

# Dracut High School

## Student and Parent/Guardian Handbook

### 2024-2025



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



*The Dracut Public Schools is a Community of Caring and a member of the  
RULER social and emotional learning community.*



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## **Welcome to Dracut High School**

Whether you are an entering freshman, a transfer student, or a returning student, this Student/Parent Handbook will provide you with all the information you need to enjoy a successful career at Dracut High School.

For students, attending high school is a new and exciting experience. There are so many courses, activities, sports, clubs, performances, and productions in which you can become involved. Each of these is designed to provide you with a rich and rewarding high school experience. Be sure to become involved in something of interest. Better yet, try something new-something you have never done in the past. High school is a time for learning, exploring, discovering, and trying new things.

As you travel through school and make your choices, you will realize that many of these activities and events require increased responsibilities. This Student/Parent Handbook is written to provide you with the information needed for you to meet these responsibilities. Please be sure to familiarize yourself with its content.

At Dracut High we are known as the Middies. Our unofficial slogan is “Once a Middie, Always a Middie.” So, Welcome Aboard, Middie!

Sincerely,

Richard Manley, Principal

# DRACUT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 2024-2025 SCHOOL CALENDAR

Approved March 11, 2024

9-2-24 Labor Day – No School

9-3-24 Teachers Return/Professional Development

9-4-24 First Day of School Grades 1-12

9-4-24 Kindergarten Orientation

9-5-24 Kindergarten Classes Begin

9-25-24 Early Release for Students  
(Professional Development Day)

11-5-24 No School for Students: All Day Professional Development

11-11-24 Veteran's Day Observance - No School

11-27-24 Thanksgiving Holiday Begins- ½ Day Early Release

11-28-24 & 11-29-24  
Thanksgiving Recess - No School

1-1-25 No School – Observance of New Year's Day

1-2-25 Schools Re-open

1-15-25 Early Release for Students  
(Professional Development Day)

1-20-25 Martin Luther King Jr. - No School

3-12-25 Early Release for Students  
(Professional Development Day)

5-26-25 Memorial Day – No School

SEPTEMBER (19/19)				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

OCTOBER (22/41)				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30	31	

10-14-24 Observance of Columbus Day – No School

10-16-24 Early Release for Students  
(Professional Development Day)

NOVEMBER (17/58)				
M	T	W	Th	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

DECEMBER (15/73)				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

12-11-24 Early Release for Students  
(Professional Development Day)

12-20-24 Christmas Vacation Begins at the close of school

JANUARY (21/94)				
M	T	W	Th	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

FEBRUARY (15/109)				
M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28

2-14-25 Mid-Winter Vacation Begins at the close of school

2-24-25 Schools Re-Open

MARCH (21/130)				
M	T	W	Th	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

APRIL (16/146)				
M	T	W	Th	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	11
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	24	25
28	29	30		

4-18-25 No School – Good Friday

4-17-25 Spring Vacation Begins at the close of school

4-28-25 Schools Re-Open

MAY (21/167)				
M	T	W	Th	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

JUNE (13/180)				
M	T	W	Th	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30				

6-18-25 180<sup>th</sup> Day  
1/2 Day Early Release

6-19-25 Juneteenth Observance

6-26-25 185<sup>th</sup> Day

Kindergarten Screening  
June 16, June 17, June 18  
No School for Kindergarten Students

**Administration:**

Steven Stone, Superintendent	978-957-2660
Stefanie Fields, Director of Finance and Operations	978-957-5583
Nicholas Botelho, Director of Teaching and Learning	978-957-2617
Kimberly Lawrence, Director of Student Services	978-957-4633
Andrew Graham, Supervisor of Building & Grounds	978-957-9704
Nathan Langevin Food Service Director	978-957-9714

**School Committee Members:**

Renée Young, Chairperson

Dr. Rebecca Duda, 1st Vice Chair

Dr. Linda Trouville, 2nd Vice Chair

Allison Volpe, Board Member

Robert Sheppard, Board Member

**Dracut High School Staff:**

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
Office of Teaching and Learning		978-957-2617

## **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 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

## 21<sup>st</sup> 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.

***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!***



## 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.

**Regular and punctual school attendance is essential for success in school. Further, a student's understanding of the importance of day-to-day schoolwork is an important factor in the shaping of his/her character. Parents can help their children by refusing to allow them to miss school needlessly.**

In accordance with state law, the Committee recognizes that **parents/guardians of children attending our schools have a responsibility to ensure that their children attend school regularly.**

Therefore, students may be excused temporarily from school attendance. Those limited reasons may include: illness consistent with those symptoms that require a student to be absent from school; quarantine; bereavement or serious illness in the immediate family; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child; and observance of major religious holidays.

Parents/guardians will provide a written explanation for the absence or tardiness (an absence for a portion of a school day) of their child. This will be required in advance for types of absences and tardiness where advance notice is possible. In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

Notwithstanding the preceding language, consistent with the district's obligations regarding the reporting of absences to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), **all absences (including tardiness), whether excused or not, are reported as an absence.**

Given the importance of regular attendance, and consistent with state law, principals consider the totality of absences, regardless of whether they are excused or not, in fulfilling their obligations related to ensuring students regularly attend school.

