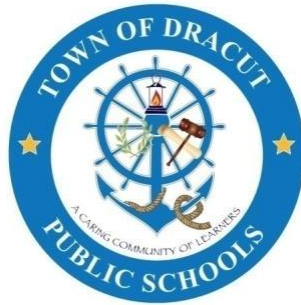


Dracut High School

Student & Parent/Guardian Handbook

2023-2024



1540 Lakeview Avenue
Dracut, MA 01826
978-957-1500



Caring • Respect • Responsibility
Trust • Family

Dracut Public Schools Mission Statement

The Dracut School Community is committed ...

TO FOSTERING a safe and caring learning environment where autonomy, collaboration, and mutual respect are valued.

TO PROVIDING our students with the knowledge and skills necessary for reaching their individual potential.

TO INSPIRING all students to persevere, to become critical thinkers, to become good community members, and to become lifelong learners.



Dracut Public Schools Vision Statement

The Dracut Public Schools aspires to be a world-class school system that develops the heads, hearts, and hands of its students and inspires them to be the critical thinkers, problem-solvers, and innovators who make contributions to their communities, our nation, and the world.

We believe and value:

1. The individuality and uniqueness of each child.
2. The special talents and abilities of each child.
3. The truth that all children can learn.
4. The respect for personal and cultural diversity.
5. The respect and dignity of each member of the school community.
6. The student's right to equal access to educational opportunity.
7. The necessity of strong community partnerships.
8. The dedication and passion of our employees.

Dracut High School

Vision of the Graduate

Critical Thinker:

- Applies logic and reasoning to draw inferences
- Engages in self-reflection
- Evaluates information for validity and bias
- Analyzes using acquired skills and knowledge

Collaborator:

- Works to achieve a common goal
- Listens and responds to feedback
- Includes the contributions of others
- Considers diverse perspectives

Communicator:

- Listens actively
- Demonstrates appropriate use of media
- Expresses thoughts and ideas for multiple audiences
- Develops persuasive arguments

Creator:

- Imagines possibilities
- Innovates solutions to solve problems
- Persists and learns by experience
- Applies technology and new approaches

Citizen:

- Participates in community activities
- Engages in civic responsibilities
- Demonstrates awareness of global issues

Core Values and Beliefs

The Dracut High School community is committed to challenging all students with a rigorous curriculum within a safe, healthy, and positive environment. Our primary goal is for students to become lifelong learners in a changing world. We believe in promoting personal responsibility, self-respect, tolerance, and integrity while preparing all students for 21st century success. We embrace and value diversity. We advocate environmental and global awareness. We offer various opportunities for all students to thrive and succeed, in and beyond the classroom, so that they may become informed, productive citizens. We encourage our students to take pride in their identity and the Dracut community as they strive toward maximum personal growth.

21st Century Learning Expectations

The Dracut High School students will be able to perform the following skills:

Speak effectively

Write effectively

Read, view, and interpret a variety of media effectively

Demonstrate financial/business literacy

Utilize an array of methods to research, analyze, and problem solve

Use technology effectively and responsibly

Demonstrate cultural literacy

Practice personal wellness and social responsibility

Promote civic responsibility regarding issues facing our community and the world today

The Dracut High School graduate will have a working plan for post-high school life.

SUPERINTENDENT of SCHOOLS

Mr. Steven Stone

DRACUT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Ms. Allison Volpe, Acting Chairperson
Dr. Linda Trouville, Second Vice Chairperson
Ms. Renee Young, Board Member
Dr. Rebecca Duda, Board Member
Mr. Robert Sheppard, Board Member

PRINCIPAL OF DRACUT HIGH SCHOOL

Mr. Richard J. Manley

VICE PRINCIPALS

Ms. Maria Lysen (Grades 10-12)
Dr. Mary Carney (Freshman Academy)

Welcome to Dracut High School! While within these walls you will be exposed to a vast amount of learning. What you take away will be up to you. Take advantage of the opportunities presented to you, listen, learn, and make friends. Be involved in your high school. Your rewards will be great!

SCHEDULE

Daily attendance is taken in the first period.

Monday, Wednesday, & Friday		Tuesday & Thursday
1st Block	7:29 - 8:19	7:29 - 8:22
2nd Block	8:23 - 9:12	8:26 - 9:19
3rd Block	9:16 -10:07	9:23 -10:16
Lunch 1	10:40-11:05	10:50-11:15
Lunch 2	11:09-11:34	11:20-11:45
Lunch 3	11:38-12:03	11:50-12:15
4th Block	10:11-12:03	10:20-12:15
5th Block	12:07-12:57	12:20- 1:50
6th Block	1:01 - 1:50	

BLOCK	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI
1	B	A	A	B	A
2	C	C	E	C	B
3	D	E	D	E	D
LUNCH (4)	A	B	C	D	E
5	F	F	F	G	F
6	G		G		G

NOTICE TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Please be advised that the Dracut Public Schools will provide copies of all official correspondences and documents (in languages other than English) to parents who require this service. Kindly inform the building principal if you are in need of this accommodation.

AVISO A TODOS LOS PADRES Y GUARDAS

Aconsejese por favor que las escuelas publicas de Dracut proporcionaran a las copias de todas correspondencias documentos oficiales (en lenguajes excepcion del ingles) a los padres que requieren este servicio. Informe amablemente al principal del edificio la escuela de su ni no si usted esta en necesidad de esta comodidad.

DRACUT PRIDE

Dracut High School is a fantastic place to be! While within these walls you will be exposed to a vast amount of learning; what you experience will be up to you. The opportunity exists for you to explore a variety of activities, meet new friends, excel in classes, and be a participant in shaping your own future! You come in as ninth graders and graduate as mature young people ready to enter college, the armed services, or the workforce of our community and nation. The opportunities for a successful high school career rest in your hands. Your responsibility is to be on time, be present, and be involved. Dracut High School faculty and staff all have a common goal: to help **you** be the best **you** can be. There are so many activities at Dracut High School there is surely something to interest you. Whether it be performing in the band or athletic events, serving on the yearbook, becoming a member of a club, engaging yourself in the school plays, or writing for the school newspaper, we urge you to become involved. By doing so you will enhance your own high school experience, be a better student, a more productive graduate, and make many lasting friends along with tremendous memories to carry you through life.

STUDENT PRIDE

Students entering DHS find a world full of challenges and opportunities. The school climate encourages each student to explore, meet new people, make new friends, learn about a multitude of academic subjects as well as be able to participate in many co-curricular activities. With this increased opportunity comes increased responsibility. **Responsibility rests with you, the student.** It includes conforming to the discipline code and educational expectations of Dracut High School, including attendance and punctuality. **Students are responsible for the following:**

- being respectful to all others and respecting property.
- recognizing the differing styles of teachers and adapting to these styles.
- spending time on homework each night or reading for a comparable amount of time, free from distractions to foster good study habits.

- seeking out teachers for extra help and asking questions when something is not understood.
- doing homework in the proper format and on time.
- recognizing the importance of homework as an extension of classroom learning.
- being in the proper place at the proper time, including being present and on time for school and classes, extra-help sessions, detentions, or other scheduled events.
- returning library books, textbooks, and for bringing in absence and dismissal notes promptly when required.
- pride in personal appearance.

Please note: During the 23-24 school year, the district is reviewing its homework practices. The existing information related to homework should be considered a general guideline, with variations possible. Any questions should be directed to individual teachers and/or building principals.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PRIDE

Parents are extremely important in the educational process, especially at the high school level. Working together will help assure a comprehensive education for your child. Parents need to help their children continue their formal education at home by being

- supportive
- providing a quiet place to study
- checking the work of the student
- communicating with teachers

Communication between home and school is important in the educational process. Parents/Guardians are urged to participate in parent/teacher conferences held twice yearly. The high school has a website that posts important calendar dates and events. Please visit at www.dracutps.org.

VISITORS

Visitors must enter through the front door and sign in at the main office. Visitors will receive a visitor identification badge to be worn while in the school.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Principal	Mr. Manley	978-957-1500 x 1489
Vice Principal (Gr. 10-12)	Ms. Lysen	978-957-1500 x 1490
Vice Principal (Gr. 9)	Dr. Carney	978-957-1500 x 1430
Main Office		978-957-1500 x 0
Guidance Office		978-957-1500 x 1
High School Fax Machine		978-957-9717
School Nurse		978-957-1500 x 2
Athletic Director		978-957-1500 x 3
Superintendent of Schools		978-957-2660
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment		978-957-2617

Follow the instructions in the voice mail system to contact an individual teacher or staff member.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must attend high school for four years and earn enough units of credit each year to complete 22 units of course work in order to graduate. Specific requirements include:

Four (4) years of attendance in grades 9-12.

Passing Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment exams.

3.0 units Science	4.0 units Social Sciences	1.0 unit Wellness
3.0 units Mathematics	1.0 unit Foreign Language	4.5 units English
1.0 units Unified Arts*		

***Unified Arts** is satisfied by any course in Business, Technology, Visual Arts, or Performing Arts.

Students must enroll in at least 7 course units and pass 5 units each year in order to be promoted. Students must pass the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System exams to receive a diploma. **Credits are earned when (a) the student earns a passing grade, and (b) the student is in compliance with the attendance policy. A student who does not pass a required course must retake the course.**

In order to participate in the DHS Graduation Ceremony, students must fulfill all the above requirements by the end of the senior final examination period that year.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71 § 3, all Dracut High School students must enroll in physical education in each of their four years of high school. Enrollment in interscholastic sports, Marching Band, or Show Choir satisfies this requirement.

GRADES AND REPORT CARDS

Report cards are published four times a year in Aspen. Midterm and final exam grades are also published in Aspen, as well as the number of absences, tardies, and dismissals. Letter grades are used to indicate student progress.

Underclassmen final grades will be published in Aspen approximately one week after the last day of the school year.

GRADES

A+ (97-100)	C+ (77-79)	M	Medically Excused
A (93-96)	C (73-76)	W	Withdrawn
A- (90-92)	C- (70-72)	I	Incomplete
B+ (87-89)	D+ (67-69)	P	Satisfactory (Pass)
B (83-86)	D (63-66)	F	Unsatisfactory (Fail)
B- (80-82)	D- (60-62)		

CORRECTIVE FEEDBACK AND REMEDIATION

Remediation provides students with opportunities to relearn course content, retake summative assessments, or correct major assignments. In consultation with their teachers, students who earn a D or F will have an additional opportunity to demonstrate their learning and improve their grade. Remediation should occur within ten school days of the student receiving the original assessment. Remediation may include test retakes, test corrections, improvements to major assignments, or self-reflections submitted to the teacher. Remediation is not available for cornerstone assessments, midterm examinations, or final examinations. Upon successful remediation students may earn up to $\frac{1}{2}$ of the credit lost on the original assessment.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Students who fail a course and wish to attend summer school must have prior approval from the principal. Approval will be granted to students provided the following criteria have been met: (a) the student must have met the attendance requirement for the course and (b) student has passed at least two quarters in that subject. A student who has not met the criteria yet and wishes to attend summer school may appeal their ineligibility to the principal. Within an academic discipline, a student may not earn more than two credits from successive summer school programs.

