be recorded for the affected class(es).

### ***Dismissals***

Dismissal from school or class can have negative effects on success in school; therefore, it should be kept to a minimum. Dismissal from school before 10:30 A.M. will count as an absence from school. Dismissal more than five (5) minutes before the end of a class will count as an absence from that class. Telephone requests for dismissal will be honored only on an emergency basis and must be followed up with a note upon the student's return to school.

### ***Absence/Tardiness/Dismissal Notes***

Each absence, tardiness to school, or dismissal from school requires a note of explanation to be submitted on the day of the student's return to school or the day of tardiness (for dismissal, no later than the morning of dismissal). **A NOTE IS A REQUIREMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS, REGARDLESS OF AGE.** The school should be notified prior to a planned absence and during a prolonged illness. Each note will be validated by a date stamp upon its presentation to tardy desk or main office personnel, and then filed in the student's record folder. Absence/tardiness/dismissal notes are explanations for the absence/tardiness/dismissal; they DO NOT excuse the absence/tardiness/dismissal.

### ***Make-Up Work***

Completing classwork and homework is crucial for academic progress. Students will be allowed to make up the work they missed during all absences. Students will be allowed two days for every day absent to make up work through the end of the term. In the event of an emergency or other extenuating circumstance, teachers may grant students additional time to do their make-up work. Students who are unable to complete

all the work missed by the established deadline may receive partial credit for the work completed and turned in. Students who fail to make up any of their work will receive no credit. In instances when a student is absent for an extended period of time (i.e., 4 days or more), parents may arrange to obtain the missed work and should expect that staff will require a minimum of 24 hours to gather the missed assignments. A student should not be required to make up a test the day s/he returns from an absence. This does not apply to in-school suspensions.

**Denial of Credit**

When a student's absences (*as reported to the main office by individual teachers and excluding the exceptions noted in the next sentence*) exceed 10% of the class sessions for a course (*nine days for a full year course and five days for a semester course*), a credit will be denied. Absences verified by appropriate documentation or designated "temporary disability" will be excluded from this total.

**Denial of Credit Appeal**

A student denied credit for excessive absences may appeal such denial by arranging an appeal meeting with the principal. At the hearing, the student and his/her parent/guardian may present such evidence or testimony as they may believe should be considered to reinstate credit. However, the principal will NOT take into consideration any absence for which a properly validated note has not been filed in the student's folder. The decision of the principal will be final.

**Class Rank**

Rank in class will be based on a weighted, four-level **grade point average** scale. Upon the completion of semester 1 of the junior year, student class standing will be reported as percentage bands (top 2%, top 5%, top 10%, etc.). At the beginning of the senior year, students will receive their actual numerical class rank. Please note: Early graduates are not factored into class rank; however, they will be given a weighted GPA at the beginning of the senior year. Students' rank in class will be based on a weighted, four-level grade point average scale. Courses are weighted according to the level of difficulty, based on the system currently employed by the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education for admission to state colleges and the University of Massachusetts (see chart on next page). Only high school grades earned in English, Math, Science, Social Studies, World Language, CTE Studies (fully enrolled in a college and career technical education studies program), and certain approved elective courses that are taken either within the Plymouth Public School District or in a regionally accredited secondary school are included in these calculations, with the exclusion of Advanced Placement (AP) Science Labs (pass/fail). In addition, only courses taken within the parameters of the regular school day (Periods A1-B4) are included in class rank calculations. Courses taken during the summer and in the evening, including college courses, are not included in class rank calculations. Because of the wide variety of courses available, the inclusion of online and virtual high school coursework will be decided on a case-by-case basis. Please note that GPA is accessible through the student information system (Aspen). For inclusion in class rank, a student must have spent a minimum of six high school semesters (3 full years) in the Plymouth Public Schools System. GPA/Class rank is run twice per year, at the end of semester 1 and then again at the end of the year. Term grades are only considered progress grades and do not change an overall official GPA until the course is complete.

To determine Valedictorian and Salutatorian, all grades for computing grade point averages will be based upon a weighted G.P.A. (cumulative, four-year) scale upon completion of the final marking period of the senior year.

**Grade Point Conversions**

GRADE	AP	HONORS	CP1	OTHER
A+	5.3	4.8	4.3	3.8
A	5.0	4.5	4.0	3.5
A-	4.7	4.2	3.7	3.2

B+	4.3	3.8	3.3	2.8
B	4.0	3.5	3.0	2.5
B-	3.7	3.2	2.7	2.2
C+	3.3	2.8	2.3	1.8
C	3.0	2.5	2.0	1.5
C-	2.7	2.2	1.7	1.2
D+	2.3	1.8	1.3	0.8
D	2.0	1.5	1.0	0.5
D-	1.7	1.2	0.7	0.2
F	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

### ***National Honor Society***

The National Honor Society is an active society of students supporting our high schools and other community programs throughout the year. **Students nominated for the National Honor Society because of academic performance must also qualify on the basis of character, service, and leadership.** Membership in the National Honor Society is a privilege, not a right. Nomination to the National Honor Society is based on rank in class. To be eligible for nomination, a candidate must be a member of the junior or senior class. Students must earn a 3.80-weighted GPA after the term preceding the application deadline to be eligible for membership. Candidates must have been in attendance at the school for the equivalent of two full terms. Students who are nominated for membership are expected to demonstrate the required high standard of academic achievement and behavior as a scholar, good character and citizenship, leadership, and service in the community. Suspension from school or punishment at any grade level for any reason, (for example plagiarism, cheating, or other inappropriate behavior) may be sufficient reason to exclude or remove a student from the National Honor Society. Students who transfer will be treated according to the National Honor Society Rules.

### ***Selection Process***

The process of nomination begins with the determination of academic eligibility according to the above standards. The names of eligible juniors and seniors are distributed to the faculty. Members of the faculty can express their opinion about the student's fitness on the other qualifications (leadership, character, and service). If a student's fitness is in doubt, the Faculty Selection Committee's ruling is final. No student is denied eligibility on the basis of a negative statement by a single member of the faculty. Once the faculty screening has taken place, the students are informed of their nomination, and they are asked to provide evidence, within a prescribed time, of their service and leadership in the form of written documentation from adults (club, church, synagogue, and other organizations) who can verify their service and leadership. Service should be ongoing in nature. The Faculty Selection Committee then reviews each nomination with the supporting documentation and makes the final assessment. Induction to the National Honor Society is held at a special ceremony scheduled in the spring.

Appeals can only be made to the Faculty Selection Committee. Under the rules of the National Honor Society, the Headmaster/Principal cannot be involved in the selection process.

The Faculty Selection Committee performs the following functions:

- Determines the selection procedure for chapter membership.

- Selects students for NHS membership (although other faculty members may be consulted). The student's discipline record is also made available to the Selection Committee.
- Hears the dismissal cases – no member may be dismissed from the NHS without having an opportunity to appear before the Faculty Committee, within the timeline of due process.

### ***Removal Process***

The process of removal from NHS is as follows:

- The student and parent/guardian(s) will be notified by the administration of the infraction that is grounds for removal.
- The faculty committee will schedule a hearing with the student and/or parent/guardian(s) providing all materials and documents to be discussed in advance.
- Upon a decision that is rendered by the faculty committee, the NHS advisors will mail a certified letter with the committee's decision.
- Upon the receipt of the final decision letter, the student and/or parent/guardian(s) may request an appeal hearing with the building principal.
- The principal's decision may overrule the committee; however, there is no further appeal beyond the building principal.

### ***Cheating/Plagiarism***

Any student who has cheated on any academic exercise will receive no credit for that exercise. Plagiarism is a form of cheating. A parent/guardian will be notified by the involved teacher in all instances of cheating. The investigation of the claim of cheating and plagiarism (including the use of Artificial Intelligence modalities) will involve the student, teacher, and administration. Please note that if the student is in violation of cheating/plagiarism and is a member of the National Honor Society, he/she will be reported to the NHS faculty council.

### ***Definition of Cheating***

Cheating is defined as obtaining or attempting to obtain or aiding another to obtain credit for work or improvement in evaluation or performance by any dishonest or deceptive means. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: lying, copying from another's test or examination; discussion at any time of questions or answers on an examination or test unless such discussion is specifically authorized by the instructor; taking or using displaying notes, "cheat sheets" or other information devices inappropriate to the prescribed test conditions; allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent the same.

### ***Definition of Plagiarism***

Plagiarism is defined as the act of using the ideas or work of another person or persons as if they were their own without giving proper credit to the source. Examples include but are not limited to the following: the submission of work, either in whole or in part completed by another; failure to give credit for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that rightfully belong to another; failure to use quotation marks or other means of setting apart such as indentation when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, a sentence or even a part thereof; close or lengthy paraphrasing or another writing without credit or originality use of another project of the program without giving credit.

Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be condoned in any manner or form. This includes, but not limited to, attempting to secure answers on tests, quizzes, and homework from another source other than direct personal knowledge; or submitting another person's work/report/term paper as one's own; or use of any resource without proper footnoting or credits. Students involved in such academic dishonesty and students who supply work to another student for their use may be subject to school discipline and a zero for the assignment. Eligibility and membership for the National Honor Society will be in jeopardy.

In addition, any student who uses or attempts to use a note, a pass, or any other document containing a forged signature or any authorizing person will be subject to discipline.

Students who use an electronic device or application (including but not limited to ChatGPT and/or AI) to transmit, alter, or receive any information for academically dishonest purposes, without permission, who use them in improper ways, or who are seeking to gain an unfair advantage with malicious intent are violating our school's academic integrity policy and are subject to discipline.

### ***Use or Possession of Tobacco or Electronic Cigarettes & Vape Pipes***

Tobacco products, electronic cigarettes & vape pipes will be confiscated and not returned. The penalties are listed below:

First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense & Subsequent Offenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Notification of Sports/Activities Directors pursuant to the MIAA policy</li> <li>● Parent Notification</li> <li>● In-School Suspension</li> <li>● Extended Detention</li> <li>● Parent/Guardian Conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● One (1) Day Out of School Suspension</li> <li>● Parent Notification</li> <li>● Notification of Sports/Activities Directors pursuant to the MIAA policy</li> <li>● Parent/Guardian Conference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Two (2) Days Out of School Suspension</li> <li>● Loss of Parking Privileges for one semester</li> <li>● Notification of Sports/Activities Directors pursuant to the MIAA policy</li> <li>● Parent/Guardian Conference</li> </ul>

### ***Auto and Parking Regulations***

Students who are permitted to park their cars on school property are being granted a privilege. The cost of a parking sticker is \$100.00 (subject to change). To obtain and keep a parking sticker, a student must maintain a cumulative average of 70% in all subjects and not exceed ten (10) tardies during the year. Furthermore, parking stickers are contingent upon a student maintaining a safe driving record on campus and parking in authorized student parking areas only. Parking privileges may be withdrawn as an administrative action at any time. There are a limited number of spots that will be given on a first-come, first-serve basis beginning with seniors. Parking stickers must be visible. Parking fees are non-refundable. Unauthorized cars found on campus without a permit will be towed at the expense of their owners. The school assumes no responsibility and/or liability for cars parked on school grounds.

The following offenses will lead to loss of parking privileges:

- Possession of drugs, alcohol, or weapons on school property or at school-sponsored activities
- Reckless driving
- Assault of a staff member or student
- Transference of a parking sticker to another student
- Leaving school without authorization
- Any other violation deemed appropriate by an administrator
- Parking in a non-designated spot

Students must observe all posted traffic regulations. School rules apply to all approved off-site parking lots.

### ***Before School Procedures***

Students who enter the building early must stay in the cafeteria until the 7:15 a.m. bell rings. All students arriving at school in the morning will proceed directly into the building. Once on school grounds, students are not allowed to leave school property without appropriate authorization

### ***Dance/Activity Guidelines***

Guests will not be admitted without prior administrative approval. Tickets to high school dances will not be sold at the door or after the pre-established ticket sale deadline. Students are not allowed to leave the dance/activity once they have entered, as they will not be admitted a second time. Doors will close one-half hour after the start, and no student will be admitted without prior administrative approval. All school rules apply to all school activities. Violations of school rules may result in exclusion from that activity for the remainder of the school year.

### ***Extra Help Sessions***

Extra help is provided for students. Individual arrangements should be made between student and teacher. Students should consider extra help a priority and act accordingly.

### ***After-School Expectations for Students***

If a student stays after school, they must stay with a purpose (i.e., scheduled extra help with PPS school staff or extracurricular school-sponsored activities). In addition, they must secure a late bus pass from a teacher in advance of boarding the late bus. Students are not allowed to solely gather after school hours in the building. This privilege may be revoked at any time at the discretion of the school administrator based on student behaviors.

### ***Lockers***

A locker will be assigned on an individual or shared basis (as space permits). The school shall not be responsible for missing articles taken from any locker. Students should check with the administrator in charge of lockers whenever there is a problem. Only administrative approval can affect a change in a locker assignment. Lockers are the property of the school department and are therefore subject to inspection by the administration at any time. Student-provided locks do not alter the school department's ownership of the lockers; the school can remove the lock during any search of lockers and the school is not required to refund or replace the student's lock if it is removed during a search.