Students with discipline history, including chronic school or class truancy, will be ineligible to attend summer school.

RANK IN CLASS

The rank in class is computed on the basis of subjects taken by the student in grades 9 through the end of the first semester of grade 12. Subjects with levels (Advanced Placement, Honors, and College Preparatory) are weighted. The selection of the top twenty senior scholars, including the class valedictorian and salutatorian, is based upon the class rank calculations at the end of the first semester of the senior year. The following chart delineates the weighting system:

GRADE	ADVANCED PLACEMENT	HONORS	COLLEGE PREPARATORY
A+	5.3	4.8	4.3
A	5.0	4.5	4.0
A-	4.7	4.2	3.7
B+	4.3	3.8	3.3
B	4.0	3.5	3.0
B-	3.7	3.2	2.7
C+	3.3	2.8	2.3
C	3.0	2.5	2.0
C-	2.7	2.2	1.7
D+	2.3	1.8	1.3
D	2.0	1.5	1.0

D-	1.7	1.2	0.7
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ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

PHILOSOPHY

Dracut High School encourages regular and punctual attendance because these are requisites to being successful in academics and being productive in college, your career and your professional life. Classroom participation and discussions are important and it is important that you be in class to take advantage of these discussions. This learning experience from your peers and direct teacher interaction cannot be substituted. Parents and guardians share in your responsibility for consistent and punctual attendance.

CARNEGIE UNITS

Academic credit at Dracut High School, and most other high schools in the United States, is based on Carnegie Units. Units are based on the number of hours that students are in their classes. Carnegie Units are required by universities and colleges as evidence that students have fulfilled all requirements towards high school graduation. It is very important for students to be present and accountable for each course they take.

ATTENDANCE DISCIPLINE

If your student will be late, absent, or dismissed, please email our Attendance Email at dhsattendance@dracutps.org For absences and or/tardies only, you may also phone the attendance line at 978-957-1500 x6. Dismissals over the phone will not be accepted.

Credit for coursework is based on attendance as well as academic achievement. It is the policy of Dracut High School that students attend 91% of their class time to earn credit for the course. This means that students may not be absent more than sixteen days in a full year course and not be absent for more than eight days in a semester course.

Students must arrive at school prior to 10:30 a.m. to be eligible to participate in any co-curricular or interscholastic activity. Students must remain in school until at least 10:30 a.m. to participate in any co-curricular or interscholastic activity. This includes athletic events, practices, rehearsals, performances, dances, proms, semi-formals. Participation in weekend activities or during school holidays requires that the student be in school the day preceding the event(s) with the same stipulations as stated. Students suspended from school (in school or out of school) may not participate in or attend any school related function, whether the site is Dracut High School or off campus.

- ❖ All absences count toward the sixteen for the year for full year courses and eight for the semester for half year courses
- ❖ Students exceeding this policy will receive a failing grade for the quarter
- ❖ Students absent more than eight times for semester courses or sixteen times for year-long courses will not receive credit for the course even if they have a passing grade
- ❖ Depending upon an appeal students may earn credit back by passing summer school (if eligible)

or an alternative previously approved by the principal. Incomplete work due to absences must be made up within ten (10) school days. **Course work not completed will be 0 (zero).** In the fourth quarter school work must be made up prior to the beginning of summer school. Work not completed by this time will be graded zero (0).

APPEAL PROCESS

There are sometimes extenuating circumstances for excessive absenteeism. In these cases it is the responsibility of the student and the parent/guardian to inform the school of unusual situations or circumstances.

- ❖ An appeal is made to the guidance counselor of the student in writing, no longer than ten calendar days after the issuance of report cards. The appeal should contain the reasons for the appeal and be addressed to the counselor and copied to the principal.
- ❖ The guidance counselor and an administrator will review the appeal and render a decision within five school days. The administrator and guidance counselor will review all special cases and may approve a waiver for family emergencies or chronic illness with documentation.
- ❖ If the decision is satisfactory there is no further action. If the decision is to be appealed the appeal must be sent to the principal for review. This responsibility rests with the parent/guardian. **All decisions of the principal are final.**

DISMISSALS

Students being dismissed from school: **Regardless of the students age, parents are required to send an email to dhsattendance@dracutps.org or the student can bring in a written note signed by the parent/guardian with the following:** students full name, time, reason, number where the parent/guardian may be reached, and the time the student will be returning to school that day. These emails/notes should be emailed to the school and/or turned in to the dismissal (front) office *before* 8:00am on the day of. **TELEPHONE DISMISSALS ARE NOT ACCEPTED!** Parents are also allowed to come in the office to dismiss their student in person; in this instance, please bring a copy of your ID with you. Only names listed under the student's contacts will be able to dismiss a student. **Forged dismissal notes is a serious matter and will result in disciplinary action.**

TARDINESS

If a student reports to school after 8:00 a.m. the front office must have notification by a parent/guardian. The parent may email a tardy note to dhsattendance@dracutps.org, or have the parent phone the school. This encourages students to report to school on time and ensures parents have the knowledge that their child is late and has missed the majority of the instruction during the first class of the day. Students will earn progressive disciplinary actions as a consequence for being late. Parents will receive communication from administrators if tardies become habitual. Each quarter will begin the process anew. For the purpose of attendance, tardy arrivals after 10:30 am will be documented as an absence.

1st - 2nd offense	No disciplinary action
3 rd - 5th offense	Detentions
6th + offense	Progressive discipline (social probation, parent meeting, suspension)

Students earning a detention for tardiness are expected to serve detentions that day or within twenty-four hours. Students may not participate in co-curricular activities if they are scheduled for detention until after they have served the detention.

PARENT NOTIFICATION

The Dracut Public Schools, pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, § 1B, has a policy of notifying the parent or 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. This policy requires that the school principal, or a designee, make a reasonable effort to meet with the parent or guardian of a student who has 5 or more unexcused absences to develop action steps for student attendance. The action steps shall be developed jointly and agreed upon by the school principal, or a designee, the student and the student's parent or guardian and with input from other relevant school personnel and officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies.

WITHDRAWAL

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 76, § 18, any student (16 years or older) who is withdrawing from school prior to graduation must obtain a withdrawal form from the guidance office. No student shall be considered to have permanently left the school district unless an administrator from the school or school district has sent notice within a period of ten (10) days from the student's fifteenth (15) consecutive absence to the parent or guardian of such student in both the primary language of such parent or guardian and English, stating that such student and his or her parent or guardian may meet with the school committee or its designated representatives prior to the student permanently leaving school, within ten days after the sending of the notice. The time for meeting may be extended at the request of the parent or guardian and with consent of the school committee or its designated representatives, provided no extension shall be for longer than fourteen days. Such meeting shall be for the purpose of discussing the reasons for the student permanently leaving school and alternative educational or other placements. M.G.L. c. 76, § 18.

<h2>SCHOOL RULES & REGULATIONS</h2>
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COURTESY

Dracut High School takes pride in its students and encourages the use of common courtesy. Respect is the key. Be helpful to teachers, fellow students, visitors, and staff. Avoid any behavior that may be harmful to others or yourself. Think before you speak and be aware of other people's feelings. Behave appropriately in assemblies, at lunch, in the hallways. You represent yourself, your school community, and the Dracut community. We expect the best from you.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Expectations of student behavior are established by the faculty and written in the student handbook. Teachers may also establish certain codes of behavioral expectations within the context of the school rules that pertain to their class, such as, wearing goggles or not missing homework assignments. **Students are responsible to be aware of the individual differences in teaching styles, to expect these differences, and to respect these variations.**

Common sense is the measure of good behavior. Teachers have the right and responsibility to assign detentions or extra help sessions and contact parents when dealing with a variety of minor disciplinary infractions such as tardiness to class, homework not being done, and general disruptive behavior. It is expected that the student will stay with the teacher for extra help or detention. The teacher also has administrative support for more serious breaches of acceptable behavior, including but not limited to, disrespect, skipping teacher assigned detentions, swearing, and cutting class. Students must recognize that continued disruptive behavior will result in administrative disciplinary action.

The use of any personal electronic device is prohibited unless otherwise authorized by the classroom teacher for instructional purposes; otherwise, all cell phones must be powered off and put away at the request of the teacher.

ASSEMBLIES

During the school year there may be presentations by various persons to enhance your education. Attendance at these assemblies is a privilege where you are expected to behave responsibly and properly. Respect is the key. All participants in assemblies are guests of ours and are to be treated accordingly with respect and courtesy.

STUDENT DRESS CODE

All DHS students are expected to dress appropriately according to the policy, and the DHS Administration will enforce the student dress code accordingly.

Clothing/dress is a reflection of students and our schools. The rules set herein are for the benefit of the entire student body. Students' dress should be appropriate for a working environment and conducive to learning as interpreted by the Administration. The School Committee, in recognizing its obligation to minimize opportunities for student distraction and/or disruption within the Dracut Public Schools, has established and adopted the following rules of dress. The administration is authorized to take action in instances where individual dress does not meet the stated requirements.

- Clothing and grooming habits should not be detrimental to health and safety, and should be weather appropriate.
- Only headwear related to religious observation will be allowed.
- Only prescription or medically required eyeglasses are allowed.
- Clothing that exposes midriffs is not permitted.
- No beachwear, sleepwear, or low-cut tops will be permitted.
- No extremely short skirts or shorts shall be permitted.
- No exposed undergarments shall be permitted.
- No clothing will be permitted that advertises alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence, gang membership, sexual references, questionable slogans, or language that creates a double entendre.
- Jewelry of an extreme nature is not acceptable. This may include dog collars, spiked jewelry, wallet chains, metal chains, or any other potentially dangerous accessories.

- Proper and safe footwear must be worn at all times. Sneakers/athletic footwear are required for physical education classes.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, AND DRUG USE BY STUDENTS PROHIBITED

A student shall not, regardless of the quantity, use or consume, possess, buy or sell, or give away any beverage containing alcohol; any tobacco product, including vapor/E-cigarettes; marijuana; steroids; or any controlled substance. The School Committee prohibits the use or consumption by students of alcohol, tobacco products, or drugs on school property, at any school function, or at any school sponsored event.

Additionally, any student who is under the influence of drugs or alcoholic beverages prior to, or during, attendance at or participation in a school-sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and may be subject to disciplinary action.

Verbal Screening

- The school district shall utilize, in accordance with law, a verbal screening tool approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to screen students for substance abuse disorders. The tool shall be administered by trained staff on an annual basis at grades 7 and 9.
- Parents/guardians shall be notified prior to the opening of school each year. Parents/guardians shall have the right to opt out of the screening by written notice prior to or during the screening.
- All statements made by a student during a screening are confidential and shall not be disclosed except in the event of immediate medical emergency or in accordance with law. De-identified results shall be reported to the Department of Public Health within 90 days of the completion of the screening process.

Breath Alcohol Testing Procedures and Protocol

Alcohol use by a student is illegal and poses a serious threat not only to the student's own well-being, but also to the well-being of the entire school community. Alcohol use will not be tolerated during school hours, on school property, or at any school-sponsored activity or event during or after school hours. Students who violate the school policy on use, possession, sales or distribution may be subject to disciplinary action including a possible suspension for up to 90 school days per MGL c. 71 s. 37H ³/₄.

When determining whether possible alcohol use or intoxication by a student has occurred at school or a school-related function, the safety of the student is the primary concern. If an administrator reasonably suspects that a student is under the influence of alcohol, the administrator may use a breath alcohol testing device which indicates the presence or absence of alcohol. The Dracut Public Schools also reserves the right to randomly screen students or screen all students at school related events with proper notice to the students and their families.

This is a non-invasive test in which students will be asked to exhale or speak into a device. The purpose of having breath alcohol testing available is a deterrent to alcohol use. The test will be administered by the administrator and witnessed by a staff member. The administration of

Dracut Public Schools is not held to a criminal standard of proof and therefore; the results of the breathalyzer are final and are not subject to further review.

1. If the test is positive, the student can request two (2) additional tests taken at least two (2) minutes apart. If these additional tests are positive:
 - a. Parents/guardians are notified and requested to take the student home
 - b. If the student is assessed to be a risk and in need of medical assistance, emergency help and parents/guardians are notified.
 - c. Disciplinary action will be taken as indicated in student handbooks.
 - d. If the test is negative, the student will be allowed to resume the activity if the administrator does not suspect the use of other drugs.
2. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or is suspected of having consumed alcohol and refuses to be tested:
 - a. The administrator will notify parents/guardians to pick up the student and detain the student until the parent's arrival.
 - b. The administrators will consider the refusal as comparable to being under the influence and will discipline the student in accordance with the student handbook.
3. If a student is suspected of being under the influence of alcohol or is suspected of having consumed alcohol and leaves the scene against the school official's request:
 - a. Police will be notified
 - b. Parents/guardians notified
 - c. Disciplinary action for intoxication will be taken as indicated in the student handbook

BOOKS

Books are valuable resources in schools. All books belong to the Dracut School District and must be taken care of properly. Books are costly and students must take to preserve and protect their books. **Students are responsible for the books issued to them and must reimburse the school for lost or damaged books.**

BULLYING POLICY

The School Committee 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.

“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.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of electronic medium in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as 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 a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

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

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

Principal means the administrative leader of a public school, charter school, collaborative school, or approved private day or residential school, or his or her designee for the purposes of implementing the school's bullying prevention and intervention plan.

Bullying and retaliation 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 retaliation 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

In accordance with M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, the superintendent and/or their designee shall develop, adhere to, and update a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents, and guardians. The plan shall apply to students and members of a school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals. The consultation shall include, but not be limited to, notice and a public comment period. The plan shall be updated at least biennially.

Each Principal is responsible for the implementation and oversight of the bullying prevention and implementation plan within his or her school.

Training and Assessment

Annual training shall be provided for school employees and volunteers who have significant contact with students in preventing, identifying, responding to, and reporting incidents of bullying.

Age-appropriate, evidence-based instruction on bullying prevention shall be incorporated into the curriculum for all K to 12 students.

Publication and Notice

Annual written notice of the relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to students and their parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms.

Annual written notice of the bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be provided to all

school staff. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the bullying prevention and intervention plan applicable to the school.

Relevant sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in the school employee handbook. The bullying prevention and intervention plan shall be posted on the school district website.

IDLING OF MOTOR VEHICLES

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions unrelated to school arrival/dismissal; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students within 15 minutes of a school’s start/end time; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles; and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below referenced regulations. The term "school grounds" shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the district to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such air intake system, unless the Dracut School District has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety or are not cost effective.

The Dracut School District shall erect and maintain in a conspicuous location on school grounds "NO IDLING" signage as described below. All such signage shall contain appropriately sized font so as to be visible from a distance of 50 feet.

NO IDLING
PENALTIES OF \$100 FOR FIRST OFFENSE AND \$500
FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES
M.G.L. C. 90, § 16B AND 540 CMR 27.00

It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that each school bus driver employed by the school district and not by a school bus contractor shall, upon employment and at least once per year thereafter, sign a document acknowledging the receipt of copies of M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B and 540 CMR 27.00. The prohibitions contained in M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B shall be enforced by state or local law enforcement agencies. For the safety of staff and students said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff and visitors, from prolonged idling of such vehicles on school grounds and violators may be subject to a fine.

BUS TRANSPORTATION

The Dracut School Committee has instituted a **Bus Fee Program** for students in grades K-12 who wish to ride the bus during the school year. The fee structure will be posted annually on-line. There is a fee of \$5.00 for each lost bus pass. A waiver of fee program is available for those students who receive free or reduced lunch. All fees are paid on-line through a FamilyID account on the Dracut Public Schools website (www.dracutps.org).

The school day begins when the students board the school bus coming to school, and ends when the students disembark from the school bus returning home. Each student is under the jurisdiction of the school administration during this entire period. With respect to pupils being transported, a written Policy Statement is required to provide the School Committee, Administrators, School Bus Contractor,

Pupils and Parents with uniformly applied guidelines. Such a policy should be widely disseminated and clearly understood by all.

Riding the school bus is a privilege. This privilege may be suspended or revoked from any student who is not well behaved, courteous, or who endangers the health or safety of any student. Any decision revoking the privilege of a student to ride the school bus will be made only by school authorities. Prior to such a decision, the matter will be discussed with the bus driver and the student, the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student will be informed. Before a student can have the bus privilege reinstated, the student and the student's parents/guardians must meet with the Committee or designee to discuss the matter.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS:

1. Only authorized students may ride the bus.
2. Obey the driver in all matters pertaining to the operation of the school bus. The bus driver is the representative of parents and teachers and is directly responsible for the safety of each student on the bus.
3. Exercise courtesy toward others while loading, riding, and leaving the bus. Application of this simple rule will result in a more enjoyable ride to school each day and will prevent many unpleasant situations from arising.
4. Arrive at the bus stop on time and wait for the bus in a safe location on the curb or shoulder off the road. There will be **NO FIGHTING AT THE BUS STOP**. If you should have a problem with someone at the bus stop inform the Principal of your school so that the matter can be resolved. Appropriate school behavior is expected at the bus stop as defined in the student handbook
5. Cross highways and streets only in front of the bus. Move away from the front of the bumper of the bus approximately (10) ten feet so that the driver can observe your crossing. **DO NOT RUN OR DASH INTO THE STREET OR ROAD WITHOUT LOOKING BOTH WAYS EVEN THOUGH THE BUS DRIVER HAS TRAFFIC STOPPED. DO NOT WALK ALONG THE SIDE OF THE BUS OR CROSS-BEHIND THE BUS.**
6. Do not trespass on private property.
7. Approach and board the bus in an orderly manner when the bus has come to a full stop, and the driver has opened the door.
8. Take your seat promptly and remain seated throughout the bus trip.
9. Assignment of seats is left to the discretion of the bus driver with the final approval by school authorities when necessary. Priority is set for the Kindergarten and first grade students to sit in the front of the bus, but front seats are also made available when we have discipline problems. If seat assignments are made, compliance is mandatory.
10. Remain seated until the bus comes to a full stop, then leave in an orderly manner. **NO PUSHING OR SHOVING IS ALLOWED. ANYONE WHO IS CAUGHT DOING THIS WILL BE**

REPORTED TO THE PRINCIPAL, AND DISCIPLINARY ACTION WILL TAKE PLACE. BE COURTEOUS AND TRY NOT TO BUMP INTO THE PERSON IN FRONT OF YOU.

11. Do not talk to the driver while the bus is in motion except in an emergency.
12. Avoid actions that might distract the driver.
13. **KEEP YOUR VOICE LOW. NO SHOUTING, WHISTLING, PUSHING, FIGHTING, OR THROWING OBJECTS ON THE BUS. THIS WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. ABSOLUTELY NO NOISE WILL BE MADE WHILE CROSSING RAILROAD TRACKS.**
14. Do not extend arms or any other parts of your body out the window. **DO NOT THROW ANY OBJECTS OUT THE WINDOW OR SPIT OUT THE WINDOW.**
15. **THERE IS NO SMOKING ON THE BUS AND AT BUS STOPS. BUS STOPS AND BUSES ARE CONSIDERED SMOKE AND DRUG FREE ZONES.**
16. Ask the driver's permission before opening the window.
17. Help keep the bus clean and report anything damaged in the bus to the driver. **EATING FOOD AND OR CHEWING GUM ON THE BUS ARE NOT ALLOWED. NO PENCILS OR PENS SHOULD BE OUT ON THE BUS DUE TO VANDALISM OR IF AN ACCIDENT SHOULD OCCUR FOR SAFETY PURPOSES.**
18. Keep books/bundles out of the aisles, and do not carry heavy objects on the bus that might cause injury to other students.
19. Ride your assigned bus and do not ask the driver to make unauthorized stops unless written permission is received from your parents, and agreement is reached between the principal and the bus driver.
20. Report any violation of these rules to the bus driver or to your teacher.
21. **ONCE THREE (3) DISCIPLINE SLIPS HAVE BEEN SUBMITTED ON ANY CHILD, THE CHILD WILL BE REPORTED TO THE PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL AND PUT OFF THE BUS. UNTIL A PARENT, PRINCIPAL AND SCHOOL DEPARTMENT DESIGNEE MEET TO DISCUSS ANY PROBLEM, ONLY THEN WILL A CHILD HAVE HIS/HER PRIVILEGES RETURNED OR DENIED.**
22. All elementary students residing more than 1 ½ miles from the school attended are entitled to transportation privileges. All students riding the bus are required to purchase a school bus pass.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS:

1. Please instruct children of the important bus codes that are listed above.
2. Support the bus driver in maintaining discipline on the bus.
3. Ensure children arrive at the bus stop on time. Supervise children when necessary.