### ***Passes for Leaving Class***

All students must have a written pass from a teacher or other school official to leave a class. Students should make prior arrangements before or after school for an appointment with a teacher.

### ***Physical Education***

If a student does not participate in a scheduled physical education class for medical reasons, that student will be ineligible to participate in after-school athletic events as an athlete that day. Physical Education is required for all students each year. Ten credits must be earned to satisfy graduation requirements (with the exception of enrollment in a specific CTE program).

### ***Student Financial Obligations***

Any student who has outstanding financial obligations to the school cannot participate in any co-curricular and/or extracurricular activity until all financial obligations have been paid. This includes, for example, extra-curricular field trips, athletics, banquets, dances, proms, senior class functions, and graduation exercises.

### ***Student Transcripts***

The student's transcripts shall be maintained by the school department and may only be destroyed sixty years after his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system, and then only at the discretion of the school committee.

## **Student Behavior**

The ultimate goal of school discipline is to instill self-discipline in each student. All students have the right to expect our school to maintain a safe environment in which excellence of instruction may flourish. It is our philosophy that student discipline, in most cases, should be progressive. Repeat offenses of a similar kind will result in progressively more serious consequences.

## **Student Leadership**

Student leaders are recognized as an important part of the school community and culture. Students who are elected to positions such as captain, class officer, student council member, etc. must remember that this role is a privilege and as a result, appropriate behavior both inside and outside of school is expected. Student leaders must uphold all school rules and high standards and expectations. Violation of standards/expectations will be reviewed by the building administration and may result in removal from their leadership position.

## **Behavior/Consequences**

The following chart has been developed to demonstrate the possible consequences that will follow misbehaviors such as those listed in the examples. This chart is not intended to be an exhaustive list of all problems or examples, but hopefully, it gives the student and parent/guardian an idea of the specific areas of concern and the types of consequences which will typically follow. The goal is to apply this concept of differing levels of inappropriate behavior to all disciplinary problems in a fair, consistent manner. It is also recognized that there are many extenuating circumstances, which relate to a particular problem behavior. Such circumstances may indicate that a specific incident should be dealt with more severely or less severely than the typical situation. Thus, this policy statement includes a degree of administrative discretion as is in the best interest of the individual student.

<b>CONSEQUENCE NAME</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF CONSEQUENCE</b>
<b>Detentions</b>	Detention is assigned for not following school rules. Detention will take priority over all other activities. Students will be given at least 24-hour notice before they are expected to serve the detention. Detention takes place after school and failure to stay for detention results in more serious disciplinary action.
<b>Extended Detention</b>	Extended detention occurs when a student is assigned to stay until 4:15 p.m. Students are responsible for their transportation. The parent/guardian will be notified when extended detention is assigned. Failure to stay for extended detention or misbehavior during detention will result in more serious disciplinary action.
<b>In-School Suspension (ISS)</b>	In-School Suspension occurs when a student is expected to attend school but is suspended from classes. The student will be supervised in an area outside of his/her regular classrooms and will be provided with classwork. An in-school suspension may be for all or part of a school day.
<b>Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)</b>	Out-of-School Suspension occurs when a student is suspended from school and is required to remain at home. The student is restricted from the school building and grounds and may not participate in any school activity or sport while on out-of-school suspension.

<b>Exclusion from School</b>	Exclusion is a long-term suspension from school for a duration of up to 90 school days, depending upon the judgment of the principal. The student will receive an alternate educational service, which will be coordinated between the administration, guidance counselor, and student.
<b>Expulsion from School</b>	Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾ .

### ***Behavior/Consequences Chart***

<b>TYPE OF PROBLEM</b>	<b>COMMON EXAMPLES</b>	<b>COMMON CONSEQUENCES</b>
<b>TYPE 1:</b> Actions that interfere in the learning process in and around the school, or that show disrespect for the health, welfare, and/or property of others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Class Cuts – Truancy</li> <li>● Class disruptions</li> <li>● Hallway violations</li> <li>● Failure to stay for detention</li> <li>● Showing disrespect to adults and students</li> <li>● Throwing objects</li> <li>● Roughhousing</li> <li>● Use of rude, obscene, or improper language/gestures</li> <li>● Excessive, unexcused tardiness</li> <li>● Proven dishonesty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Detention</li> <li>● Extended Detention</li> <li>● ISS</li> <li>● Out of School Suspension (1-3 days)</li> <li>● Parent/Guardian Conference/Call</li> <li>● Saturday School</li> </ul>
<b>TYPE 2:</b> More serious actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Repeated Type 1 Behaviors</li> <li>● Possession/use of tobacco products</li> <li>● Leaving the building</li> <li>● Public Display of Affection</li> <li>● Verbal Abuse of Staff Members</li> <li>● Cafeteria Disturbance</li> <li>● Fighting (minimum 3-day suspension)</li> <li>● Assault (minimum 5-day suspension)</li> <li>● Inappropriate behavior at a school event</li> <li>● Proven dishonesty</li> <li>● Parking Violations</li> <li>● Recording and/or taking photos of staff and students during the school setting without their knowledge and consent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extended Detention</li> <li>● ISS</li> <li>● Out-of-School Suspension (1-5 days)</li> <li>● Parent/Guardian Conference/Call</li> <li>● Removal from School Events</li> </ul>
<b>TYPE 3:</b> Openly defiant behavior and actions that show insolence or refusal to follow directions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Repeated Type 1 &amp; 2</li> <li>● Verbal abuse/profanity</li> <li>● Sexual language</li> <li>● Smoking/Vaping</li> <li>● Harassment/Discrimination</li> <li>● Defacing/destroying school property</li> <li>● Truancy</li> <li>● Leaving school grounds</li> <li>● Willful, repeated misbehavior</li> <li>● Proven dishonesty</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Extended Detention</li> <li>● In-school Suspension</li> <li>● Out of School Suspension (1-10 days)</li> <li>● Restitution when appropriate</li> <li>● Parent/Guardian Conference/Call</li> <li>● Removal from School Events</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Posting recordings of staff and/or students during a school setting to social media and/or message groups without their knowledge and consent, or with the intention of harassment</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Please note:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restitution is required in addition to discipline for destruction, damage, and/or theft of property.</li> <li>• Out-of-school suspensions may be used for multiple offenses of any type.</li> <li>• Referral for a hearing may be made at any time during the discipline process where an out-of-school suspension has been issued.</li> <li>• This is a list of common offenses. In no way is this list all-inclusive. The administration reserves the right to discipline for behaviors/circumstances not listed above. Any school incident may be given more severe punishment at the discretion of the building principal or designee.</li> </ul>		

***Athletic Teams***

FALL SPORTS	WINTER SPORTS	SPRING SPORTS
Cheerleading	Basketball	Baseball
Cross Country	Cheerleading	Softball
Dance Team	Dance Team	
Field Hockey	Gymnastics	Tennis
Football	Indoor Track	Track & Field
Golf	Ice Hockey	Lacrosse
Soccer	Swimming	
	Wrestling	

***Student Activities***

The activities listed below may be available to students at one or both high schools except where designated. Students must be present in school for a minimum of one-half day to participate unless previously approved by the principal/advisor. Below is a sample list of clubs and activities that may be offered. Offerings will vary depending on student interest, availability of an advisor, availability of funds, and club enrollment.

<p>Amnesty International          Anime Club          Band          Best Buddies <b>(PN)</b>          CARE (Cultural Awareness &amp; Racial Equality) <b>(PN)</b>          Chess Club          Chorus          Class Officers          Color Guard          Debating Team          DECA (An Association of Marketing Students)          Drama Club          Foreign Exchange Programs          World Language Club          Interact Club          Intramural Programs          Literary Magazine          Math Club</p>	<p>Medical Career Club          Model Congress          Model United Nations          National Honor Society          Panther Pals          Paranormal Club          Peer Leadership          Peer Mediation          P.R.I.D.E. (Pride, Respect, Integrity, Diversity, Equality)          Renaissance Program          Robotics          SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions)          School Newspaper          Science Club          Skills USA <b>(Tech Program)</b>          Student Council          Students Fostering Hope <b>(PN)</b>          Technology Education          Yearbook</p>
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To participate in any extra-curricular activity, a student must not receive more than one “F” on their report card. Students with incomplete grades are not eligible until the grade is resolved. To be eligible for the fall season, students must be enrolled in at least 20 credits and not receive more than one “F” on their report card (*final grades not fourth quarter*). Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered official and determined only on the date when the report card has been issued to the parents of all students. A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility. A student cannot count for eligibility for any subject taken during the summer vacation unless that subject has previously been pursued and failed.

**Interscholastic Athletics: Information & Regulations**

***Welcome to Plymouth Public Schools Athletics***

This Athletic Handbook has been developed to inform athletes and parents of policies, practices, and regulations that govern the athletic program in the Plymouth Public School system. We believe the information will help answer many of your questions regarding interscholastic athletics. Please keep this manual and refer to it whenever you have a question regarding your athletic experience. If you feel that your questions or concerns are not answered in this manual, contact the **Athletic Department Director at 508-830-4429 (PNHS), and 508-224-1723 (PSHS)**. Please do not let your questions go unanswered.

**The purposes of our handbook are:**

- To make athletes and parents aware of the philosophy and objectives of the athletic program.
- To inform athletes and parents of guidelines and procedures governing the athlete’s behavior.
- To create uniformity and equity of behavioral standards for all athletes in all sports.

## ***Philosophy***

The purpose of athletics is to provide learning experiences, which contribute to physical, mental, social, and emotional growth. Athletics should foster the development of positive self-esteem and a climate among coaches and team members where mutual respect, honor, and integrity are valued. The basic educational principle of a “sound mind in a healthy body” can best be fulfilled in a well-organized, competently directed program in athletics. The interscholastic athletic program is a voluntary program designed to meet the needs and interests of the student/athlete who has sufficient ability. The student/athlete must be prepared to make a major commitment to the maximum development of knowledge, skills, and attitudes under the supervision of a thoroughly trained and effective coaching staff committed to the educational goals of the school district. Interscholastic athletics has served as an effective complement to the entire educational program. The young man or woman who learns to cope with victory and defeat, to accept frustrations and disappointments, as well as success; to spend long hours in practice with no guarantee that they will participate in a game, to accept strict discipline, to work with fellow athletes for the achievement of a common goal has learned something that cannot be taught in the classroom.

## ***Objectives***

Due to an infinite number of individual differences in abilities and interests, the athletic program is comprehensive. All students who show interest in the program will be encouraged to participate. The emphasis at each level is:

- Varsity- Very Competitive/Instructional
- Junior Varsity- Competitive/Instructional
- Freshmen-Instructional

## ***Participation***

Subject to restrictions on team size, the athletic program will be open to all students who are physically able to participate and who are eligible under local and state regulations. An unlimited participation policy will be used whenever possible. There are factors, however, which necessitate the size of the team to be limited to maintain a high level of safety, coaching, playing time, and practice time. Judgments with respect to the abilities of athletes are based on the performance of the participants. The coach’s judgments with respect to the selection of participants are made after observing prospective players in practice and/or game-type situations. The playing time for an athlete, once a team size is determined, will be based upon decisions made by a coach or coaching staff. A student may not try out for a team after final cuts have been made unless prior approval for extenuating circumstances has been received. In such cases, no displacement of team members may occur. Participation in athletics should contribute to the development of the following qualities:

1. Health and happiness
2. Development of physical skills
3. Emotional maturity
4. Social competence
5. Moral values
6. A sense of cooperation
7. A spirit of competition
8. Self-discipline
9. An understanding of the democratic process
10. A realization of the value of group goals

## ***Athletic Programs***

Student participation in the athletic program is a privilege, which can be a valuable and rewarding experience. Students have the opportunity to participate during three seasons. Many sports are conducted at three levels of competition: Varsity, Junior Varsity, and freshman. There is a possibility that athletes may be moved from one level to another for the benefit of the athlete and the program.

## ***Duration of Season***

- FALL Practice may begin for all teams as early as the second Thursday preceding Labor Day. No team may have more than ten single practice sessions (i.e., “double sessions” count as two single practice sessions) through and including the Friday prior to Labor Day. Football teams must precede their initial contact practice with an additional three days of single non-contact sessions and fifteen days of practice.

WINTER Monday following Thanksgiving to completion of the schedule and any tournament play

SPRING Third Monday in March to completion of the schedule and any tournament play

### **Schedules**

Schedules can be found on the MIAA website ([www.miaa.net](http://www.miaa.net)) as well as their cell phone application. Schedules are subject to change. For additional information visit the district's website [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us) (athletics tab). The booster clubs maintain athletic websites.

### **Physical Examination/Parental Permission Form**

Every athlete must pass a physical exam within 13 months before trying out and participating in any sport. Each athlete prior to trying out and practicing with the team shall submit a medical clearance form signed by a physician, with the exact date and year of the physical exam.

### **Insurance**

Parents are urged to check insurance coverage for students playing sports. All athletes should be fully covered by family insurance or purchase a school plan to cover expenses from injury. The School Department does carry insurance for athletes, but it is secondary to your family insurance.

It is highly suggested you purchase the twenty-four-hour coverage that is available through the school at a minimal cost. The pamphlet regarding this insurance is distributed at the beginning of the school year to all students.

### **Athletic Fee**

All participants are required to pay a seasonal fee of \$175 per student or \$875 max per family (electronic payments will incur a non-refundable fee) to assist in the funding of the athletic programs. The payment of the athletic fee **does not** ensure playing time. Make checks payable to "Town of Plymouth". Checks are to be submitted along with all paperwork during clearance night. This fee is non-refundable after the first scheduled game. All refunds will be in the form of a credit for use during the next season in which a student participates. All refunds will be reimbursed to the parent/guardian. Please contact the Athletic Director's office at your student's school if you have reached the family cap. If a family is experiencing financial difficulty, they must write a note for the attention of the athletic director. The situation will then be reviewed, and a free/reduced fee may be put into place for the student-athlete.

### **Rules of Eligibility**

School rules, which apply to the student body, apply to all athletes. The student handbook and any other school rules supersede the athletic code.

### **Academics**

All students are encouraged to participate in the athletic program. To participate in any extracurricular activity, a student must not receive more than one "F" on their report card. All student-athletes are governed by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) and the Patriot League By-Laws, which publishes annual rules and regulations governing interscholastic athletics in the Commonwealth. To be eligible for the fall season, athletes must be enrolled in at least 20 credits and not receive more than one "F" on their report card. (*final grades not fourth quarter*) Academic eligibility of all students shall be considered official and determined only on the date when the report card has been issued to the parents of all students. A student who repeats work upon which he/she has once received credit cannot count that subject a second time for eligibility. An Incomplete on a student's report card is considered a failure for the purposes of athletics and therefore any student with an Incomplete on their report card is ineligible for the season as determined by the dates set forth by the MIAA. If the incomplete is rectified and there are no cuts for that team, the student may be reinstated. If the student is trying out for a sport with cuts and misses tryouts, tryouts will not be reopened to accommodate students who had incompletes and were ineligible during tryouts. A student cannot count for eligibility for any subject taken during the summer vacation unless that subject has previously been pursued and failed.

## **Age**

A student shall be under the age of nineteen (19) years on September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. A student shall be eligible for interscholastic competition for no more than twelve consecutive athletic seasons beyond the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

## **Transfer Students**

An athlete who transfers from any school to PN or PS is ineligible to participate in any interscholastic athletic contest at any level for a period of one year in all sports in which he/she participated at the varsity level during the one year immediately preceding the transfer. **Exception:** the transfer is necessitated by a change of residence of his/her parents to Plymouth. A student who transfers from a foreign country without parental change of residence accompanying the transfer will be ineligible for a period of 365 days from the date of entrance unless such transfer is sponsored by a CSJET-approved foreign exchange program.

## **High School Athletic Rules**

- Athletes must maintain themselves in good standing or face suspension from participation. Good standing is defined by the record of attendance, grades, and good citizenship throughout the school and community. As an athlete, you are very visible not only in your school and community but in surrounding communities as well. A student must be recorded as present before 10:30 a.m. and may not be dismissed before 10:30 a.m. or they cannot participate in any practice or game that day without the consent of the Athletic Director or Principal.
- Any athlete who is dismissed during the day and cannot return before the close of school must receive approval from the Athletic Director or Principal to participate that day.
- An athlete who is absent without prior approval of the Athletic Director or Principal may not participate in a game or practice that day.
- Athletes assigned disciplinary after-school detention by either the administration or a teacher must attend as directed.
- An athlete who does not participate in their scheduled physical education class may not participate in their practice or game that day.
- An athlete excused from physical education class for medical reasons may not participate in athletics until physical education classes are resumed and the Athletic Director receives a written note from the school nurse.
- An athlete will be held accountable for all equipment issued and must return the equipment promptly at the request of the coach and athletic director. An athlete may only participate in one sport per season.

## **Practice and Game Attendance**

Prompt attendance is mandatory for all practices and meetings scheduled by the coach. It is the responsibility of the athlete to get permission from the coach to miss a practice **prior to and not after** the practice if there is a need to be excused. Acceptable reasons for missing a practice include but are not limited to an extra help session with a teacher, tutorial assistance, school, and district-sanctioned trips and academic competitions, medical and dental appointments that cannot be rescheduled, or any family emergency. As a district, we always encourage communication in advance as much as possible regarding student attendance. These policies will be enforced except as may be required under Section 504, Title II, or otherwise under federal law. An athlete must be present at the practice preceding a game to participate in the game unless excused by the athletic director or principal.

## **School/Family Vacations, Extended Absences**

Students who plan to be absent for an extended period of time due to vacation or a planned extended absence are expected to discuss this situation with the coach prior to trying out for the team. The coach's discretion will be used in determining the consequences for such extended absences.

### ***MIAA Bona Fide Team Member Rule: Loyalty to the High School Team***

A bona fide member of the school team is a student who is consistently present for and actively participates in all high school team sessions (e.g., practices, tryouts, competitions). Bonafide members of a school team are precluded from missing a high school practice or competition to participate in a non-school athletic activity/event in any sport recognized by the MIAA. A coach does not have the right to excuse a team member from practice or a game so he/she may play or practice for another team. The principal of the school may request a waiver of this rule in special circumstances. **First offense: student-athlete is suspended for 25% of the season. Second offense; student-athlete is suspended for an additional 25% of the season and is ineligible for tournament play immediately upon confirmation of the violation.**

### ***Transportation***

All athletes must ride the bus provided for transportation to and from the athletic contests unless excused by the athletic director or principal.

### ***Injuries***

It is the responsibility of the athlete to promptly report all injuries to the coach, athletic trainer, and school nurse to ensure that an accident report is submitted in a timely fashion to cover school and insurance company requirements. If you had an injury that required outside medical attention (emergency room, physician) you must submit a doctor's note to the nurse or athletic director in order to be reinstated with your team.

### ***Return to Participation***

Athletes that have been out of action for a time because of illness or injury and were under the treatment of a trainer or family physician, must have a written statement allowing them to return to competition.

### ***Concussion Policy***

The purpose of this policy is to assure that any student who sustains a concussion or head injury is managed properly. Plymouth Public Schools recognizes the importance of educating students, parents/guardians, athletic staff, teachers, guidance counselors, school nurse educators, and designated others to recognize signs and symptoms of a concussion or head injury; and to respond appropriately to facilitate prevention, management, and safe return to academic and athletic activities in students with a concussion or head injury.

In accordance with Massachusetts state law and MA Department of Public Health (DPH) regulations related to Head Injuries and Concussions In Extracurricular Athletic Activities, the Plymouth Public Schools shall provide standardized procedures in regard to the prevention, management, and return to academic and athletic activities in middle and high school students who incur a head injury while involved in extracurricular athletic activities. This law also applies to students in the High School Marching Band. This policy and all related procedures comply with Massachusetts General Law and MA DPH regulations. Out of concern for any student suffering from a concussion/head injury, this policy will apply to all middle and high school students who sustain a concussion/head injury, regardless of whether the injury occurred related to extracurricular athletic or marching band activities.

- The Athletic Director or designated individual in each school will be responsible for the implementation of this policy and related procedures.
- At the high school level, a Concussion Team consisting of the Athletic Director, Certified Athletic Trainer, Guidance Counselor, and School Nurse Educator will assume responsibility for the implementation of procedures associated with this policy.
- At the middle school level, a Concussion Team consisting of the designated Athletic Director, Guidance Counselor, and School Nurse Educator will assume responsibility for the implementation of procedures associated with this policy.

- Communication with all involved individuals is paramount to the successful management of students with head injuries. Plymouth Public Schools will maintain open communications between staff, students, parents, healthcare providers, and others involved in order to optimize recovery for students with head injuries to return to health and succeed in their education.
- Review and revision of this policy shall occur as needed, and at least every two years.

*References: MA General Law (M.G.L.) Chapter 111, Section 222*

*MA Department of Public Health 105 CMR 201:000: Head Injuries and Concussions in Extracurricular Athletic Activities.*

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### ***School Rules and Suspensions***

Student-athletes are subject to the school rules and regulations governing student behavior as cited in the Student Handbook for Plymouth North and South High Schools. Violation of school rules resulting in a suspension from school will automatically preclude student involvement in athletics for the length of the suspension.

### ***Chemical Health/Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco Policy***

**The Rule: (MIAA Blue Book, Revised 2/13/08, page 54, Rule 62.1):**

From the earliest fall practice date to the conclusion of the academic year or final athletic event (whichever is the latest), a student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use, consume, possess, buy/sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. This policy includes products such as “NA or near beer”. It is not a violation for a student to be in possession of a legally defined drug specifically prescribed for the student’s use by his/her doctor. The MIAA statewide minimum standard is not intended to render “guilt by association”, e.g. many student-athletes might be present at a party where only a few violate this standard. This rule represents only a minimum standard upon which schools may develop more stringent requirements. If a student violates this rule and is unable to participate in interscholastic sports due to injury or academics, the penalty will not take effect until that student can participate again.

#### **Minimum Penalties:**

##### **First Violation:**

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 25% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. No exception is permitted for a student who becomes a participant in a treatment program. It is recommended that the student be allowed to remain at practice for the purpose of rehabilitation. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 25% of the season.

##### **Second and Subsequent Violations:**

When the Principal confirms, following an opportunity for the student to be heard, that a violation occurred, the student shall lose eligibility for the next consecutive interscholastic contests totaling 60% of all interscholastic contests in that sport. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 60% of the season.

If after the second or subsequent violations the student of his/her own volition becomes a participant in an approved chemical dependency program or treatment program, the student may be certified for reinstatement in MIAA activities after a minimum of 40% of events provided the student was fully

engaged in the program throughout that penalty period. The High School Treatment Program must certify that the student is attending or issue a certificate of completion. If a student does not complete the program, the penalty reverts back to 60% of the season. All decimal parts of an event will be truncated i.e. All fractional parts of an event will be dropped when calculating the 40% of the season. Penalties shall be cumulative each academic year, but serving the penalty could carry over for one year. Or, if the penalty period is not completed during the season of the violation, the penalty shall carry over to the student's next season of actual participation, which may affect the eligibility status of the student during the next academic year. (e.g., if a student plays only football; he violates the rule in winter and/or the spring of the same academic year; he/she would serve the penalty (ies) during the fall season of the next academic year). The MIAA has informed member schools that this rule is in effect 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Any student who is alleged to have violated this rule will be accorded the right to due process.

### ***Procedure for Reporting Violations***

The coach of each sport shall determine if a violation of the athletic code of conduct has taken place. In all cases, infractions of the athletic code must be reported to the Athletic Director whether an action is taken or not. If disciplinary action is taken, an athlete may have his/her case reviewed.

### **Review Procedure**

- The athlete and/or parents may ask to meet with the coach and athletic director.
- This request must occur within two school days of the disciplinary decision by the coach.
- If not satisfied, the student and/or parent may ask to meet with the principal, athletic director, and coach.

### **HAZING**

Massachusetts General Laws - Chapter 269 (*refer to the main handbook for full law and policy*)

#### **C.269.S.17. Crime of Hazing: Definition: Penalty**

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

#### **C. 269, S.19 Hazing Statutes to Be Provided: Statement of Compliance and Discipline Policy Required**

Each institution of secondary education and each public or private institution of post-secondary education shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary institutions, the board of education, certifying that such institution has complied with its responsibility to inform student groups, teams, or organizations and to notify each full-time student enrolled by it of the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen and also certifying that said institution has adopted a disciplinary policy with regard to the organizers and participants of hazing, and that such policy has been set forth with an appropriate emphasis in the student handbook or similar means of communicating the institution's policies to its students. The board of regents and, in the case of a secondary institution, the board of education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution, which fails to make such report. Added by St. 1985, c.536; amended by St. 1987, c.665.

#### **TAUNTING** – The Board of Directors of the MIAA adopted the following policy on 11/94

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

- **Examples of taunting:** include but are not limited to: “trash talk”, defined as a verbal communication of a personal nature directed by a competitor to an opponent by ridiculing his/her skills, efforts, sexual orientation, or lack of success, which is likely to provoke an altercation or physical response; and physical intimidation outside the spirit of the game, including “in the face” confrontation by one player to another and standing over/straddling a tackled or fallen player.
- In all sports, officials are to consider taunting a flagrant unsportsmanlike foul that disqualifies the offending bench personnel or contestant from the contest/day of competition. In addition, the offender shall be subject to existing MIAA Expulsion rules. Game officials prior to the contest shall give a warning to both teams. At all MIAA contest sites and tournament venues, appropriate management may give spectators one warning for taunting. Thereafter, spectators who taunt players, coaches, game officials, or other spectators are subject to ejection.

### ***Captain’s Practice***

The idea of so-called “captains practice” serves no real athletic or conditioning purpose and is discouraged for the following reasons: Lack of qualified adult supervision per MIAA regulations; liability concerns due to the increasingly litigious nature of American society; and it will not take place on any school-owned, leased or rented property.

### ***Varsity Letter Awards***

All athletes participating on a varsity team are eligible for a varsity letter. Coaches will determine who on their team will be awarded a letter and certificate of award. A participant who has not qualified for a varsity letter will be awarded a certificate of recognition. All junior varsity and freshman team members shall receive a certificate of recognition. Each subsequently earned letter award will be in the form of a certificate of award.