4. Make suggestions in writing to the Principal and to the Office of the Superintendent to make any improvements to the routes.
5. Report any concerns or violations to the Principal of the school that your child is attending.
6. **NO KINDERGARTEN CHILD WILL BE DROPPED OFF AT THE BUS STOP WITHOUT A PARENT/GUARDIAN THERE TO MEET HIM/HER. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN OF THE CHILD TO HAVE ARRANGEMENTS MADE IN THE EVENT THEY CANNOT BE AT THE BUS STOP. IF NO ONE IS THERE, THE CHILD WILL BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL AND THE PARENT/GUARDIAN WILL HAVE TO TRANSPORT THE CHILD HOME SAFELY.**
7. In the event that a child is returned to school due to misbehavior on the bus the Principal will contact the parent/guardian and it will be the responsibility of the parent/guardian to transport the child home.
8. Parents, or persons authorized to pick up children at dismissal time or for extenuating circumstances must have this in writing, which will be kept in the office of the Principal. Pupils who do not have written permission to either stay for after-school activities or to be transported by car will be placed on their regular bus home.
9. Please do not ask that we transport children of friends or relatives who may be visiting on a temporary basis.
10. The school should be made aware of any known health problems such as allergies that might require special assistance.
11. **DO NOT DISCUSS WITH THE BUS DRIVER ANY PROBLEMS THAT YOU MAY HAVE WITH THE BUS DRIVER, ROUTE, OR OTHER CHILD. PLEASE REFER ALL PROBLEMS TO THE PRINCIPAL OF YOUR SCHOOL. DRIVERS HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED NOT TO DISCUSS ANY PROBLEMS WITH PARENTS WHILE ON ROUTE.**
12. **PARENTS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BOARD THE BUS.**

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE BUS DRIVERS:

1. Read, comply with and periodically review the rules and regulations as stated in the contract agreement with said contractor and residents of the town.
2. Become familiar with current state laws on school buses and safety procedures.
3. Immediately report in writing any and all accidents, even if minor, to the School Department Business Office, the Police Department and the Registry.
4. Avoid potential hazards. **ABSOLUTELY NO SMOKING OR EATING ON THE BUS.**
5. **Assume full charge of the bus and the pupils while they load, ride, and leave the bus.**

6. Ensure the bus is fully stopped with red signal lamps flashing while loading and unloading pupils.
 - a) **The bus should not proceed until all pupils are seated and the door is closed**
 - b) When pupils are loading and unloading, do not wave vehicles to pass the school bus
 - c) Report the registration number to your supervisor of any vehicle passing the school bus while the red signal lamps are flashing.
7. Take necessary disciplinary action with students riding school buses as outlined in the disciplinary procedures. Any and all violations should be written up and a copy submitted to the Principal. After three written violations students should be reported to the Principal for temporary suspension from transportation.

A driver shall not put pupils off the bus at any stop for reason of discipline. The driver will return the offending child/children back to the school of origin and inform the Principal or designee that you are returning so that they will be prepared for the child/children.

8. Perform routes as outlined and assigned. Make notations for any and all special requirements of your route. Be sure that there is a roster of your route in your bus at all times in the event there is a substitute driver that they may follow your route
9. Schedules are to be kept as neatly as possible. If the bus is on time and a pupil is not at the designated stop, the driver shall not wait.
10. Bus drivers are cautioned about their language. Derogatory remarks about pupils and/or others are to be withheld. Any complaint will be discussed with your Supervisor and will not be tolerated.
11. **IN NO WAY SHOULD THE DRIVER ENTER INTO A DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS CONCERNING THE MISCONDUCT OF A RIDER. REFER THE PROBLEM TO THE PRINCIPAL.**
12. Exercise extreme caution when buses pass each other in opposite directions on a narrow roadway.
13. Transport students only to designated points on scheduled routes. Deviations are allowed only if agreed upon by the parent, driver, contractor, and school department.
14. Instruct children on safety procedures in case of emergency. Conduct bus drills twice a year demonstrating the use of the emergency exit.
15. Place no devices for locking or securing any exit or windows while actually engaged in transporting school children.
16. Inspect vehicles before the start of routes each day to ensure it is in safe operation condition. Inspect vehicles at the end of each day to ensure that all students are off the bus and articles/children left on the bus are taken off and brought to the proper authority.
17. Transport only authorized students attending public schools in Dracut. The transportation of additional passengers is not allowed.

18. No kindergarten child will be dropped off at a designated bus stop without a parent/guardian at the stop to meet them unless other arrangements have been made with the parent or guardian. In the event no one is at the stop, the driver will contact the Principal's office by the phone on the bus and inform them he/she will be returning the child to the school and to please try to contact the parent.

19. ALL DRIVERS MUST BE CPR AND FIRST AID CERTIFIED.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT:

1. Adjust routes and bus stops if students are subject to safety hazards. Review any bus stops by the School Department.
2. If requested, handle disciplinary complaints.
3. Conduct classes to instruct bus drivers, students, patrol leaders, etc. on safety measures.
4. Monitor the behavior of pupils at bus stops when requested. Parents assume primary responsibility for monitoring the behavior of their children at bus stops.

RESPONSIBILITIES – PRINCIPAL:

1. Process disciplinary reports received from the bus drivers.
2. If necessary, establish safety guides for the buses.
3. Ensure prompt supervision during loading and unloading of students from the buses each day before and after school.
4. Clear all traffic from bus loading areas each morning and afternoon.
5. As appropriate, instruct students on general safety procedures observed while riding school buses.
6. Be available to assist any parent or bus driver if they have any problems with the school buses.

RESPONSIBILITIES – TEACHERS:

1. Perform duties in relation to school buses as directed by the Principal.
2. Assist drivers in maintaining discipline when riding the buses.
3. Instruct students on bus codes at the start of the school year.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE – RESPONSIBILITIES BUS DRIVERS:

1. In the event of an accident involving a school bus take proper precautions to protect lives.
2. Turn off ignition and activate flashers and flares to warn traffic.
3. Check passengers for physical injury and administer any first aid if required.
4. Evacuate students if a fire is located. If the possibility of a fire is remote and if it is safe to do so, keep students on the bus.
5. Contact the Police or Fire Department to report the location of the accident and to request an ambulance, if required.

- Request a police officer to attend the scene of the accident.
 - Procure the names and addresses of any witness or other operators of motor vehicles involved in the accident.
 - Notify the Business Office immediately and the Principal with the names of students involved in the accident even if it is a minor accident or incident.
6. Fill out accident or incident reports as required.
 7. Submit one copy of the report to the Superintendent of Schools and also to the Principal of the school building involved.

ACCIDENT PROCEDURE-RESPONSIBILITIES – STUDENTS:

1. Keep calm, and follow the directions of the bus driver. Stay in your seat until the bus driver tells you what action to take.
2. Do not touch any emergency equipment unless told to do so by the driver.
3. In case of fire, leave the bus in an orderly manner, as directed by the driver and move to the nearest exit away from the fire.
4. If the driver is injured and unable to move, notify the nearest adult or contact the Police or Fire Department on the nearest phone.
5. Report any injuries to yourself or other students to the driver.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE-RESPONSIBILITIES PRINCIPAL:

1. Evaluate disciplinary reports.
2. Counsel students on the nature of the violation.
3. Recommended necessary action:
 - a. Depending on the nature of the offense, the principal will reprimand, give a warning, or suspend the student’s right to ride the bus.
 - b. No fixed number of disciplinary reports is required to take away a student’s riding privilege if the offense is severe.
4. Inform the parents of the nature of the offense.
5. Advise the bus driver of the action taken.

DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE-RESPONSIBILITIES-BUS DRIVER:

1. Utilize your good judgment, experience, and maturity in handling the students. Never exceed the bounds of good taste in disciplining a child and never strike a child or use profane language. This will only aggravate the situation severely.
2. Fill out the disciplinary report clearly and completely as provided. Be sure to fill out this report whenever deemed necessary to do so. Action cannot be taken if this form is not filled out.

3. Report immediately any disciplinary reports you write out to the Principal's Office and maintain a copy for yourself.
4. **Never discharge students from the bus for disciplinary reasons in the middle of a run or any other time without proper authorization.** If you have a problem with students on the bus you must bring them back to the school they are from and inform the Principal that you are taking them back because of discipline problems. The Principal will then deal with the situation.

EVACUATION PROCEDURE:

1. Passengers are to remain seated and pay attention to the driver.
2. The driver will stay at the front of the bus, indication that passengers should move out left to right.
3. Passengers should not take anything with them – musical instruments, athletic equipment, lunch boxes, etc. The objective of the drill is to empty the bus as quickly as possible in an orderly manner.
4. The driver will designate a helper to assist in leading the students to a designated location on the school grounds approximately 100 feet from the bus. Students are to walk, not run to this location.
5. A second helper will be appointed to stand outside the bus door to assist passengers as they leave the bus.

CAFETERIA

The cafeteria is the place for dining and being with friends. Proper behavior is expected, and inappropriate behavior in the cafeteria may result in disciplinary action. You are responsible for keeping the cafeteria neat and clean. Be respectful and talk in a normal tone of voice.

CO-CURRICULAR PARTICIPATION

A full range of co-curricular opportunities is offered. Eligibility requirements are set by Dracut High School guided by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association. Students must pass four one (1) credit courses each quarter to be and remain eligible for co-curricular participation. Information on sports schedules and athletic eligibility may be obtained from the Athletic Director at 978-957-1500 X 1355. Participation at dances and other co-curricular events is a privilege for those who are academically eligible according to Dracut High School standards. The Dracut School Committee has instituted an Athletic User Fee. The fee structure will be posted annually at www.dracutps.org. A fifty percent reduction is available for those students who receive free and reduced lunch. All fees are paid on-line through a FamilyID account on the Dracut Public Schools website (www.dracutps.org).

DANCES

Dances and other social functions are for **eligible Dracut High School** students only. Prior administrative approval must be obtained for guests to attend the Junior Semi-Formal or the Senior Prom. **The Principal has final say on who attends the Dracut High Semi-Formal and Prom.**

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY INCLUDING HARASSMENT AND RETALIATION

Dracut Public Schools will respond promptly to any reports or complaints of discrimination, including harassment and retaliation, or other violations of civil rights, pursuant to our detailed response protocol. Where it is determined that discrimination or harassment has occurred, Dracut Public Schools will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and will impose developmentally-appropriate disciplinary, restorative, and/or corrective action.

Any member of the school community who is found, after investigation, to have engaged in any form of discrimination, including harassment or retaliation, against another member of the school community, will be subject to consequences determined appropriate by the administration. Such consequences may include restorative measures and corrective action, and/or student discipline or staff disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Definitions

"Discrimination" and "Harassment" are defined as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal or physical, that is based on any individual's actual or perceived race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, active military/veteran status, marital status, familial status, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions, homelessness, ancestry, ethnic background, national origin, or any other category protected by state or federal law, Discrimination and/or harassment includes, but is not limited to:

- Display or circulation of written materials or pictures that are degrading to a person or group described above.
- Verbal abuse or insults about, directed at, or made in the presence of, an individual or group described above.
- Any action or speech that contributes to, promotes or results in a hostile or discriminatory environment to an individual or group described above
- Any action or speech that is sufficiently severe, pervasive or persistent that it either (i) interferes with or limits the ability of an individual or group described above to participate in or benefit from employment or a program or activity of Dracut Public Schools; or (ii) creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational or working environment.