### ***Parent/Guardians/Coach Communication***

Both parenting and coaching are extremely difficult vocations. By establishing an understanding of each position, we are better able to accept the actions of the other and provide greater benefit to all children. As parents, when your child becomes involved in our program, you have a right to understand what expectations are placed on your child. This begins with clear communication from the coach of your child’s program.

### ***Communication You Should Expect from the Coach***

- Philosophy of the coach
- Expectations the coach has for your child as well as all the players on the squad.
- Location and times, of all practices and contests
- Team requirements, i.e. practices, special equipment, out-of-season conditioning
- The procedure followed should your child be injured during participation
- The discipline that may result in the denial of your child’s participation

### ***Communication Coaches Expect from Parents/Guardians***

- Concerns expressed directly to the coach
- Notification of any scheduling conflicts well in advance
- Specific concerns with regards to a coach’s philosophy and or expectations
- Communication regarding your child, not other members of the team

### ***Appropriate Concerns to Discuss with Coaches***

- The treatment of your child, mentally and physically
- Ways to help your child improve
- Concerns about your child’s behavior

It is exceedingly difficult to accept your child is not playing as much as you may hope. Coaches take their profession seriously. They make judgment decisions on what they believe to be the best for all students involved. As you have seen from the list above, certain things can be and should be discussed with your child's coach. Other things, such as those that follow, must be left to the discretion of the coach.

### ***Issues Not Appropriate to Discuss with Coach***

- Playing time
- Team strategy
- Play calling
- Other student-athletes

These situations may require a conference between the coach and the parents. These meetings are encouraged. Both parties involved must have a clear understanding of the other's position. When these conferences are necessary, the following procedure should be followed to help promote a resolution to the issue of concern.

- Contact the Coach and set up a meeting to discuss your concerns.
- **DO NOT CALL A COACH AT HOME!** (unless the coach has made his/her home, or phone available to parents and athletes). A coach's time with family is severely limited during the season. The family's privacy should be respected.
- **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONFRONT A COACH BEFORE OR AFTER A CONTEST OR PRACTICE.** These can be emotional times for both the parent and the coach. Meetings under these circumstances do not promote resolution
- If the coach cannot be reached, speak to the athletic director at PNHS at 508-830-4428, or PSHS at 508-224-1723. A return call from the coach will be arranged.

### ***If The Meeting Did Not Provide a Satisfactory Resolution***

- Call and set up an appointment with the athletic director at PNHS 830-4428 or PSHS 224- 1723.
- The Athletic Director will listen carefully to your concerns and mediate a resolution between you and the coach.

**Remember:** Your concerns are important to us. Never hesitate to follow the above procedures to make those concerns known. Together we can work to improve our athletic programs.



## **Appendix D: Preschool Level Information and Rules**

## ***Plymouth Early Childhood Center: “an inclusive preschool”***

We would like to welcome you and your child to the inclusive developmental preschool program. In order to assist in your preparation for the school experience, we have included some information to help familiarize you with our program and its components. The Plymouth Early Childhood Center offers two sessions, a 2.5-hour morning session and a 2.5-hour afternoon session for 2, 3, or 4 days per week: serving children with individual educational plans and children from the community. Some students, due to the nature of their disability, attend school for a full-day program from 9:15- 3:15, four days per week. The Plymouth Early Childhood Center supports the philosophy of inclusive education to which the Plymouth Public Schools are committed. Our inclusive education seeks to provide meaningful education to the range of students in our communities by drawing strength from their diversity”. Following are some shared common beliefs:

- all children have a right to be educated within their home community with their peers.
- children should participate at the same time in shared educational experiences

### ***Multidisciplinary Model***

The program also incorporates the Multidisciplinary approach to teaching. The teachers and therapists work cooperatively, sharing individual expertise and responsibility in providing developmental activities within the classroom. The specialist services each child according to his/her individual needs. Our approach is based on an educational rather than a clinical model of early childhood development. In an *educational model*, children learn in a more natural and meaningful environment. The Program provides training for parents by participating in school-based therapies and parent workshops. Parent Training is provided as required by the needs of the individual student.

### ***Classroom Model***

The developmental approach to early learning encourages children to be active learners by exploring both people and materials in their environment. The daily schedule is a predictable routine that allows children to feel secure and comfortable and helps them to follow directions and participate independently, functionally, and effectively in activities.

### ***Circle Time***

Children and staff anticipate the daily routine and review past activities. The children share “news”, sing, engage in fingerplays and movement exercises, and share a story.

### ***Experiential Play***

Child-directed play is an important learning tool for all young children. At various times in the day, the children may choose from any of the learning centers and activities. Depending on the day and theme, these centers include arts and crafts, painting, sand and water table, dress-up, housekeeping, blocks, puzzles, writing, listening, books, games and science centers, creative arts, and sensory experiences.

### ***Social/Emotional***

The program supports and encourages positive self-esteem and social behaviors. Modeling appropriate behaviors and role-playing social situations encourages children to be sensitive to a diverse population.

### ***Language Group***

Activities are taught cooperatively with the Speech and Language Pathologist to develop your child’s listening skills and ability to understand and use language effectively.

## ***Music and Movement***

Involves movement and rhythm activities, listening, and memory skills in addition to using both large and small muscle coordination.

## ***Sensory Integration***

Sensory integration is provided in the context of play in order to motivate the child to work on skills that build muscle tone, perception, attention, and coordination. Suspended equipment, seating cushions, weighted blankets, and a variety of textures are provided on a daily basis.

## ***Motor Activities***

Large muscle equipment (hippity hops, scooter board, and platform swing) facilitated the development of balance, strength, and coordination.

## ***Snacks***

The children should bring a healthy snack to school each day. Snacking is a valuable learning part of our day. The children engage in conversation with their peers during this experience and develop independent skills in opening their containers and cleaning up when the snack is over. Children are encouraged to use appropriate table manners.

## ***Nutrition and Health Guidelines for Snacks***

We encourage parents to send children with healthy and nutritious snack foods. Some suggestions include:

- Cheese
- low sugar cereal
- pretzels
- fruits
- saltines
- granola
- breadsticks
- peanut butter
- fruit juice
- carrot sticks.

## ***Outdoor Play***

Each day, weather permitting, the children are taken outside. It is during this time that the children have the greatest opportunity for gross motor development.

## ***Clothing Considerations***

Early learning is active and often very messy. Preschool is fun and often unpredictable, and children should wear casual and comfortable clothes. Loose clothing that allows children to dress themselves is a good choice (sweat suits, elastic waist pants, etc.). Layering clothes in winter (a tee shirt under a sweatshirt) allows us to adjust a child's clothing as classroom conditions warrant. During the winter months, hats, mittens, and a warm jacket are essential. Throughout the school year, we will have opportunities for events both indoors and outdoors that may require specific clothing considerations. This may include snow pants and boots. The classroom teacher will inform you prior to these events. If your child wears boots, please send sneakers or indoor shoes for the child to wear while in class. For safety purposes, we encourage students to wear appropriate footwear (closed-toe, with a back) in order to engage in all play activities.

- Please label all items your child brings to school.
- Please send a **complete change of clothing**, including underwear, socks, pants, and a shirt.

### ***Diapers or Pull-ups for Children Not Yet Toilet Trained***

For children in diapers or pull-ups, please provide diapers and wipes. For hygiene reasons, we ask you to use disposables. Please send a full box for use only on your child. When your child moves into training pants, we need several pairs on hand.

Please keep the staff informed when you begin or change any toilet-training routine so we can be consistent at school.

### ***Home-School Newsletters and Notebooks***

Our teachers send weekly classroom newsletters to tell you about our “theme” and related activities, songs, and recipes. Teachers also send occasional notes, and emails. We like parents to send notes too, to tell us about things that happen to their child outside of school. It helps us to have special things to talk with your child about, particularly if your child has delayed language or speech. If you would like to speak to a staff member, please call and leave a message in the office and we will return your call as soon as possible.

### ***Inclusionary Model of Therapies***

The Plymouth Early Childhood Center uses classroom-based therapies. These practices include documented research to support the use of specialized equipment and modifications within the classroom environment. These practices are supported by the Motor and Speech Therapists and carried over within the classroom by both therapists and classroom staff.

***The following is a list of some of the equipment that is used in the classroom:***

- ▶ Move n’ Sit
- ▶ Wedges
- ▶ Cube Chairs
- ▶ Massager
- ▶ Therapy balls
- ▶ Body Socks
- ▶ Scooter boards
- ▶ Trampoline
- ▶ Weighted Vest
- ▶ Weighted Blankets
- ▶ Platform Swings
- ▶ Net Swings
- ▶ Leg/Ankle/Wrist/Waist Belts

### ***Inclusive Preschool Tuition***

Our tuition covers supplies, materials, professional development, parent training, and special events. Children with special needs are services by state and federal law at no cost to parents

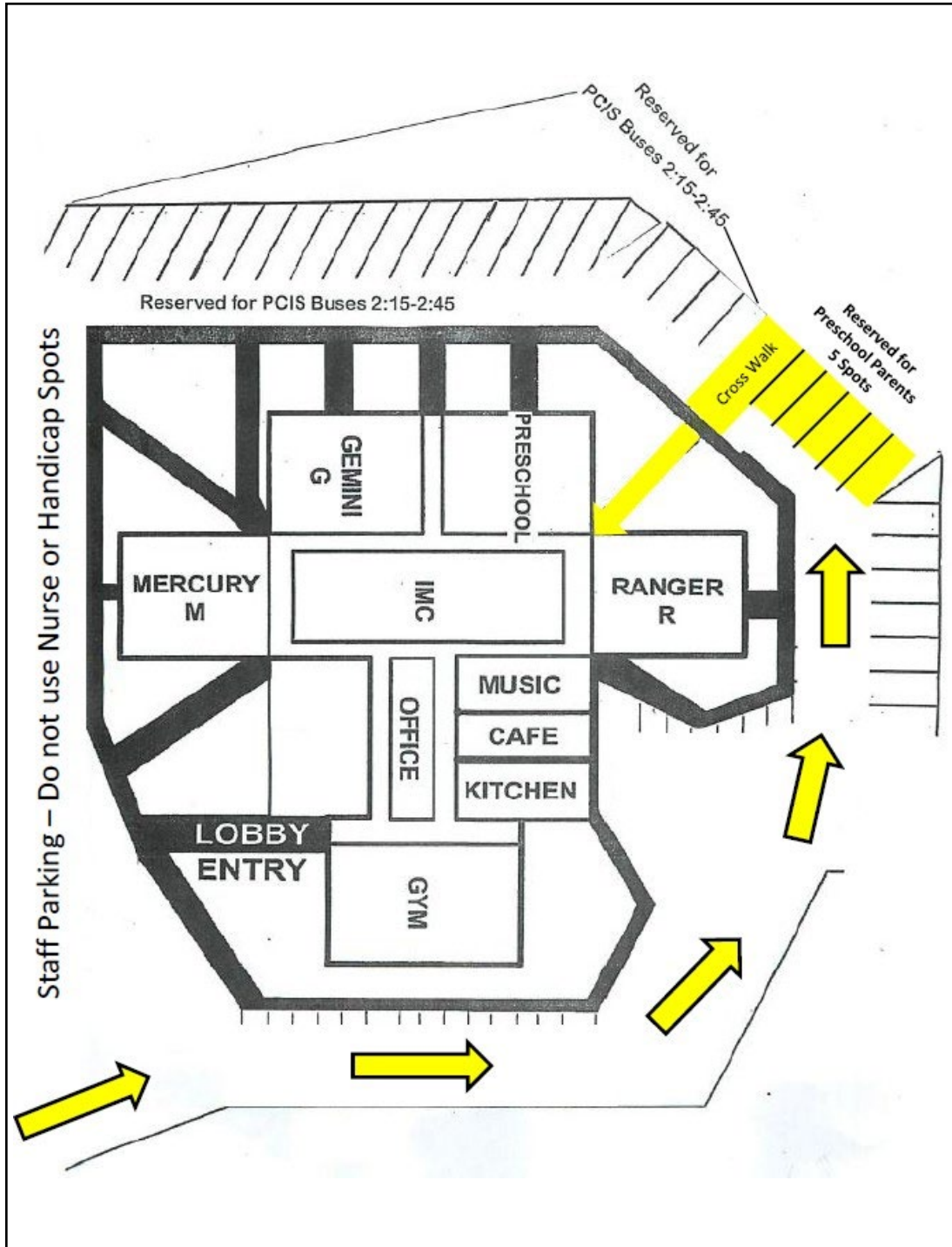
### ***Inclusive Preschool Tuition Rate***

One Child	\$15.00 (SY 24-25) \$17.50 (SY 25-26) \$20.00 (SY 26-27)
Second Child	Second child pays one-half of the above rate
Third Child	Third child pays the same rate as the second child

- Tuition is payable monthly.
- NO DEDUCTIONS FOR CHILD ABSENCES.
- Our tuition is not based on individual daily attendance. For example, if your child is absent due to illness or family vacation, tuition is still charged on those days. Tuition is determined by adding the number of days a program is in session for the year and then dividing the total into 8 equal monthly payments. You do NOT PAY for school vacation (Thanksgiving, December-February-April) or legal holidays when school is not in session.
- Please make checks payable to: ***“Town of Plymouth”***
- Tuition Assistance: Available on a confidential basis from the Preschool Director if your family meets the qualifications.