Harassment may include, but is not limited to, any unwelcome, inappropriate, or illegal physical, written, verbal, graphic, or electronic conduct, and that has the intent or effect of creating a hostile education or work environment by limiting the ability of an individual to participate in or benefit from the district's programs and activities or by unreasonably interfering with that individual's education or work environment or, if the conduct were to persist, would likely create a hostile educational or work environment.

"Title IX Sexual Harassment" (effective August 14, 2020) means verbal, physical or other conduct that targets a person based on their sex, and that satisfies one or more of the following: 1 of 3
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- A school employee conditioning educational benefits or services on participation in unwelcome sexual conduct (i.e., quid pro quo);
- Any unwelcome conduct that a reasonable person would find so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's

- educational program or activity;
- Any instance of "sexual assault", "dating violence", "domestic violence", or "stalking", as those terms are defined by the Clery Act (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)) and the Violence Against Women Act (34 U.S.C. 12291(a)(8), (10) & (30)).

Allegations of Title IX Sexual Harassment shall be reported and investigated pursuant to the Dracut Public Schools Protocol for Investigating Sexual Harassment and Retaliation Pursuant to Title IX.

Resources

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment Coordinator, and Grievance Officer for the School Committee, administration, faculty, staff, volunteers in the schools, and for parties who are contracted to perform work for the Dracut Public Schools, and can be reached at:

Name/Position Kimberly Lawrence, Director of Student Services
Address 2063 Lakeview Avenue, Dracut, MA 01826
Phone 978-957-4633

The following individual is designated as the District ADA, Title VI, Title IX, and Sexual Harassment and Civil Rights Coordinator for students in the Dracut Public Schools. In addition, the Director of Student Services is the District 504 Coordinator, and can be reached at:

Name/Position Kimberly Lawrence, Director of Student Services
Address 2063 Lakeview Avenue, Dracut, MA 01826
Phone 978-957-4633

Inquiries concerning the Dracut Public Schools' policies and protocols, compliance with applicable laws, statutes, and regulations, and complaints may also be directed to the Director of Human Resources. Inquiries about laws, statutes, regulations and compliance may also be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education or the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 5 Post Office Square, 8th Floor, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02109; (617) 289-0111; Email: OCR.Boston@ed.gov; Website: www.ed.gov/ocr

DRIVING/PARKING

Driving a car to school is a **privilege** as well as a **responsibility**. Safety rules regarding automobiles are very serious and **must be followed**. Student vehicles must be registered in the main office. Hang tags will be issued and must be affixed to the vehicle as directed by the administration. There will be a limited number of permits issued based on the number of available parking places. Students who purchase a parking permit are required to park in the designated parking spot / lot.

The Dracut School Committee has instituted a student parking fee. A reduced fee is available for those students who receive free and reduced lunch. All fees are paid on-line through a FamilyID account on the Dracut Public Schools website (www.dracutps.org).

Potential loss of parking privileges due to one or more of the following: reckless driving, illegal parking, chronic tardiness to school, school truancy, re-entering the school parking lot during school hours, and failure to purchase and display a DHS parking permit. Rules for drivers and passengers include:

- ❖ Use extreme caution when operating a vehicle on school grounds; follow all state motor vehicle laws.
- ❖ Park only in designated areas in your assigned spot.
- ❖ Enter school immediately after parking. Do not loiter in the car, or in the lot, during or after school hours.
- ❖ Vehicles parked on school grounds are subject to search, including search by canines and law officials.
- ❖ Plan ahead. Students are not allowed to go to their cars during the school day. Students leaving school grounds during the school day without following the dismissal process will be subject to disciplinary action and loss of parking privileges for the remainder of the school year.

Failure to comply with parking rules and regulations may result in the loss of parking privileges or towing at student's expense.

ETHICS

High standards of ethics are expected and enforced. Honesty and integrity in schoolwork is expected. Students must always cite sources when preparing any academic work. The failure to cite sources is academic dishonesty and will not be credited. Ethics violations impact National Honor Society applications, acceptance, and standing.

GUIDANCE

The Guidance Department is here to assist you in making the best use of your opportunities at Dracut High School. Please make yourself familiar to your guidance counselor. Schedule appointments to peruse college material and allow your counselor to assist you in scheduling courses and selecting post high school opportunities. The Guidance Department may be contacted at any time via note or telephone (978-957-1500 ext. 1). Students are assigned counselors alphabetically, and students should check these assignments on the first day of school.

HALLWAYS

Be respectful, orderly, and quiet when in the corridors and stairways. Certain areas of the building get congested more than others. In these places **stay to the right** so there will be an even flow of traffic. Remember the tardy policy and get where you are going on time. There is ample time allotted for passing between classes. **Passes are required for students any time they are out of class.** To provide maximum access to the lavatories, students will be issued passes to the bathroom assigned to the wing in which their classroom is located. Students must use the lavatories assigned to their classroom wing.

HAZING

CH. 269, S.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 three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or both such fine and imprisonment. The term "hazing" as used in this section and in

sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to the contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 269, S.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 crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S.19. COPY OF SECTIONS 17 TO 19; ISSUANCE TO STUDENTS AND STUDENT GROUPS, TEAMS AND ORGANIZATIONS; REPORT

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

Each such group, team or organization shall distribute a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to each of its members, plebes, pledges or applicants for membership. It shall be the duty of each such group, team or organization, acting through its designated officer, to deliver annually, to the institution an attested acknowledgement stating that such group, team or organization has received a copy 1 of 2 File: JICFA-E of this section and said sections seventeen and eighteen, that each of its members, plebes, pledges, or applicants has received a copy of sections seventeen and eighteen, and that such group, team or organization understands and agrees to comply with the provisions of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen.

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

MEDICATION/SCHOOL NURSE

Any medication that a student needs during the school day must be immediately brought to the school nurse. Failure to do so constitutes a violation of the school's drug possession rules. Only the nurse will be allowed to dispense medications. Medications need to be accompanied by a physician's prescription and be in the original bottle dispensed by the pharmacy. The administration of medication in schools are subject to the provisions of 105 C.M.R. § 210.006. New students entering Dracut High School must present a copy of their immunization records before they can be enrolled in school according to Massachusetts Public Health Laws.

NO SCHOOL - DELAYED OPENING

Watch local television stations for information on school closings. **There will also be an electronic message sent to each student's family.**

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT OF STUDENTS

Maintaining an orderly, safe environment conducive to learning is an expectation of all staff members of the school district. Further, students of the district are protected by law from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Such restraint shall be used only in emergency situations of last resort after other lawful and less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, and with extreme caution.

When an emergency situation arises, and physical restraint is the only option deemed appropriate to prevent a student from injuring themselves, another student or school community member, a teacher or employee or agent of the school district may use such reasonable force needed to protect students, other persons or themselves from assault or imminent, serious, physical harm.

The definitions of forms of restraint shall be as defined in 603CMR 46.02.

The use of mechanical restraint, medical restraint, and seclusion is prohibited.

The power of the School Committee or of any teacher or other employee or agent of the Committee to maintain discipline on school property shall not include the right to inflict corporal punishment upon any student.

Physical restraint, including prone restraint where permitted under 603 CMR 46.03, shall be considered an emergency procedure of last resort and shall be prohibited except when a student's behavior poses a threat of assault, or imminent, serious, physical harm to themselves and/or others and the student is not responsive to verbal directives or other lawful and less intrusive behavior interventions are deemed inappropriate.

The Superintendent will develop procedures identifying:

- Appropriate responses to student behavior that may require immediate intervention;
- Methods of preventing student violence, self-injurious behavior, and suicide including crisis planning and de-escalation of potentially dangerous behaviors among groups of

- students or individuals;
- Descriptions and explanations of alternatives to physical restraint as well as the school's method of physical restraint for use in emergency situations;
 - Descriptions of the school's training and procedures to comply with reporting requirements; including, but not limited to making reasonable efforts to orally notify a parent/guardian of the use of restraint within 24 hours of its imposition;
 - Procedures for receiving and investigating complaints;
 - Methods for engaging parents/guardians in discussions about restraint prevention and use of restraint solely as an emergency procedure;
 - A statement prohibiting: medication restraint, mechanical restraint, prone restraint unless permitted by 603 CMR 46.03(1)(b), seclusion, and the use of physical restraint in a manner inconsistent with 603 CMR 46.00,
 - A process for obtaining Principal approval for a time out exceeding 30 minutes.
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Each building Principal will identify staff members to serve as a school-wide resource to assist in ensuring proper administration of physical restraint. These staff members will participate in an in depth training program in the use of physical restraint.

In addition, each staff member will be trained regarding the school's physical restraint policy and accompanying procedures. The Principal will arrange training to occur in the first month of each school year, or for staff hired after the beginning of the school year, within a month of their employment.

Physical restraint is prohibited as a means of punishment, or as a response to destruction of property, disruption of school order, a student's refusal to comply with a school rule or staff directive, or verbal threats that do not constitute a threat of imminent, serious physical harm to the student or others.

Physical restraint is prohibited when it is medically contraindicated for reasons including, but not limited to, asthma, seizures, a cardiac condition, obesity, bronchitis, communication-related disabilities, or risk of vomiting.

The use of "time out" procedures during which a staff member remains accessible to the student shall not be considered "seclusion restraint".

SAFETY

The Dracut High School community prides itself upon establishing a positive learning environment. In order for this learning environment to be maximized students are expected to adhere to a few simple rules. The underlying principle is that you need to be in the proper place at the proper time and no one has the right to interfere with another person's opportunity to learn. Teachers have the expectation to teach in a non-disruptive classroom and students have the right to expect a positive learning atmosphere. The discipline code is written with these concerns in mind. Common sense dictates safety measures. Running in the hallways, pushing in the lunch line, fooling around on the stairs and throwing things are undesirable behaviors that take away from a safe environment. Be responsible in your conduct. Students in any lab class such as technology classes or science labs must wear protective

eye wear when required. Emergency procedures such as fire drills and ALICE drills are also important for safety measures in schools. Students are required to follow emergency procedures, use exits established by the school, and obey their teachers. Refusing to comply with these rules or teacher directives is a serious safety matter.

School doors are opened at 7:15 a.m. and locked at 7:29 a.m. After 7:29 a.m., all students must enter the high school through the front door and report to the main office. At no time should a student open a perimeter door during the school day for any reason. Failure to adhere to this safety protocol will result in disciplinary consequences up to, and including, suspension.

TUTORING

All teachers provide extra help sessions after school. The National Honor Society members act as student tutors when requested. Contact your guidance counselor for details.

WELLNESS

Participation in Wellness classes can be enjoyable and also foster habits for a lifetime of good health. Have your activity attire ready, be prepared, and participate fully in class. **You are responsible for being ready to participate in class.** Do not bring valuables to class. Students who are medically excused from participation in Wellness classes must have a note from a physician stating the reason(s), duration of inactivity, and date of return to Wellness class. These medically excused students may still be required to attend class and help out as scorekeeper, assistant, referee, etc., or may be required to do research on topics such as history and rules of sport, cardiovascular fitness, lifetime fitness activities.

CHILD ABUSE

General Laws Chapter 119, Section 51A, makes administrators, teachers, school nurses, guidance counselors and other school staff members mandated reporters for purposes of reporting child abuse and neglect to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Under G. L. c. 119, Section 51A, a school staff member who has reasonable cause to believe that a student under the age of 18 years is suffering physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or neglect, by a parent, guardian, school staff member, or other caretaker, must immediately report the abuse or neglect either directly to the DSS or to the person designated by the school to accept those reports, who, in turn, must promptly report the abuse to the DSS. The Principal, on a yearly basis, informs all professional staff of their obligations to report cases of child abuse and neglect as specified in M.G.L. Chapter 119, §51A-51F and M.G.L. Chapter 71, §37L.

RESPONSIBILITY & DISCIPLINE

There are consequences for inappropriate actions while a student at Dracut High School. The infractions and the consequences contained within this handbook are not exhaustive; rather these are guidelines for addressing inappropriate conduct and suggested disciplinary consequences. A range of discipline is possible within these guidelines, and school administrators have the discretion to impose more severe consequences than contained within these guidelines depending on the individual circumstances presented. Please be aware that some behavior warrants police investigation as the breach of conduct may also be a criminal offense.

The following list of offenses may result in suspension from school or other disciplinary actions:

- ❖ **Violation of Civil Rights:** The use of any language referencing any aspect of a student's identity including race, religion, ethnic background, disability, sexual identity or gender identification is strictly prohibited. Students who violate this rule will be subject to discipline up to, and including, suspension.
- ❖ **Disrespect:** Give respect to all, especially your teachers and adults in the building. Respect personal space and boundaries. Only one person per stall is allowed at a time in the restrooms.
- ❖ **Harmful Language:** Harassment, hazing, using profanity, bullying, using sexual remarks
- ❖ **School truancy:** Leaving school grounds without following proper dismissal procedures.
- ❖ **Class truancy:** Being in an unauthorized area during class time. An unauthorized area is any space that is not where the student is scheduled to be or has permission to be.
- ❖ **Insubordination:** Skipping teacher or office detentions, chronic tardiness, leaving school or class without permission, entering an unauthorized area, failure to respond to directives given by a staff member.
- ❖ **Smoking:** Including possession of tobacco, in any and all forms, including e-cigarettes, vaping devices, other drugs, alcohol use or possession. Illicit material including drug paraphernalia will be confiscated and will not be returned.
- ❖ **Vandalism:** Graffiti, destruction of school property or personal property
- ❖ **Theft**
- ❖ **Gambling:** Card playing, all forms of gambling or betting
- ❖ **Fighting:** Physical or verbal altercation, instigating fights, threats, causing a disturbance
- ❖ **Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating, copying, texting, unauthorized use of electronic devices during class time.
- ❖ **Plagiarism**
- ❖ **Dress code violations**
- ❖ **Drugs:** Any and all drugs, including prescription medications, drug paraphernalia, and/or alcohol
- ❖ **False reporting:** Bomb threat, pulling fire alarm, false emergency
- ❖ **Transportation:** Bus violations before, during, or after school including sporting

events or field trips.

❖ **Possession of Weapons**

❖ **Other items not specifically covered in this list**

Improper attire such as hats **will be confiscated and may not be returned.**

Improper or illicit use of cell phones, headphones, other electronic devices is not permitted. Such devices may be confiscated **when student use is disruptive or detrimental to learning or teaching.** These devices will be **returned to a parent/guardian.**

DETENTIONS, SUSPENSIONS, SOCIAL PROBATION, & EXPULSIONS

Detentions are issued to students who have not conformed to school or class rules. Teachers may issue and administer detentions for minor infractions. The responsibility is on the student to conform to the rules of expected behavior. Detentions are issued with 24 hour notice. Students who are scheduled to serve a school detention may not participate in any after school activity or sport that conflicts with an assigned detention until the detention is served. The Athletic Director/Dean of Students will be notified of student athletes who are assigned detentions. Students skipping assigned detentions by teachers or administrators may be suspended.

Suspensions are a serious matter. Suspensions may be served in or out of school. Suspended students are expected to make up all work missed. Repeated suspensions may result in further long-term exclusion from school.

Social Probation: Social probation may be assigned to students in lieu of, or in addition to, school suspension. Students placed on social probation will be prohibited from attending or participating in co-curricular activities including attendance at athletic events, senior week activities, the Semi-Formal, or the Senior Prom, for example. Students may petition for reinstatement of social privileges upon satisfactory completion of the social probation contract.

The School Committee believes that all students deserve every opportunity to achieve academic success in a safe, secure learning environment. Good citizenship in schools is based on respect and consideration for the rights of others. Students will be expected to conduct themselves in a way that the rights and privileges of others are not violated. They will be required to respect constituted authority and to conform to school rules and to those provisions of law that apply to their conduct.

Each Principal shall include prohibited actions in the student handbook or other publication to be made available to students and parents/guardians.

Principals and staff shall not use academic punishment of any form as a consequence for inappropriate behaviors/actions by students.

The principal has the discretion to take, as disciplinary measures, other corrective and remedial actions, including detention or removing a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, to address student misconduct. Such actions are not subject to the remainder of this policy. The remainder of this policy is applicable only to

suspensions of students from school. Additionally, this policy is only applicable to the extent it is not preempted by federal law.

The Superintendent shall provide each Principal with a copy of the regulations promulgated by DESE and shall have each Principal sign a document acknowledging receipt thereof, which shall be placed in their personnel file.

I. Assaults on Staff, Possession of a Controlled Substance, and Possession of a Dangerous Weapon – Suspension Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H

In accordance with 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 M.G.L. c. 94C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal. Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, the principal's authority to suspend is not limited to ninety (90) school days and the principal may impose a suspension that goes beyond the school year during which the offense was committed.

Any student who is charged under this section with a violation of possession of a controlled substance, possession of a dangerous weapon, or an assault on staff shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his or her discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated this subsection. Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to this subsection 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 or her 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 subsection.

II. Felony Offenses – Suspension Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 1/2

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 if the principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. 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 his or her 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 or her request for an appeal no later than five 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 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 or her behalf and shall have the right to counsel (at his or her 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 calendar days of the hearing. Such a decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension.

Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an 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 determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. 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 or her 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.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his or her request for an appeal no later than five 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 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 (at his or her 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 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the Dracut Public Schools with regard to the expulsion.

III. Due Process for All Other Suspensions - M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4[1]

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, except for offenses addressed under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H ½, a principal or designee[2] and the superintendent and superintendent's designees[3] when acting as a decision-maker at a disciplinary hearing or appeal to consider student discipline for violations of school rules other than offenses involving drugs, weapons, assaults on school staff and felony offenses, shall, when deciding the consequences for the student, consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process. The principal, superintendent or respective designees shall not suspend the student until alternative remedies have been employed, and their use and results documented unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies would be unsuitable or counter-productive, or unless the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school.

Notice of Suspension: (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 Only)

Except for emergency removal or an in-school suspension of less than 10 days, a Principal or designee must provide the student and the parent/guardian oral and written notice, and provide the student an opportunity for a hearing and the parent/guardian an opportunity to participate in such hearing before imposing suspension as a consequence for misconduct. The Principal or designee shall provide both oral and written notice to student and parent/guardian in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English. The notice shall include the rights enumerated in law and regulation. To conduct a hearing without a parent/guardian present, the

Principal or designee must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent/guardian.

Emergency Removal (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 Only)

A Principal or designee 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 or designee's judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The Principal or designee shall immediately notify the Superintendent in writing of the removal including a description of 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 or designee shall: Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent/guardian of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters required in the notice as referenced in the applicable regulation; provide written notice to the student and parent/guardian as required above; provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the Principal or designee that complies with applicable regulations, and the parent/guardian an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the Principal or designee, student, and parent/guardian; 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 applicable law and regulation.

A Principal or designee shall also ensure adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation prior to removal.

In School Suspension – not more than 10 days consecutively or cumulatively (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 Only)

The Principal or designee may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

The Principal or designee may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under this provision, provided that the Principal or designee follows the process set forth in regulation and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as required by law and regulation.

Principal's Hearing – Short Term Suspension of up to 10 days (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 Only)

The hearing with the Principal or designee shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the Principal or designee shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information.

The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the Principal or designee should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in law and regulation.

The Principal or designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal or designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal or designee shall, based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.

The Principal or designee shall notify the student and parent/guardian of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as required by law and regulation. The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal or designee 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.

Principal's Hearing – Long Term Suspension of more than 10 days but less than 90 days (consecutive or cumulative) (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 Only)

The hearing with the Principal or designee shall be to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction.

At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights: in advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the Principal or designee may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not; the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's/guardian's expense; 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; the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the Principal or designee, and to receive a copy of the audio recording upon request. If the student or parent/guardian requests an audio recording, the Principal or designee shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent/guardian upon request.

The Principal or designee shall provide the parent/guardian, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the Principal or designee should consider in determining consequences for the student.

The Principal or designee shall, based on the evidence, determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as required by law and regulation, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The Principal or designee shall send the written determination to the student and parent/guardian by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, email to an address provided by the parent/guardian for school communications, or any other

method of delivery agreed to by the Principal or designee and the parent/guardian.

If the Principal or designee decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall: identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing; set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the Principal or designee; identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school; include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as required by law and regulation; inform the student of the right to appeal the Principal or designee's decision to the Superintendent or designee, but only if the Principal or designee 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: The process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent/guardian must file a written notice of appeal with the Superintendent or designee 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/guardian may request and receive from the Superintendent or designee an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven (7) additional calendar days; and that the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the Superintendent decides to reverse the Principal or designee's determination on appeal.

If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the Principal or designee shall send a copy of the written determination to the Superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension before the suspension takes effect.

Superintendent's Hearing (M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4 Only)

A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the Principal or designee shall have the right to appeal the Principal's decision to the Superintendent or designee.

The student or parent/guardian shall file a notice of appeal with the Superintendent or designee within the time period noted above (see Principal Hearing – Suspension of more than 10 days). If the appeal is not timely filed, the Superintendent or designee may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

The Superintendent or designee shall hold the hearing within three (3) school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent/guardian requests an extension of up to seven (7) additional calendar days, in which case the Superintendent or designee shall grant the extension.

The Superintendent or designee shall make a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian in the hearing. The Superintendent or designee 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/guardian and Superintendent or designee to participate. The Superintendent or designee shall send written notice to the parent/guardian of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

The Superintendent or designee 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 or designee shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent/guardian upon request. The

Superintendent or designee 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/guardian upon request. The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension.