### ***Parent Drop-off and Parking***

The Plymouth Early Childhood Center has its own parent drop-off in the rear of the Plymouth Intermediate School. As you arrive on campus to drop off your child, we ask that you drive to the back of the school in a counterclockwise manner. Please be mindful of those spots that are reserved for preschool parents and those that are reserved for buses.





**Appendix E:  
Plymouth Public Schools  
Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures**

## ***Appendix E: Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures***

### **OVERVIEW**

The Plymouth Public Schools (“District”) are committed to maintaining school environments free of sexual harassment.

Sexual harassment in any form or for any reason is prohibited. This includes sexual harassment by administrators, personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals in school or at school-related events.

The Plymouth Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities and is required by Title IX not to discriminate on the basis of sex. Such non-discrimination also extends to admissions and the employment application process. Retaliation against any individual who has brought sexual harassment to the attention of school officials, or against an individual who has participated, or refused to participate, in the investigation thereof is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Plymouth Public Schools.

### **SCOPE**

The Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures have been developed in accordance with the revised Title IX regulations, 34 CFR Part 106, effective August 14, 2020, which established a new definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, and which mandate specific procedures for responding to and investigating allegations of sexual harassment under Title IX.

The Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures apply only to allegations of sexual harassment under Title IX, which includes harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, and/or gender identity, and is defined in the Definitions section below.

The Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures apply to conduct that occurs within the United States in an education program or activity of the district, regardless of whether such District program or activity is conducted on or off school grounds. A District education program or activity includes locations, events, or circumstances over which the district exercised substantial control over both the respondent and the context in which the sexual harassment occurred.

Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX will be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures. Allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures.

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will be addressed through the District’s Civil Rights Grievance Procedures. (See exception under Section II, Part 4, Step 4 below). The definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII, M.G.L. c. 151B, and M.G.L. c. 151C are set out in the Civil Rights Grievance Procedures. ***Please see Appendix F the District’s Civil Rights Grievance Procedures.***

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The district will keep the identity of complainants, respondents, and witnesses confidential, except as permitted by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as otherwise required by law, and/or as necessary to carry out this Procedure.

### **DEFINITIONS**

**Complainant:** An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment under Title IX. Parents and/or legal guardians of a complainant are not considered a complainant but may file a Formal Complaint on behalf of a minor child and act on behalf of the minor child in any Title IX matter. For the purpose of this procedure the terms “complainant” and “alleged victim” shall have the same meaning.

**Formal Complaint:** A document or electronic submission filed by a complainant, which contains the complainant's physical or digital signature or otherwise indicates that the complainant is the person filing the Formal Complaint, or a document signed by the Title IX coordinator, that:

- alleges sexual harassment against a respondent, and
- requests that the district investigate the allegation of sexual harassment.

At the time of filing a Formal Complaint, the complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the district's education program or activity with which the Formal Complaint is being filed.

Sexual Harassment: Under Title IX, the term "sexual harassment" includes three (3) types of misconduct based on sex:

- any instance of quid pro quo harassment by a school employee;
- unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex, including unwelcome conduct based on sex stereotyping or on the basis of traditional notions of masculinity and femininity, which is sufficiently severe and pervasive and objectively offensive conduct, effectively denying a person equal educational access; or
- any instance of sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking as defined below.

**Sexual Assault:** An offense that meets the definition of rape, fondling, incest, or statutory rape as used in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting system and set out below:

**Rape:** The penetration, no matter how slight, of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.

**Fondling:** The touching of the private body parts of another person for the purpose of sexual gratification, without the consent of the victim, including instances where the victim is incapable of giving consent because of his/her age or because of his/her temporary or permanent mental incapacity. In Massachusetts, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 265, § 13B, a child under the age of 14 is incapable of giving consent to indecent touching.

**Incest:** Sexual intercourse between persons who are related to each other within the degrees wherein marriage is prohibited by law.

**Statutory Rape:** Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent. In Massachusetts, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 265, § 23, the statutory age of consent is 16 years of age.

For the purposes of the definition of sexual assault, the term "consent" shall be defined in a manner consistent with Massachusetts laws.

**Dating Violence:** Violence committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic or intimate nature with the victim. The existence of such a relationship shall be determined based on the reporting party's statement and with consideration of the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. For the purposes of this definition, dating violence includes, but is not limited to, sexual or physical abuse or the threat of such abuse. Dating violence does not include acts covered under the definition of domestic violence.

**Domestic Violence:** A felony or misdemeanor crime of violence committed by a current or former spouse or intimate partner of the victim; by a person with whom the victim shares a child in common; by a person who is cohabitating with, or has cohabitated with, the victim as a spouse or intimate partner; by a person similarly situated to a spouse of the victim under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred; by any other person against an adult or youth victim who is protected from that person's acts under the domestic or family violence laws of the jurisdiction in which the crime of violence occurred.

**Stalking:** Engaging in a "course of conduct" directed at a specific person that would cause a "reasonable person" to fear for the person's safety or the safety of others or suffer "substantial emotional distress."

***For the purposes of this definition:***

**“Course of conduct”** means two or more acts, including, but not limited to, acts in which the stalker directly, indirectly, or through third parties, by any action, method, device, or means, follows, monitors, observes, surveils, threatens, or communicates to or about a person, or interferes with a person’s property.

**“Reasonable person”** means a reasonable person under similar circumstances and with similar identities to the victim.

**“Substantial emotional distress”** means significant mental suffering or anguish that may, but does not necessarily, require medical or other professional treatment or counseling.

**Party or Parties:** The complainant and/or respondent.

**Principal:** The Principal or Principal’s designee.

**Respondent:** An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute sexual harassment.

**Superintendent:** The Superintendent or Superintendent’s designee.

**Supportive Measures:** Individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the Complainant or Respondent, while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect the safety, and/or deter sexual harassment. Supportive Measures may be offered before or after the filing of a Formal Complaint or where no Formal Complaint has been filed. Supportive measures are individualized services reasonably available that are non-punitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party, while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect the safety, and/or deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures available to complainants and respondents include, but are not limited to: counseling; extensions of deadlines or other course-related adjustments; modifications of work or class schedules; campus escort services; mutual restrictions on contact between the parties; changes in work locations; leaves of absence; increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the building and/or campus; and other similar measures. Violations of the restrictions imposed by supportive measures may be considered a violation of school rules and may also be considered in determining whether sexual harassment has occurred.

***Title IX Coordinator: Employee(s) designated by the district to coordinate its efforts to comply with Title IX.***

**REPORTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**Who May Report Sexual Harassment:** Anyone may report an allegation of sexual harassment.

**How to Report Sexual Harassment:** Individuals are encouraged to report allegations of sexual harassment to the Title IX Coordinator or the Principal, but any District employee who receives a report of sexual harassment will respond to the report as outlined below.

**Internal Reporting:** Any District employee who receives a report of sexual harassment shall respond by promptly informing the Principal or Title IX Coordinator of the report. Any District employee who observes sexual harassment of a student should intervene to stop the conduct and shall promptly inform the Principal or Title IX Coordinator of the incident. If a report involves an allegation against the Principal or Title IX Coordinator, the District employee shall instead report the allegation to the Superintendent.

Any Principal who receives a report of sexual harassment shall promptly inform the relevant Title IX Coordinator of the report.

**District’s Response to Report:** The District will respond to all reports of sexual harassment promptly and equitably and in a manner consistent with this Procedure and any other relevant District procedures and policies. Upon receipt of a report, the Title IX Coordinator shall:

- Promptly and confidentially contact the complainant to discuss the availability of supportive measures;
- Inform the complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint;

- Consider the complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures;
- If the District does not provide the complainant with supportive measures, document the reasons why such response was reasonable; and

Explain to the complainant the process for filing a Title IX Formal Complaint. Only the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint will trigger the Title IX Formal Complaint grievance process, outlined in Section II.

#### **A. FILING A TITLE IX FORMAL COMPLAINT**

Only the filing of a Title IX Formal Complaint will trigger the Title IX Formal Complaint grievance process, outlined below.

Who may file a Title IX Formal Complaint: Although anyone may report sexual harassment, only a complainant or a Title IX Coordinator may file a Title IX Formal Complaint. If a complainant chooses not to file a Formal Complaint, the complainant's choice to not initiate an investigation will generally be respected, unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a Formal Complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. The Title IX Coordinator will take into account concerns articulated by the parties, the best interests of the community, fairness to all concerned, and the district's legal obligations under applicable state and federal laws. Where the Title IX Coordinator signs the Formal Complaint, the Title IX Coordinator is not a complainant or a party during the grievance process and must comply with the requirement to be free from conflicts or bias.

Processing of a Title IX Formal Complaint: Title IX Formal Complaints will be investigated promptly and equitably by the Title IX Coordinator or designee, as follows:

#### **Step 1:** Title IX Formal Complaint is filed:

1. A Formal Complaint shall state (if known to the reporter or alleged victim) the name(s) of the persons involved, witnesses to the conduct, if any, a description of the conduct, and to the extent possible, the dates and locations of the conduct. A Formal Complaint will not be dismissed solely because it was not completely filled out or it was filled out incorrectly.
2. A Formal Complaint may be filed at any time, including during non-business hours. Formal Complaints submitted outside of normal business hours will be deemed received on the following school working day.
3. At the time of the filing of the Formal Complaint, the alleged victim must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the school with which the Formal Complaint is filed.
4. A Formal Complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information for the Title IX Coordinator listed in this procedure, and by any additional method designated by the school.
5. Consolidation of Formal Complaints: the district may consolidate Formal Complaints where the allegations arise out of the same facts.
6. Consideration of the use of the Informal Resolution Process with the consent of the parties. See Section II(D).
7. Throughout this process, there shall be a presumption that the respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

**Step 2:** Consider Supportive Measures for both the complainant and the respondent: Once a Formal Complaint is filed, the Title IX Coordinator will ensure that supportive measures are considered for both parties. See Section I(D).

**Step 3:** Written Notice of Allegations: Upon receipt of a Formal Complaint, the District shall send written notice of the allegations, including the identity of the parties, to both the complainant and the respondent, if their identities are known. The written notice must include: (1) a statement prohibiting knowingly submitting false

information; (2) sufficient details known at the time to allow the respondent the opportunity to respond to the allegations; (3) a statement that the respondent is presumed not responsible for the alleged conduct; (4) that a determination regarding responsibility is made at the conclusion of the grievance process; (5) that the parties may have an advisor of their choice, who may be, but is not required to be, an attorney; and (6) that the parties/advisors may inspect and review evidence in accordance with this procedure. If in the course of the investigation, the district decides to investigate allegations of sexual harassment that are not included in the initial written notice of allegations, the district shall provide notice of the additional allegations to the parties whose identities are known.

**Step 4:** Consider Whether Dismissal of Formal Complaint Warranted: Some Formal Complaints will be subject to mandatory or discretionary dismissal under Title IX.

1. Mandatory Dismissal of Formal Complaint: The Title IX Coordinator shall dismiss a Formal Complaint under Title IX when the conduct alleged:
  2. even if proved, would not meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX;
  3. did not occur in an education program or activity of the district, or
  4. did not occur against a person in the United States.
5. Discretionary Dismissal of Formal Complaint: The Title IX Coordinator may dismiss a Formal Complaint or allegations therein for purposes of Title IX at any time if the complainant informs the Title IX Coordinator in writing that the complainant desires to withdraw the Formal Complaint or allegations; the respondent is no longer enrolled or employed by the District, or
6. specific circumstances prevent the district from gathering sufficient evidence to make a determination.
7. The Title IX Coordinator must provide the parties with written notice of any dismissal of a Formal Complaint and the reasons for the dismissal.
8. Dismissal of a Formal Complaint for purposes of Title IX shall not preclude the District from addressing the allegations under any other relevant District policies or procedure(s), including but not limited to, the Civil Rights Grievance Procedures, the Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan, the Student Code of Conduct, and/or a collective bargaining contract, nor will it preclude the District from addressing the allegations pursuant to the grievance process set out in Section II of this Procedure. The Title IX Coordinator shall have the discretion to make any such referrals and proceed as appropriate in regard to the allegations.

**Step 5:** Initial Investigation: All Formal Complaints will be investigated by the Title IX Coordinator or other individual designated to serve as the investigator by the Title IX Coordinator. The investigator shall be responsible for seeking and gathering evidence relative to the investigation. Any Formal Complaint against an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority. During the Formal Complaint resolution process:

1. Standard of Proof: The investigator shall make factual findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.
2. The burden for gathering evidence and the burden of proof remains on the district, not on the parties.
3. The district shall provide equal opportunity for the parties to present facts and expert witnesses and other inculpatory and exculpatory evidence.
4. The district shall not restrict the ability of the parties to discuss the allegations or gather evidence (e.g., no "gag" orders).
5. Each party may have one (1) advisor of their own selection and at their own expense participate in this grievance process. In the case of a student under the age of 18, this advisor may be in addition to the student's parents/guardians. Any restrictions on the participation of an advisor will be applied equally to each party. The advisor may, but is not required to, be an attorney. Any evidence received by an advisor in this process is subject to confidentiality and may be used only for the purpose of the

grievance process. Advisors are prohibited from disseminating or disclosing such evidence outside of the grievance process.

6. The district shall send prior written notice to the parties of any investigative interviews, meetings, or hearings in which their participation is invited or expected.

7. **Privacy of Medical Treatment and Mental Health Treatment Records:** The District may not access or use either the complainant's or the respondent's medical, psychological, or similar treatment records unless the district obtains the party's written consent to do so.

8. The investigator may impose reasonable timeframes on all parties as required to facilitate the timely completion of the investigation. The investigator may extend any of the timeframes beyond the time periods identified in this procedure for good cause. If a complaint or report of sexual harassment is received within three (3) weeks of the end of the academic school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. In the event that the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the district will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced time frame but may extend the investigation period to account for the unavailability of witnesses while school is not in session. If the investigator extends the investigation, the investigator will notify the parties of the extension and the reasons therefore in writing.

**Step 6:** Opportunity for Parties to Respond to Evidence: The District must send the parties, and their advisor(s) (if they have one) evidence directly related to the allegation, in electronic format or hard copy. Parties shall be afforded ten (10) calendar days to inspect, review and respond to the evidence. The district shall not require, allow, rely upon, or otherwise use evidence that constitutes information protected from disclosure by a legally recognized privilege unless it has been waived by the holder of the privilege.

1. Prior to providing evidence to the parties, the investigator may redact confidential information that is not directly related to the allegations or that is otherwise barred from use under Title IX or by privilege (e.g., treatment records), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and/or 603 CMR 23.00. Information that is directly related to the investigation, and that is not expressly barred from disclosure under Title IX (e.g., treatment records), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and/or 603 CMR 23.00, must be made available for review by both parties.

2. The parties and their advisors shall be prohibited from the dissemination of any of the evidence for any purpose not directly related to this grievance procedure.

**Step 7:** Completion of the Investigative Report: The District must send the parties, and their advisor, an Investigative Report that fairly summarizes relevant evidence but does not reach any conclusions regarding responsibility, in electronic format or hard copy, within twenty-five (25) school days of receipt of the Formal Complaint, unless otherwise extended for good cause. A copy of the Investigative Report will also be sent to the decision-maker.

**Step 8:** Parties' Opportunity to Respond to Investigative Report: The District shall provide each party with ten (10) calendar days for the parties to respond to the investigative report. The Investigative Report will notify the parties of the opportunity to submit to the decision-maker directed questions of the other party and/or any witness within those same ten (10) calendar days. (See Step 9).

**Step 9:** Directed Written Questions from the Parties: After the Investigative Report has been sent to the parties, but prior to reaching a determination regarding responsibility, the decision-maker shall afford both the complainant and the respondent the opportunity to submit to the decision-maker written, relevant questions of the other party or any witness, provide the party with the other party's and/or witness's written responses to said written questions, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party in writing. Questions that seek disclosure of information protected under a legally recognized privilege, Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and/or 603 CMR 23.00 shall not be permitted unless the person holding the privilege has waived the privilege.

1. The complainant shall be protected from answering questions about the complainant's prior sexual behavior unless offered to prove that someone other than the respondent committed the alleged misconduct or offered to prove the complainant's consent to the conduct under investigation.
2. Upon receipt of the Investigative Report, each party shall have ten (10) calendar days to submit directed relevant questions to the decision-maker in writing.
  1. All questions must be posed respectfully (e.g., without profanity and without attacking a person's character or motivations).
  2. Questions that are not relevant will be excluded, and the decision-maker shall explain to the party posing the question the reason(s) for excluding any question.
2. Upon receipt of the directed questions from the district, each party and witness shall have five (5) calendar days to respond to those questions in writing.
3. After receipt of the answers by the parties, any follow-up questions by the parties shall be submitted to the decision-maker in writing within three (3) calendar days, and those follow-up questions shall be responded to in writing within three (3) calendar days of receipt.
4. Each party will be provided a copy of the other party's or witness's written answers.

**Step 10:** Determination of Responsibility/Findings of Fact by the Decision-Maker:

1. The decision-maker shall issue a written determination regarding responsibility with a description of the procedural steps taken, findings of fact, conclusions about whether the alleged conduct occurred, the rationale for the result as to each allegation, the range of disciplinary sanctions to which the respondent may be subject, whether remedies will be provided to the complainant, and procedures and bases for appeal. The decision-maker's written determination shall not be completed by the Title IX Coordinator or the investigator.
2. Standard of Proof: The decision-maker shall make factual findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.
3. The decision-maker's findings shall be based on an objective review of all relevant evidence, inculpatory and exculpatory, and avoid credibility determinations based on a person's status as a complainant, respondent, or witness. \
4. The decision-maker shall not draw inferences about the determination of responsibility based solely on a party's failure or refusal to answer questions.
5. The written determination must be sent simultaneously to both parties.\
6. This determination shall be sent within twenty (20) school days of the issuance of the investigative report unless an extension is agreed upon by the parties or if the process is otherwise reasonably delayed. Except where the parties have agreed to an extension of the timeline or where the process is otherwise reasonably delayed, the written determination shall be issued within sixty (60) school days of receipt of the Formal Complaint.

**B. Remedies:** If the decision-maker determines that sexual harassment has occurred, the District administration shall take steps to eliminate the harassing environment, which may include but not be limited to providing remedies to a complainant that are designed to restore or preserve the complainant's equal access to the District's educational programs and/or activities. These remedies may be the same individualized services as the supportive measures outlined in Section I(D) above and/or may consist of alternative interventions and/or punitive or disciplinary sanctions that burden the respondent.

**C. Discipline:** Persons who engage in sexual harassment or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, reprimand, suspension, termination, expulsion (if applicable under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H ½), or other sanctions as determined by the District administration, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

1. Although the respondent may, in accordance with Title IX, be subject to emergency removal at

any time, the respondent may not be subject to disciplinary sanctions for the misconduct defined under this procedure until after this grievance process has been completed.

**D. Informal Process:** Only after a Formal Complaint is filed may the district opt to offer and facilitate informal resolution options, such as mediation or restorative justice. Both parties must give voluntary, informed, written consent to attempt any offered informal resolution. Any informal resolution under this procedure will be facilitated by trained personnel.

1. The informal resolution process is not available to resolve allegations that an employee sexually harassed a student.
2. The informal process is voluntary, and the alleged victim and/or respondent may terminate or decline any informal process at any time and resume the Formal Complaint grievance process.
3. The informal process shall not exceed thirty (30) calendar days.

Participation in the informal process will stay within the timelines of the Formal Complaint Process.

**E. Emergency Removal under Title IX:** The District may remove a respondent on an emergency basis at any time provided that the District: (1) undertakes an individualized safety and risk analysis; (2) determines that an immediate threat to the physical health or safety of any student or other individual arising from the allegations of sexual harassment justifies removal and that there is no alternative to the respondent's emergency removal to mitigate the threat presented; and (3) provides the respondent with notice and the opportunity to challenge the decision immediately following the removal.

**F. Anonymous Reports:** The District may be on notice of an allegation of sexual harassment through receipt of an anonymous report. In the case of anonymous reports, the District's obligation is to respond in a manner that is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. If the anonymous reporter is the complainant and they request confidentiality, the district can and should offer supportive measures to the extent consistent with maintaining the request for confidentiality. If an anonymous report is received without disclosure of the complainant's identity, the district will be unable to provide the complainant with supportive measures in response to that report. The District may in conformance with applicable state laws and regulations be required to report sexual harassment identified in an anonymous complaint to state and/or local authorities such as the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families in conformance with state statutes and regulations and/or take actions to protect the safety of the school community (contacting the police, for example) that may result in the identity of the reporting person being disclosed. Although the District shall respond to anonymous reports of sexual harassment in accordance with this Procedure, a Formal Complaint cannot be filed anonymously. Appeals: The complainant or respondent may appeal from a determination regarding responsibility and/or from the district's dismissal of a Formal Complaint or any allegations therein, only on the following bases:

1. procedural irregularity that affected the outcome of the matter;
2. newly discovered evidence that could affect the outcome of the matter; and/or
3. Title IX personnel had a conflict of interest or bias that affected the outcome of the matter.

**G.** An appeal may be made to the Superintendent or designee within five (5) calendar days after receiving the determination of responsibility or dismissal. The Superintendent will decide on the appeal no later than thirty (30) calendar days from the date of receipt of the written appeal. In cases in which it has been determined that a respondent student is subject to long-term suspension as a result of a finding of sexual harassment in accordance with this procedure, the respondent may elect to exercise their appeal under the disciplinary due process requirements applicable to the circumstances (e.g., M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾) in place of this appellate procedure. Appeals must be made in writing (email is sufficient) to the Superintendent or designee, Plymouth Public Schools, 11 Lincoln Street, Plymouth, MA 02360.

The Title IX Formal Complaint grievance process is deemed complete when either the time period for appeal has lapsed or upon the issuance of the Superintendent's decision on a timely filed appeal.

**H. Recordkeeping:** Records related to this Procedure will be maintained for a period of seven (7)

years.

**I. Employment Agencies:** The contact information for state and federal employment discrimination enforcement agencies is as follows: 1) Federal - United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); John F. Kennedy Federal Building; 15 New Sudbury Street, Room 475; Boston, MA 02203-0506; 1-800-669-4000; EEOC Boston Area Office Website: <https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/boston/location>; 2) State: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD); Boston Headquarters; One Ashburton Place; Sixth Floor, Room 601; Boston, MA 02108; (617)-994-6000; MCAD Website <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-against-discrimination>.

**J. Identification of key personnel involved in the Title IX process for reports and/or Formal Complaints of sexual harassment:**

Title IX Coordinators: Stacey Rogers, Assistant Superintendent of Administration & Instruction: [srogers@plymouth.k12.ma.us](mailto:srogers@plymouth.k12.ma.us) and Erik Cioffi, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources: [ecioffi@plymouth.k12.ma.us](mailto:ecioffi@plymouth.k12.ma.us)

- Investigator(s): Assistant Principal, or another designee assigned by the Superintendent
- Decision-maker: Building Principal, or another designee assigned by the Superintendent
- Appeal Officer: Christopher Campbell, Superintendent of Schools: [ccampbell@plymouth.k12.ma.us](mailto:ccampbell@plymouth.k12.ma.us)
- Informal Resolution Facilitator(s): Stacey Rogers, Assistant Superintendent of Administration & Instruction: [srogers@plymouth.k12.ma.us](mailto:srogers@plymouth.k12.ma.us) or Erik Cioffi, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources: [ecioffi@plymouth.k12.ma.us](mailto:ecioffi@plymouth.k12.ma.us)

The district will notify students, employees, applicants for admission or employment, parents and legal guardians of students, and unions of the name, title, office address, email address, and telephone number of the Title IX Coordinator. This information will be prominently displayed on the district's website.

**Legal Refs:** Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 151B and c. 151C; and M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; SC Policy 6.15, Anti-Bullying; SC Policy 2.6, Nondiscrimination.



# **PLYMOUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

## ***Appendix F: Plymouth Public Schools Civil Rights Grievance Procedure***

The Plymouth Public Schools (“District”) is committed to maintaining school environments free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation based on race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, or disability.

Harassment, discrimination, and retaliation in any form or for any reason are prohibited. This includes harassment or discrimination by administrators, personnel, students, vendors, and other individuals in school or at school-related events. Retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or discrimination to the attention of school officials or who has cooperated in an investigation of a complaint under this procedure is unlawful and will not be tolerated by the Plymouth Public Schools.

Persons who engage in harassment, discrimination, or retaliation may be subject to disciplinary action, including, but not limited to reprimand, suspension, termination/expulsion, or other sanctions as determined by the school administration, subject to applicable procedural requirements.

### **Non-Applicability of This Procedure to Title IX Sexual Harassment Allegations**

The *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure* shall not apply to reports of sexual harassment as defined under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations (“Title IX”) effective August of 2020.

Allegations of conduct that could, if proven, meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX shall be addressed through the District’s *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures*. Similarly, allegations of conduct that meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, and simultaneously meet the definitions of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will also be addressed through the *Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures*. **Addendum E.**

Allegations of conduct that do not meet the definition of sexual harassment under Title IX, but could, if proven, meet the definition(s) of sexual harassment under Title VII (employees), M.G.L. c. 151B (employees), and/or M.G.L. c. 151C (students), will be addressed through the *Civil Rights Grievance Procedure*.

### **Definitions**

For the purposes of this procedure:

- “Discrimination” means discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or religion by which an individual is excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any program or activity of the school.
- “Harassment” means unwelcome conduct on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, disability, or religion that is sufficiently severe, persistent, or pervasive to create or contribute to a hostile environment for the individual at school. Harassment may include insults, name-calling, off-color jokes, threats, comments, innuendoes, notes, display of pictures or symbols, gestures, or other conduct, which rises to the level of a hostile environment. A hostile environment is one that unreasonably interferes with an individual’s participation in, denied the individual the benefits of, or otherwise subjected the individual to discrimination under any program or activity of the district.