The Superintendent or designee shall issue a written decision within five (5) calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of law and regulation. If the Superintendent or designee determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the Superintendent or designee may impose the same or a lesser consequence than was imposed at the Principal's hearing, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the Principal or designee's decision. The decision of the Superintendent or designee shall be the final decision of the Dracut Public Schools school district with regard to the suspension.

Expulsion (M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H 1/2 Only)

Expulsion is defined as the removal of a student from school for more than ninety (90) school days, indefinitely, or permanently as allowed by law for possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or 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 substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. . Expulsion from school is only permitted by Massachusetts laws under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H and 37H ½.

Any student expelled from school for such an offense shall be afforded an opportunity to receive educational services and make academic progress.

[1] This section sets forth the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than: possession of a dangerous weapon; possession of a controlled substance; assault on a member of the educational staff; or 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 the school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H or 37H½.

[2] Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, all or a portion of a principal's responsibilities may be delegated to a designee.

[3] Under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H 3/4, all or a portion of a superintendent's responsibilities may be delegated to a designee.

IV. Academic Progress (Applies to all suspensions from school under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H 1/2, and 37H 3/4)

Any student who is suspended or expelled shall have the opportunity to earn credits, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The Principal or designee shall inform the student and parent/guardian of this opportunity in writing, in English and in the primary language of the home, 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 make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

The Principal or designee shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the 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. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents/guardians of the services and arranging such services. 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 the law.

The Principal or designee shall notify the parent/guardian and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten (10) consecutive days, whether in-school or out-of-school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

V. Reporting

The school district shall collect and annually report data to the DESE regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals, access to education services, and such other information as may be required by the DESE.

The Principal or designee of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status in accordance with law and regulation.

RELEVANT MASSACHUSETTS LAWS

M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H

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

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

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

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. 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.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

M.G.L. c. 71, §37H1/2 - Felony Complaints and Felony Convictions:

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

(1) 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 continued presence in school would have a substantial 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 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.

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 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 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 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or 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 substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. 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 any 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 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 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 calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or

regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

M.G.L. c.71, §37H3/4.

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H.5.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or other person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall exercise discretion; consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been employed.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the

reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

M.G.L. c.76, §21

Section 21. Principals and headmasters shall ensure that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive days, whether in or out of school, shall have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments and earn credits missed including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Principals shall develop a school-wide education service plan for all students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school. Principals shall ensure these students have an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion, to make up assignments and earn credits missed, including, but not limited to, homework, quizzes, exams, papers and projects missed. Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning. In developing the education service plan, principals may seek the cooperation or input of relevant health and human service, housing and nonprofit agencies, education collaboratives, and other service providers. Any school or school district that expels a student or suspends a student for more than 10 consecutive school days shall provide the student and the parent or guardian of the student with a list of alternative educational services. Upon selection of an alternative educational service by the student and the student's parent or guardian, the school or school district shall facilitate and verify enrollment in the service. Students exempt from attending school under section 1 of chapter 76 shall not be subject to this section.

M.G.L. c.71, §37L

The school committee of each city, town or regional school district shall inform teachers, administrators, and other professional staff of reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect under section 51A of chapter 119 and the reporting requirements for fires under section 2A of chapter 148.

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time.

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of children and families, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of children and families, together with a representative from the office of student services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

School department personnel and school resource officers, as defined in section 37P, shall not disclose to a law enforcement officer or agency, including local, municipal, regional, county, state and federal law enforcement, through an official report or unofficial channels, including, but not limited to, text, phone, email, database and in-person communication, or submit to the department of state police's Commonwealth Fusion Center, the Boston Regional Intelligence Center or any other database or system designed to track gang affiliation or involvement, any information relating to a student or a student's family member from its databases and other recordkeeping systems including: (i) immigration status; (ii) citizenship; (iii) neighborhood of residence; (iv) religion; (v) national origin; (vi) ethnicity; or (vii) suspected, alleged, or confirmed gang affiliation, unless it is germane to a specific unlawful incident or to a specific prospect of unlawful activity the school is otherwise required to report. Nothing in this paragraph shall prohibit the sharing of information: (i) for the purposes of completing a report pursuant to section 51A of chapter 119; (ii) upon the specific, informed written consent of the eligible student, parent or guardian; (iii) to comply with a court order or lawfully issued subpoena; (iv) in connection with a health or safety emergency pursuant to the provisions of 603 C.M.R. 23.07(4)(e); or (v) for the purposes of filing a weapon report with the local chief of police pursuant to this section.

A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

SPECIAL EDUCATION/SECTION 504

Under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (“IDEA”) and M.G.L. c. 71B, some students with disabilities may be eligible for services if they require specialized instruction and/or supportive services to help them make effective progress in school. These services can include, but are not limited to, speech therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy, specialized instruction, or placement in a special classroom. Students may be referred to the Special Education Department for an evaluation of eligibility for special education services. Within five (5) school days of such a referral, a consent form authorizing an evaluation of the student will be forwarded to the parent(s). Within forty-five (45) school days of receipt of the parent(s)’ consent, an evaluation will be conducted and a Team meeting will be held to determine if the student is eligible for special education services. If the student is found eligible for special education services, the Team will develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) identifying the necessary services.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (“Section 504”) is a federal law designed to protect the rights of individuals with disabilities in programs and activities that receive federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education. Section 504 provides: “No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the United States . . . shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance” Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title II) is a federal law that applies to public entities, including the conforming amendment to Section 504 that affects the meaning of a disability under Section 504.

The Section 504 regulations require a school district to provide a “free appropriate public education” (FAPE) to each qualified student with a disability who is in the school district’s jurisdiction, regardless of the nature or severity of the disability. Under Section 504, a FAPE consists of the provision of regular or special education and related aids and services designed to meet the student’s individual educational needs as adequately as the needs of nondisabled students are met. Compliance with the IDEA is one means of complying with Section 504.

Additionally, the Dracut Public Schools provides nonacademic and extracurricular services and activities in such a manner as is necessary to afford students with disabilities an equal opportunity for participation. The Dracut Public Schools is, however, generally permitted to establish and utilize skill-based eligibility criteria for participation in extracurricular programs and activities (e.g., school-sponsored athletics) so long as the criteria are rationally related to the purposes and goals of the specific program or activity.

The Dracut Public Schools’ administrators, in their discretion, may deny or limit a student’s access to co-curricular activities as a disciplinary sanction.

EMPOWERED DIGITAL USE POLICY

Purpose

The School Committee recognizes the need for students to be prepared to contribute to and excel in a connected, global community. To that end, the district provides ongoing student instruction that develops digital citizenship skill sets for using technology as a tool. Information and communication technology are an integrated part of our curriculum across subjects and grades in developmentally appropriate ways and are aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and standards, including seeking knowledge and understanding; thinking critically and solving problems; listening, communicating, and interacting effectively; and engaging and competing in a global environment.

Availability

The Superintendent or designee shall implement, monitor, and evaluate the district's system/network for instructional and administrative purposes.

All users shall acknowledge that they understand that using digital devices, whether personal or school owned, and the school district network is a privilege and when using them in accordance with School District guidelines they will retain that privilege.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop and implement administrative guidelines, regulations, procedures, and user agreements, consistent with law and policy, which shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Digital devices, software, and networks shall be used in school for educational purposes and activities.
- An individual's personal information (including home/mobile phone numbers, mailing addresses, and passwords) and that of others shall be kept private.
- Individuals will show respect for themselves and others when using technology including social media.
- Users shall give acknowledgement to others for their ideas and work.
- Users shall report inappropriate use of technology immediately.

These procedures shall be reviewed annually by district administration together with students and teachers and shall provide a springboard for teaching and learning around topics such as internet safety, digital citizenship, and ethical use of technology.

POLICY ON SOCIAL MEDIA

The Superintendent and the School Principals will annually remind staff members and orient new staff members concerning the importance of maintaining proper decorum in the on-line, digital world as well as in person. Employees must conduct themselves in ways that do not distract from or disrupt the educational process. The orientation and reminders will give special emphasis to:

1. Improper fraternization with students using social media or other electronic means.
 - a. Teachers may not friend or follow current students on social media, and will not allow students to follow them.
 - b. All electronic contacts with students should be through the district's computer and telephone system, except emergency situations.
 - c. Team, class, or student organization pages, accounts, or groups will be created only in

conjunction with the coach or faculty advisor. All groups must include the appropriate administrator as a member. Access to the page will remain with the coach or faculty advisor.

- d. All contact and messages by coaches and faculty advisors with team members shall be sent to all team members, except for messages concerning medical or academic privacy matters, in which case the messages will be copied to the appropriate administrator.
- e. Teachers will not give out their private cell phone or home phone numbers without prior approval of the district.
- f. Inappropriate contact via phone or electronic device is prohibited.

2. Inappropriateness of posting items with sexual content
3. Inappropriateness of posting items exhibiting or advocating use of drugs and alcohol
4. Examples of inappropriate behavior from other districts, as behavior to avoid
5. Monitoring and penalties for improper use of district computers and technology
6. The possibility of penalties, including dismissal from employment, for failure to exercise good judgment in on-line conduct.

The Superintendent or designees may periodically conduct internet searches to see if teachers have posted inappropriate materials on-line. When inappropriate use of computers and websites is discovered, the School Principals and Superintendent will promptly bring that inappropriate use to the attention of the staff member and may consider and apply disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Massachusetts Student Records Laws and The Family and Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Dracut Public Schools complies with applicable federal and state laws and regulations pertaining to Student Records. Those laws and regulations are designed to ensure a parent's and eligible student's rights to access, inspect, and to request amendment of the child's student record.

The Massachusetts Student Record regulations and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) apply to all information kept by a school on a student in a manner such that he or she may be individually identified. The regulations divide the record into the transcript and the temporary record. The transcript includes only the minimum information necessary to reflect the student's educational progress. This information includes name, address, course titles, grades, credits, and grade level completed.

The temporary record contains the majority of the information maintained by the school system about the student. This may include such things as standardized test results, class rank, school sponsored extracurricular activities, and evaluations and comments by teachers, counselors, and other persons. The temporary record is destroyed no later than seven (7) years after the student leaves the school system.

The following is a summary of major parent and student rights regarding their student records:

Inspection of Record - A parent, or a student who has entered the ninth grade or is at least fourteen (14) years old, has the right to inspect all portions of the student record upon request. The record must be made available to the parent or student within ten (10) days of the request, unless the parent or student consents to a delay. In the event the parent/student requests copies of a student record, the District may charge the parents/student for said copies at the District rate.

Confidentiality of Record - With a few exceptions, no individuals or organizations but the parent, student, and authorized school personnel working are allowed to have access to information derived from the student record without specific, informed, written consent of the parent or the student.