### **Non-Title IX Sexual Harassment**

M.G.L. c. 151B, § 1 - the term “sexual harassment” is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions; (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive work environment. Discrimination on the basis of sex shall include, but not be limited to, sexual harassment.

M.G.L. c. 151C, § 1 - the term “sexual harassment” is defined as sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (a) submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the provision of the benefits, privileges or placement services or as a basis for the evaluation of academic achievement; or (b) such advances, requests or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s education by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating or sexually offensive educational environment.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 - Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when: (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment; (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual; or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. A hostile environment on the basis of sex is created when the conduct is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of employment.

When determining whether an environment is hostile, the district shall consider the context, nature, frequency, and location of the incidents as well as the credibility of witnesses and the identity, number, and relationships of the persons involved. The district must consider whether the alleged harassment was sufficient to have created such an environment for a reasonable person of the same age, gender, and experience as the Complainant, and under similar circumstances. Conduct does not constitute harassment where the incident occurs off-campus at a non-school-sponsored activity and does not create a hostile environment at school for the victim.

**Retaliation:** retaliatory acts against any individual who exercises his or her rights under the civil rights statutes covered by this procedure or the sexual harassment procedure are considered discrimination and are unlawful. Individuals are prohibited from coercing, intimidating, threatening, or interfering with an individual because the individual exercised any right granted or protected under this procedure and/or the Title IX Sexual Harassment Procedures.

**Complainant:** An individual who is alleged to be the victim of conduct that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this procedure. Parents and/or legal guardians of a complainant are not considered a complainant but may file formal complaints on behalf of a minor child and act on behalf of the minor child in any civil rights matter.

**Party or Parties:** The complainant and/or respondent.

Principal:

- The Principal or Principal’s designee.
- Respondent: An individual who has been reported to be the perpetrator of conduct that could constitute discrimination, harassment, or retaliation under this procedure.

### **How to make a complaint**

Any student or employee who believes that he/she has been discriminated against or harassed should report their concern promptly to the principal. Students may also report incidents of harassing conduct to a teacher, administrator, or guidance counselor. Any complaint received by school personnel shall be promptly reported to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. Students or employees who are unsure whether discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred are encouraged to discuss the situation with the principal. There may be instances where another third party, who has not experienced but is aware of the occurrence of prohibited conduct, may bring a complaint under this procedure. In such circumstances, that person is referred to as the “reporter.” Any District employee who observes or receives a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation shall promptly notify the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator, identified below. Any District employee who observes discrimination, harassment, or retaliation against a student should intervene to stop the conduct and report it to the principal. Upon receipt of a report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, the principal shall promptly inform the relevant Civil Rights Coordinator of the report, and the district will respond in a manner consistent with this Procedure. If the report involves an accusation against the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator, the employee shall report the incident to the Superintendent or designee.

**Informal Reports:** Individuals may wish to file a formal complaint of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, or to report informally (i.e., without initiating a formal complaint). Such informal reports may be made to the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator. The district shall inform anyone making an informal report that he or she may initiate a formal complaint at any time, regardless of what steps are being or have been taken in response to an informal report.

**Anonymous Reports:** Complainants and reporters should be aware that although the District will often be able to maintain the confidentiality of reporting persons, the District may sometimes be required to take actions to protect the safety of the school community which may result in the identity of the reporting person being disclosed (to the police, for example). When reporters or Complainants seek to remain anonymous or have their identities kept confidential, they will be informed that honoring such a request may limit the ability of the district to respond fully to any reported event, including limitations on the ability to take disciplinary action against a Respondent.

**Informal Process:** If the District concludes that it is possible to resolve a matter, whether after a formal complaint or an informal report, in a prompt, fair, and adequate manner through an informal process involving, and with the consent of, the Complainant and Respondent, the District may seek to do so. The informal process is voluntary, and the Complainant and/or Respondent may terminate or decline any informal process at any time, without penalty.

**Formal Process:** A formal complaint shall state (if known to the reporter or Complainant) the name(s) of the persons involved and witnesses to the conduct, describe the conduct, and identify, to the extent possible, the dates and locations of the conduct. The complaint shall be signed and dated by the reporter and/or Complainant. Complaints will be investigated promptly and equitably by the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal. Investigations may be initiated whenever warranted, in the absence of a formal complaint, or after a formal complaint has been withdrawn.

**Initial Assessments:** The Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal will make an initial assessment following a complaint. Based on that assessment, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may: (a) if the conduct, even if substantiated, would not constitute harassment, discrimination, or retaliation, dismiss the complaint; (b) if the alleged conduct (or complaint) could not, even if true, constitute discrimination, harassment or retaliation, but is within the scope of another procedure, the Civil Rights Coordinator shall refer the matter to the appropriate personnel; (c) if the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal concludes that it is possible to resolve the complaint in a prompt, fair and adequate manner through an informal process involving and with the consent of both parties, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may seek to do so in accordance with Section D, above; or (d) if the alleged conduct, if substantiated, would constitute discrimination, harassment or retaliation, the Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal will initiate an investigation. The Civil Rights Coordinator or Principal may also identify and initiate any interim measures. See Section G.

**Interim Measures:** The District will provide prompt and reasonable interim measures during the pendency of the investigation, if appropriate, to support and protect the safety of the parties, the educational environment, and the district and/or school community; to deter retaliation; and to preserve the integrity of the investigation and resolution process. Any interim measures will be monitored to ensure they are effective based on the evolving needs of the parties. Violations of the restrictions imposed by interim measures could be considered a violation of school rules and may be considered in determining whether discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred.

**Timeframes:** The District will seek to complete any investigation within twenty (20) school days after receipt of a complaint and provide written notice of the outcome of the investigation within twenty-five (25) school days. The investigator may impose reasonable timeframes on all parties to facilitate the timely completion of the investigation. The investigator may extend the investigation period beyond the time period identified due to extenuating circumstances, including but not limited to the availability and cooperation of witnesses, the complexity of the investigation, school vacation periods, and the involvement of law enforcement and other outside agency investigations. If a complaint or report of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation is received within three (3) weeks of the end of the academic school year, the investigator will attempt to complete the investigation by the end of the school year. If the investigation extends beyond the last day of school, the district will make reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within the above-referenced time frame but may extend the investigation period to account for the availability of witnesses during the summer vacation period. If the investigator extends the investigation, he or she will notify the Complainant and Respondent of the extension. A

report to law enforcement will not automatically delay an investigation; however, a request from law enforcement to delay the investigation may require a temporary suspension of an investigation, and the district will promptly resume its investigation upon being advised that law enforcement's evidence gathering is completed.

Under the formal resolution procedure, the complaint will be investigated by the Principal, Civil Rights Coordinator, or other individual designated by the Principal or Civil Rights Coordinator who has responsibility for seeking and gathering evidence relative to the investigation. A formal complaint against an employee who holds a supervisory position shall be investigated by a person who is not subject to that supervisor's authority.

### **During the formal resolution procedure:**

- The Complainant shall be provided with an opportunity to be heard and have the opportunity to identify witnesses and other relevant evidence to the investigator.
- The Respondent will be provided with an opportunity to be heard as part of the investigation including the opportunity to provide relevant information and identify witnesses for the investigator's consideration.
- The privacy rights of the parties shall be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.
- The investigator will keep a written record of the investigation process.
- The investigation will be completed within twenty (20) school days of the date of receipt of the complaint.
- The notification of the outcome of the investigation, including, if appropriate, a description of the remedies taken, will be provided to the parties within twenty-five (25) school days of the receipt of the complaint, unless extended for good cause.
- Nothing in this Procedure will preclude the investigator, in his or her discretion, from completing the investigation sooner than the time period described above.
- Standard of Proof: The investigation shall make factual findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

If the investigator determines that discrimination, harassment, or retaliation has occurred, the district shall take steps to eliminate the discriminatory or harassing environment, which shall include but not be limited to:

- Identifying what steps are necessary to prevent the recurrence of any discriminatory behavior, including but not limited to harassment or retaliation, and to correct its discriminatory effects if appropriate; and
- Informing the Complainant and Respondent of the results of the investigation (in accordance with applicable state and federal privacy laws) in accordance with the above timelines.

The school administration may also refer the offender for disciplinary procedures to be conducted in accordance with federal and state law. Nothing in the Procedure shall be interpreted as limiting or prohibiting the District's ability to take appropriate disciplinary action against the offender in accordance with the applicable code(s) of conduct or employment contracts or policies, where appropriate, prior to completion of the investigation, in accordance with the due process rights of employees and students, as applicable.

**Appeal:** If the Complainant or the Respondent is dissatisfied with the results of the investigation, an appeal may be made to the Superintendent or designee within seven (7) calendar days after receiving notice of the outcome of the investigation, except for circumstances in which the Respondent is subject to long-term suspension as a result of a finding of discrimination, harassment or retaliation. In such an instance, the appeal rights of the Respondent will be provided in a manner consistent with the disciplinary due process requirements applicable to the circumstances (e.g., M.G.L. c. 71, 37H, 37H ½ or 37H ¾). Appeals must be made in writing (email is sufficient) to the Superintendent or designee, Plymouth Public Schools, 11 Lincoln Street, Plymouth, MA 02360. The Superintendent or designee will decide the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the date of receipt of the written appeal. Identification of Civil Rights Coordinator for complaints of discrimination, harassment, and retaliation under this procedure is:

**Erik Cioffi, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources**  
**11 Lincoln Street**  
**Plymouth, MA 02360**

Employment Agency Information: federal employment discrimination enforcement agencies are as follows: 1) Federal - United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC); John F. Kennedy Federal Building; 15 New Sudbury Street, Room 475; Boston, MA 02203-0506; 1-800-669-4000; EEOC Boston Area Office Website: <https://www.eeoc.gov/field-office/boston/location>; 2) State: Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD); Boston Headquarters; One Ashburton Place; Sixth Floor, Room 601; Boston, MA 02108; (617)-994-6000; MCAD Website <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-commission-against-discrimination>. Legal Ref: Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990; Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; the Age Act; M.G.L. c. 151B and c. 151C; M.G.L. c. 76, § 5; SC Policy 6.15, Anti- Bullying; SC Policy 2.6, Nondiscrimination.



## **2024–2025 Initial MCAS and ACCESS for ELLs Testing Schedule**

## Appendix G: 2024–2025 Initial MCAS and Access for ELLs Testing Schedule

### November 2024 MCAS ELA and Mathematics Retests

Next-Generation CBT (PBT available as an accommodation)

Subject Area	Prescribed Test Administration Dates
ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Session 1: <b>November 6</b></li> <li>• ELA Session 2: <b>November 7</b></li> </ul>
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematics Session 1: <b>November 12</b></li> <li>• Mathematics Session 2: <b>November 13</b></li> </ul>
Last date for all make-up testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>November 18</b></li> </ul>

### February 2025 MCAS Biology and Introductory Physics Tests

Next-Generation CBT (PBT available as an accommodation)

Subject Area	Prescribed Test Administration Dates
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biology Session 1: <b>February 4</b></li> <li>• Biology Session 2: <b>February 5</b></li> </ul>
Introductory Physics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introductory Physics Sess. 1: <b>February 4</b></li> <li>• Introductory Physics Sess. 2: <b>February 5</b></li> </ul>
Last date for all make-up testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>February 10</b></li> </ul>

### March 2025 MCAS ELA and Mathematics Retests

Next-Generation CBT (PBT available as an accommodation)

Subject Area	Prescribed Test Administration Dates
ELA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Session 1: <b>March 6</b></li> <li>• ELA Session 2: <b>March 7</b></li> </ul>
Mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematics Session 1: <b>March 11</b></li> <li>• Mathematics Session 2: <b>March 12</b></li> </ul>
Last date for all make-up testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>March 14</b></li> </ul>

### Spring 2025 MCAS Grades 3–8 ELA and Mathematics, and Grades 5 and 8 STE

Next-Generation CBT (PBT available as an accommodation)

Subject Area	Test Administration Window
ELA Test Sessions	<b>March 24 – April 18</b>  <i>Note that ELA will be administered earlier than Mathematics and STE.</i>
Mathematics Test Sessions	<b>April 28 – May 23</b>
STE Test Sessions	<b>April 28 – May 23</b>
<b>Civics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• State-level performance task</li> <li>• End-of-course test</li> </ul> <i>First year of operational testing</i>	<b>April 28–June 6</b>

## Spring 2025 MCAS Grade 10 Tests

Next-Generation CBT (PBT available as an accommodation)

Subject Area	Prescribed Test Administration Dates
ELA	<p><i>Test the maximum number of students who can participate concurrently.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA Session 1 <b>March 25</b></li> <li>• ELA Session 2: <b>March 26</b></li> </ul>
Mathematics	<p><i>Test the maximum number of students who can participate concurrently</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mathematics Session 1: <b>May 20</b></li> <li>• Mathematics Session 2: <b>May 21</b></li> </ul>
Last date for all make-up testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ELA: <b>April 3</b></li> <li>• Math: <b>May 28</b></li> </ul>

## Spring 2025 MCAS High School STE Tests

Subject Area	Prescribed Test Administration Dates
Biology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session 1: <b>June 4</b></li> <li>• Session 2: <b>June 5</b></li> </ul>
Introductory Physics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Session 1: <b>June 4</b></li> <li>• Session 2: <b>June 5</b></li> </ul>
Last date for all make-up testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>June 12</b></li> </ul>

## 2025 ACCESS for ELLs

Grades K–12	
ACCESS for ELLs test sessions	<b>January 6 – February 14</b>

## 2025 MCAS Alternate Assessment (MCAS-Alt)

Grades 3–8 and High School	
MCAS-Alt submission deadline	<b>March 28</b>

## Plymouth Public Schools Handbook Signature Pages and Summaries 2024-2025

The Plymouth Public Schools is required to collect signatures to ascertain that parents, guardians, and students have read and understood the following:

1. *Content of the Student Handbook (including Media Release, Directory Information, and Transfer of Records)*
2. *Information concerning an Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)*
3. ***The Liability Release Form 2024-2025 (requires signature)***

The Plymouth Public Schools is required to obtain parent/guardian permission pursuant to the following:

1. *Student Internet Safety & Technology Acceptable Use Policy (AUP)*

To assist you, please refer to the following summaries.