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

Directory Information - Federal law requires that the District release the names, addresses and telephone listings of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher education upon request for recruitment and scholarship purposes without prior consent. In addition, the District may release the following directory information about a student without prior consent: a student's name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, major fields of study, dates of attendance, weight and height of members of athletic teams, class participation in officially recognized activities and sports, degrees, honors and awards, post-high school plans and directory information such as homeroom assignments. However, in all instances, parents may request that such directory information not be released without prior consent by notifying their school building office in writing by the end of September of each school year.

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

Transfer of Records: It is the practice of the Dracut Public Schools to forward the student record of any student who seeks or intends to transfer to another public school district upon request of the receiving district.

Non-Custodial Parents: Unless there is a court order to the contrary, a non-custodial parent (parent without physical custody of the student) of any public school student has the right, subject to certain procedures, to receive information regarding the student's achievements, involvement, behavior, etc. A non-custodial parent who wishes to have this information shall submit a written request annually to the child's school principal. Upon receipt of such a request, the principal shall send written notification to the custodial parent by certified and first class mail that the records and information will be provided to the non-custodial parent in twenty-one (21) calendar days unless the custodial parent provides documentation of the non-custodial parent's ineligibility to access such information. In all cases where school records are provided to a non-custodial parent, the electronic and postal address and other contact information for the custodial parent shall be removed from the records provided. Any such records provided to the non-custodial parent shall be marked to indicate that they may not be used to enroll the student in another school. Upon receipt of a court order that prohibits the distribution of information pursuant to G.L. c. 71, §34H, the school will notify the non-custodial parent that it shall cease to provide access to the student record to the non-custodial parent. M.G.L. c.71, §34H, 603 CMR 23.07.

Third Party Access: Authorized school personnel, to include: (a) school administrators, teachers,

counselors and other professionals who are employed by the school committee or who are providing services to the student under an agreement between the school committee and a service provider, and who are working directly with the student in an administrative, teaching, counseling, and/or diagnostic capacity; (b) administrative office staff and clerical personnel, employed by the school committee or under a school committee service contract, and whose duties require them to have access to student records for purposes of processing information for the student record; and (c) the Evaluation Team which evaluates a student, shall have access to the student record of students to whom they are providing services, when such access is required in the performance of their official duties. The consent of the parent or eligible student shall not be necessary.

Complaints: A parent or eligible student has a right to file a complaint with the Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, D.C. 20202-5901, (202) 260-3887 or with the Massachusetts Department of Education, 350 Main Street, Malden, MA 02148, 781-338-3300. If you have any questions regarding this notice, or would like more information and/or a copy of the Massachusetts Department of Education Student Record Regulations, please contact the building principal.

NOTICE OF PUPIL RIGHTS AMENDMENT (PPRA)

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) affords parents and students who are 18 or emancipated minors (“eligible students”) certain rights regarding our conduct of surveys, collection and use of information for marketing purposes, and certain physical exams. These include the right to:

Consent before students are required to submit to a survey that concerns one or more of the following protected areas (“protected information survey”).

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student’s parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student’s family;
- Sex behaviors or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Receive notice and an opportunity to opt a student out of:

1. Any protected information survey administered or distributed to a student by an local educational agency that is a recipient of funds under an applicable program (LEA) if the protected information survey is either not funded as part of a program administered by the Department or is funded as part of a program administered by the Department but to which a student is not required to submit;
2. Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening required by an LEA as a condition of attendance; administered by the school and scheduled by the school in advance; and, that is not necessary to protect the immediate health and safety of a student, with some exceptions; and
3. Activities of an LEA involving collection, disclosure, or use of personal information collected from students for the purpose of marketing or sale (or to otherwise distribute such information to others for that purpose), with some exceptions.

Inspect, upon request and before administration or use:

1. Protected information surveys and surveys created by a third party, before the administration or distribution by an LEA of the surveys to a student;
2. Any instrument used by an LEA to collect personal information for the purpose of marketing or sale (or otherwise distributing such information for that purpose), before the instrument is administered or distributed to a student, with some exceptions; and
3. Instructional material, excluding academic tests or academic assessments, used by an LEA as part of the educational curriculum for a student.

The Dracut Public Schools will develop and adopt policies, in consultation with parents, regarding these rights, as well as arrangements to protect student privacy in the administration of protected surveys and the collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution purposes. (The Dracut Public Schools will directly notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes.) The Dracut Public Schools will also directly notify parents and eligible students of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes.) The Dracut Public Schools will also directly notify parents and eligible students, such as through U.S. mail or e-mail, at least annually at the start of each school year of the specific or approximate dates of the following activities and provide an opportunity to opt a student out of participating in collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales or other distribution. The Dracut School District will directly notify parents of these policies at least annually at the start of each school year and after any substantive changes. The Dracut School District will also directly notify, such as through U.S. mail or e-mail, parents of students who are scheduled to participate in the specific activities or surveys noted below and will provide an opportunity for the parent to opt his child out of participation of the specific activity or survey. The Dracut School District will make this notification to parents at the beginning of the school year if the District has identified the specific or approximate dates of the activities or surveys at that time.

For surveys and activities scheduled after the school year starts, parents will be provided reasonable notification of the planned activities and surveys. Parents will also be provided an opportunity to review any pertinent surveys. Following is a list of the specific activities and surveys covered under this requirement:

- ❖ Collection, disclosure, or use of personal information for marketing, sales, or other distribution.
- ❖ Administration of any protected information survey not funded in whole or part by ED.
- ❖ Any non-emergency, invasive physical examination or screening as described above.

Parents who believe their rights have been violated may file a complaint with:

Student Privacy Policy Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-5920

STUDENT/GUARDIAN STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES Digital Use / Digital Resources Use Policy Signature

Student Expectations

I have read, understand and will follow the [Empowered Digital Use Policy](#) and [Access to Digital Resources Policy](#). If I violate that agreement, the consequences could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand that the school network and email accounts are owned by Dracut Public Schools and that Dracut Public Schools have the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time.

Guardian/Guardian Acceptable Use Signature

Guardian collaboration is a crucial focus of Dracut Public Schools. Through our technology integration, we want to work with Guardians so they understand the different initiatives that are taking place at school. As Guardians, students and teachers working together, we become a strong learning community, therefore, creating more opportunities for our students to become successful.

As the Guardian or guardian of this student. I have read the Dracut Public Schools' [Empowered Digital Use Policy](#) and [Access to Digital Resources Policy](#). I understand that technology is provided for educational purposes in keeping with the academic goals of Dracut Public Schools, and that student use for any other purpose is inappropriate.

I recognize it is impossible for the school to restrict access to all controversial materials, and I will not hold the school responsible for materials acquired on the school network. I understand that children's computer activities at home should be supervised as they can affect the academic environment at school.

I understand and will support my student in adhering to the [Empowered Digital Use Policy](#) and [Access to Digital Resources Policy](#). I am aware that if my child violates this agreement the consequences could include suspension of computer privileges and/or disciplinary action. I also understand the school network and email accounts are owned by Dracut Public Schools and that Dracut Public Schools have the right to access any of the information used through the mediums provided through the school at any time. I hereby give permission for my child to use technology resources in Dracut Public Schools, and expressly waive any right of privacy my child has in anything created, stored, sent, or received on Dracut Public Schools' technology resources or network.

Guardian or Guardian Name (please print): _____

Guardian or Guardian Signature: _____

Student Name (Please print): _____

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

School Location: Dracut High School 2023-2024 School Year

RELEASE OF INFORMATION and PHOTOGRAPHS

A recently enacted law requires schools to release the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of students to military recruiters and institutions of higher learning upon request. Please indicate your desire by checking the appropriate box.

____ I AGREE to have my child’s information released.

____ I DO NOT want my child’s directory information, such as name, address, or telephone number released to higher learning institutions or for non-educational purposes other than those required by law.

____ I DO NOT want my child photographed or my child’s picture to be used for any purpose, including videotape.

I have read and understand the policies, procedures, responsibilities, and rules in this student handbook. I have discussed these with my son/daughter. My son/daughter has read and understands the policies, procedures, responsibilities, and rules of Dracut High School.

**I/We have read and understand the Dracut High student handbook rules.
Please sign all spaces for handbook rules and Release of Information and Photographs**

Student Name (Printed)

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

**Student/Parent Acknowledgement of Dracut High School’s
BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY
(Please sign below after reading and discussing this form with your child)**

I/We have read the Bullying Policy for the Dracut Public Schools. I/We understand that this policy is designed to make Dracut High School safe for all students. I/We have discussed with my son/daughter his/her responsibilities regarding bullying and reporting of bullying or harassment. I/We understand that any violation by my/our son/daughter of the bullying policy may result in school disciplinary action, including being removed from a course. Furthermore, if my child is a target of bullying, I will inform the administration of Dracut High School. All students and parents/guardians should understand that bullying could lead to detention, suspension, or expulsion.

“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.

Cyber-bullying shall also include the creation of electronic medium in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as 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 a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in the definition of bullying.

Bullying and retaliation 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;

I have read and understand the anti-bullying policies, procedures, responsibilities, and rules in the online DHS Student Handbook. I have discussed the issues with my son/daughter.

I/We have read and understand Dracut High School’s bullying policy.

Student Name - Printed

Student Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act

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 pre-school 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.

Parent Notification Regarding Sexual Education And Human Sexuality Issues

In accordance with law, the Dracut School Committee has adopted this policy on the rights of parents and guardians of our students in relation to curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues.

At the beginning of each school year, all parents/guardians of students in our schools will be notified in writing of the courses and curriculum we offer that primarily involve human sexual or human sexuality issues. The Superintendent of Schools will determine the administrator(s) responsible for sending the notice(s). Parents/guardians of students who enroll in school after the start of the school year will be given the written notice at the time of enrollment. If planned curriculum change during the school year, to the extent practicable, parents/guardians will be notified of this fact in a timely manner before implementation.

Each such notice to parents/guardians will include a brief description of the curriculum covered by this policy, and will inform parents/guardians that they may:

1. exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexual issues, without penalty to the student, by sending a letter to the school Principal requesting an exemption. Any student who is exempted by request of the parent/guardian under this policy may be given an alternative assignment.

2. inspect and review program instruction materials for these curricula, which will be made reasonably accessible to parents/guardians and others to the extent practicable.

Parents/guardians may arrange with the Principal to review the materials at the school and may also review them at other locations that may be determined by the Superintendent of School. A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the Principal concerning notice, access to instructional materials, or exemption for the student under this policy may send a written request

to the Superintendent for review of the issue. The Superintendent or designee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within two weeks of the request.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with the Superintendent's decision may send a written request to the School Committee for review of the issue. The School Committee will review the issue and give the parent/guardian a timely written decision, preferably within four weeks of the request. A parent/guardian who is still dissatisfied after this process may send a written request to the Commissioner of Education for review of the issue in the dispute.