***Please, be sure to complete and return the signature page to your child's school no later than one week after the receipt of the Student Handbook***

### **Pictures, Names, Student Work, or Quotes in the Media**

Sometimes media (such as newspapers, television, radio, or cable) reporters or photographers would like to be involved in activities in the schools. Having a picture or student work in the paper for participating in a program is usually acceptable to parents, but occasionally, for legal reasons, it is not prudent. **If you do not wish your child's name or schoolwork to be used or pictures to be taken for the media, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

### **Directory Information Notice**

The Plymouth Public Schools has designated certain information contained in the education records of its students as directory information for purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Student Record Regulations, 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

The following information regarding students is considered directory information: name; address; telephone number; date and place of birth; major field of study; participation in officially recognized activities and sports; weight and height of members of athletic teams; dates of attendance; degrees, **honors, and awards received**; and post-high school plans of the student.

Directory information may be disclosed for any purpose at the School System's discretion, without the consent of a parent/guardian of a student or an eligible student. Parents/guardians and eligible students have the right, however, to refuse to permit the designation of any or all of the above information as directory information. In that case, this information will not be disclosed except with the consent of a parent/guardian or eligible student, or otherwise allowed by FERPA and 603 CMR 23.00 et seq.

**Any parent/guardian or student refusing to have any or all of the designated directory information disclosed must file a written notification to this effect with the school's principal no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. This notification is part of the signature page.**

In the event a refusal is not filed, it is assumed that neither parent/guardian nor eligible student objects to the release of directory information.

### **Notice on Transfer of Records to another School**

Pursuant to 603 CMR 23.07 (g), notice is hereby given that Plymouth Public Schools forwards the complete school record of a transferring student to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll. Such transfer of records takes place without the consent of the parent/guardian or eligible student.

### **An Act Relative to Sex Education (M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A)**

#### ***Parent Notification***

The Health Education and Science programs of Plymouth Public Schools contain comprehensive PreK-12 curricula. The goal of the program is to help students acquire appropriate content background to develop life skills or problem-solving, communication, and decision-making abilities to prepare for a healthy and productive future.

The Health Education and Science programs have been designed by our professional staff, using their research-based programs as well as programs developed by the Massachusetts Department of Education, the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, the American Red Cross, Operation Lifesaver, and other health and science education resources.

The health curriculum in grades K-5 includes a Child Protection Unit which teaches personal safety/keeping your body safe and contains topics and references such as recognizing, refusing, and reporting unsafe behavior toward children related to bodies, personal space, and staying safe. The health curriculum in grade 5 includes a Human Growth and Development unit and

contains topics and information presented factually about puberty, physiology, personal health, and hygiene. Prior to the Human Growth and Development unit, a letter is sent home to families with an explanation of topics and the opportunity to opt out of the unit.

UPDATED LANGUAGE: An Act Relative to M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A

Within the Science program, learning standards for K-4 are lessons, which include topics dealing with characteristics of all organisms. These topics include growth, development, reproduction, and death. The students will also observe that plants and animals have different structures, which serve different functions in growth, survival, and reproduction.

During health and science classes, student questions will be answered factually and, in an age-appropriate manner. Each student's privacy will be respected, and no one will be required to answer questions or reveal personal information. Material is presented factually.

Under Massachusetts law and the Plymouth School Committee policy, you may exempt your child from any portion of a curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. If you would like to exempt your child from a particular class, please send the request in writing.

The Director of Health Education and the Coordinator of Science are available to meet with you to review the curriculum and materials. To review these materials, please call to make an appointment.

We look forward to working with you to ensure that your child has a positive and educationally enriching experience this school year. If you have any questions regarding the exemption process for the Health and Science Programs, please call your school's principal.

**To exempt your child from any portion of the health and/or science curriculum that primarily involves sexual education or human sexuality issues, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

### ***Student Internet Safety and Technology Acceptable Use (AUP)***

A signature releases the Plymouth Public Schools, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from a student's use of, or inability to use, the Plymouth Public Schools Data Network, including, but not limited to claims that may arise from the unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services.

The parent/guardian agrees to instruct his/her child regarding any restrictions against accessing material that is in addition to the restrictions set forth in the AUP. Please complete the ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY***

***AND ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT***. This form once completed will need to be returned to your building principal.

### ***Military Recruitment/Institutes of Higher Education***

According to the provisions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), schools are now required to provide student directory information (**secondary school student name**, address, and telephone number) upon request to military recruiters and/or institutions of higher education.

**Any parent/guardian who does not want this information released to these third parties must file a written notification to this effect with the school's principal no later than one week following the receipt of this handbook. This notification should be written on the back of the Signature Page.**



**SIGNATURE PAGES**

**FOR STUDENTS AND PARENT(S) / GUARDIAN(S)**

**Student Information**

*First Name:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Middle Initial:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Last Name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date of Birth:* \_\_\_\_\_ *Grade:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Parent/Guardian Name:*

Below, please check the boxes that apply, sign all pages, as well as the **2024-2025 Liability Release Form, and the Student Technology Acceptable Use Form**, and then return all pages to the school.

**An Act Relative to Sex Education**

Elementary Health Education: Sex education is not included in the elementary curriculum. The health curriculum in grades K-5 includes a Child Protection Unit which teaches personal safety/keeping your body safe and contains topics and references such as recognizing, refusing, and reporting unsafe behavior toward children related to bodies, personal space, and staying safe. The health curriculum in grade 5 includes a Human Growth and Development unit and contains topics and information presented factually about puberty, physiology, personal health, and hygiene. Prior to the Human Growth and Development unit, a letter is sent home to families with an explanation of topics and the opportunity to opt out of the unit.

A. I acknowledge that I have read the information in the handbook and above concerning Parent Notification of An Act Relative to Sex Education M.G.L. Ch. 71 §32A as it relates to elementary health education.

YES

NO

B. My child may participate in any portion of the health and/or science curriculum that primarily involves sexual education or human sexuality issues.

YES (Unrestricted)

NO (Restricted)

---

**Information Released to a Third-Party Mailing Service**

My child's name and address may be released to receive Charter Public School recruitment information.

YES (Unrestricted)

NO (Restricted)

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**Pictures/Student Work in the Media**

My child's picture or schoolwork may be taken for the media or used in school district publications including yearbook pictures submitted to the newspaper.

YES (Unrestricted)

NO (Restricted)

---

**Directory Information Notice**

The school district may release my child's directory information to publish items such as yearbooks, graduation announcements, newsletters, and honor roll announcements without having to get written consent for each use of student information.

YES (Unrestricted)

NO (Restricted)

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**Pictures, Names, Student Work, or Quotes in the Media**

Sometimes media (such as newspaper, television, radio, or cable) reporters or photographers would like to be involved in activities in the schools. Having a picture or student work in the paper for participating in a program is usually acceptable to parents, but occasionally, for legal reasons, it is not prudent. **If you do not wish your child's name or schoolwork to be used or pictures to be taken for the media, you must notify the school in writing on the back of the Signature Page.**

**Student Technology AUP Access Agreement**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF THE TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY AND ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT**

**STUDENT SECTION** (Must be signed by students in grades six and above.)

Student Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

I have read, understand, and agree to follow the Plymouth Public Schools Technology AUP. I understand that if I violate this policy or school rules my access can be terminated, and I may face other disciplinary measures. I understand this policy applies to all technology being operated on Plymouth Public Schools property or connected to the Plymouth Public Schools network. I understand and agree there is no expectation of privacy related to information stored and transmitted over the Plymouth Public Schools network.

Student Signature (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT/ GUARDIAN SECTION** (The following section must be signed by a parent or guardian unless the student is over 18 years of age.)

As the parent/guardian of this student, I have read the Technology AUP and this Agreement. I hereby release the Plymouth Public Schools, its personnel, and any institutions with which it is affiliated, from any and all claims and damages of any nature arising from my child's use of, or inability to use, the Plymouth Public Schools network, including, but not limited to, claims that may arise from the unauthorized use of the system to purchase products or services. I understand that violation of this AUP or any other technology policies, agreements, or rules may result in disciplinary action.

I understand and agree that there is no expectation of privacy related to information stored and transmitted over the Plymouth Public Schools Network. I understand and agree that my child will abide by the terms of any device loan agreement if he/she receives a 1:1 device through the Plymouth Public Schools and that the AUP and this Agreement apply to any devices used by my child on Plymouth Public Schools property or connected to the Plymouth Public Schools network. I will instruct my child regarding any restrictions against accessing materials that are in addition to the restrictions set forth in the Technology AUP. I will emphasize to my child the importance of following the rules for personal safety. I understand that by signing this Agreement, I am acknowledging the acceptance of all Plymouth Public Schools network and device policy requirements and responsibilities.

I give permission for my child to access the Internet and certify that the information contained in this form is correct.

I **DO NOT** WISH FOR MY CHILD TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE INTERNET.

Parent/Guardian Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature:	Date:
----------------------------	-------

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_



# Plymouth Public Schools

Administration Building  
11 Lincoln Street  
Plymouth, MA 02360

Telephone: 508-830-4300  
Fax: 508-746-1873

Web: [www.plymouth.k12.ma.us](http://www.plymouth.k12.ma.us)

CHRISTOPHER S. CAMPBELL, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools  
STACEY ROGERS, Ed.D.  
Assistant Superintendent  
Administration and Instruction  
ERIK CIOFFI  
Assistant Superintendent  
Human Resources  
ADAM BLAISDELL, Ed.D.  
School Business Administrator

## Liability Release Form ~ School Year 2024-2025

**As a result of a recent school district insurance review, our insurance carrier has recommended that all participants in school sponsored activities that occur outside of the regular classroom have a signed waiver on file. Students will be unable to participate in such activities if a signed Liability Release Form is not on file.**

I, the undersigned \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_, my child or ward,  
Parent, guardian, etc. Student's name (first and last)  
a minor, do hereby consent to my child's participation in voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities of the Town or Public School of Plymouth.

I also agree to forever release the Town or Public School of Plymouth, the School Committee, and all their employees, agents, board members, volunteers and any and all individuals and organizations assisting or participating in voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities of the Town or Public Schools ("the Releasees") from any and all claims, rights of action and causes of action that may have arisen in the past, or may arise in the future, directly or indirectly, from personal injuries to my child or property damage resulting from my child's participation in the Town or Public School of Plymouth voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities.

I also promise, to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Releasees against any and all legal claims and proceedings of any description that may have been asserted in the past, or may be asserted in the future, directly or indirectly, arising from personal injuries to my child or property damage resulting from my child's participation in the Town or Public School of Plymouth voluntary athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities.

I further affirm that I have read this Consent and Release Form and that I understand the contents of this Form. I understand that my child's participation in these programs is voluntary and that my child and I are free to choose not to participate in said programs. By signing this Form, I affirm that I have decided to allow my child to participate in the Town or Public School's athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities with full knowledge that the Releasees will not be liable to anyone for personal injuries and property damage my child or I may suffer in voluntary Town or Public School athletic or recreation programs, field trips, or school sponsored activities.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Parent or Guardian of: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please print)

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_

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

*The Plymouth Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, national origin, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, homelessness, genetic information, ancestry, status as a veteran or U.S. uniformed military service member, disability, or age in admission to, treatment in, or employment in its services, programs, and activities.*

Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I acknowledge that I have read and have discussed the preceding rules and regulations of this STUDENT HANDBOOK with my child.

YES

NO

**STUDENT SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT SIGNATURE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **PSAT/SAT/ACT Information**

The Plymouth Public Schools is committed to helping all students prepare for post-secondary education and ensuring that they have access to these opportunities. The district offers college readiness assessments to grade 11 students including the PSAT (fall) and SAT (spring) during the school day. Students are also encouraged to take the SAT Reasoning Test in the spring of their junior year and the fall of their senior year. Please contact the Guidance Office or [www.collegeboard.org](http://www.collegeboard.org) for registration information.

ACT registration information can be found at [www.act.org](http://www.act.org)