**Students are expected to attend school each school day on time unless they are ill or an unforeseen emergency arises.** A written excuse for the day(s) absent signed by a parent or guardian must accompany each student on his/her return to school. The note must be dated and

include a specific reason for the absence. A parent may be notified if a child is absent more than<sup>8</sup> five (5) times during the marking period.

**If your student will be late, absent, or dismissed, please email our Attendance Email at [dhsattendance@dracutps.org](mailto:dhsattendance@dracutps.org)** For absences and or/tardies only, you may also phone the attendance line at 978-957-1500 x6. Call and/or emails must be received by the main office by 8:00 a.m. 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.**

## **TARDINESS**

**Students are expected to arrive at school on time each day.** Students are considered tardy if they arrive after the 7:29 a.m. bell. In the case of an emergency, where tardiness is unavoidable, the **students must have a written excuse signed by a parent or guardian**. When a student is tardy, he/she must report to the main office upon arrival at school. Parents/guardians will be notified if a student's attendance record indicates more than five (5) unexcused tardies during a marking period. A student who is continually tardy may be asked to make up for lost instructional time either before school or after school. A meeting with the school Principal will be scheduled to determine a plan moving forward.

## **EARLY DISMISSAL**

**An email or call to the classroom teacher and school secretary requesting an early dismissal from school must be sent or called before 1:00 unless an emergency should arise.**

Notification must include the student's name, reason for dismissal, the date and time of desired dismissal. Upon arriving, the designated parent/guardian must come to the Main Office and officially sign the child out before the child will be dismissed.

**Note: For more specific policy information concerning Early Dismissal, refer to Appendix A at the back of this handbook.**

## **UNAUTHORIZED VACATIONS**

School vacation weeks are scheduled at regular intervals throughout the school year. These are the appropriate times to plan for family vacations. **Vacations during regular school days are not appropriate, are unauthorized, and will NOT be excused.** Schoolwork and homework assigned during unauthorized absences may be provided upon the child's return to school and must be made up within five (5) days. Teachers are not required to provide advance assignments to students going on family vacations.

## **LEGAL OBLIGATIONS FOR REGULAR ATTENDANCE:**

Chapter 76, section 19 of the Massachusetts General Laws states that each school committee must employ a supervisor of attendance. A supervisor of attendance has the power to apprehend and take to school any child who is truant and is required to investigate all cases where a child in the district fails to attend school.

**Parents or guardians are legally responsible for ensuring that a child under their control attends school on-time, daily.** It is a crime for a responsible parent or guardian not to cause such a child to attend school. If a child fails to attend school habitually, the supervisor of attendance may file a criminal complaint in court against the responsible parent and/or guardian.

**Parental responsibility includes ensuring that students are not truant**, which is defined as meaning the child is 'willfully' failing to attend school for more than eight (8) school days in a quarter without a lawful and reasonable excuse from attendance.

**Excessive tardiness, absence, and/or truancy are violations of state law. Principals and the Attendance Officer will monitor such circumstances and take any necessary action to ensure students attend school regularly and on-time. Such action may include notification to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and/or the court consistent with State law.**

**Extended, unauthorized vacations during school days will likely be considered matters of truancy and addressed as outlined in this section.**<sup>10</sup>

**Child Requiring Assistance**

Under M.G.L. c. 119, § 21, , a child may be eligible for “Child Requiring Assistance” services through the juvenile court system if the child: repeatedly runs away from the home of a parent or legal guardian; repeatedly fails to obey the lawful and reasonable commands of a parent or legal guardian, thereby interfering with the parents or legal guardian's ability to adequately care for and protect the child; repeatedly fails to obey lawful and reasonable school regulations; or is “habitually truant.” A school aged child is “habitually truant” when not otherwise excused from attendance in accordance with lawful and reasonable school regulations, willfully fails to attend school for more than 8 school days in a quarter. The school can assist parents/guardians with pursuing “CRA” services and support.

**Filing of a 51A**

Under Chapter 119, section 51A of the Massachusetts General Laws, a report can be filed on behalf of a child under the age of eighteen for educational neglect if a child is not attending school on a regular basis. This report of suspected Child Abuse or Neglect, commonly referred to as a 51A, is filed with the Department of Children and Family Services. By law, school personnel are mandated reporters.

**DISMISSALS**

Students being dismissed from school: **Regardless of the students age, parents are required to send an email to [dhsattendance@dracutps.org](mailto: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.**

**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 meetings 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.

**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	

<b>BLOCK</b>	<b>MON</b>	<b>TUES</b>	<b>WED</b>	<b>THURS</b>	<b>FRI</b>
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.

**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.

**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.

**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<sup>12</sup> 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 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 providing absence and dismissal notices promptly when required.
- pride in personal appearance.

### **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.

### **HOMEWORK**

The goal of homework in the Dracut Public Schools is to foster growth, improvement, and routines. Homework is assigned to introduce, extend, reinforce, and/or enrich learning for all students and is expected to increase in complexity as students mature. Assignments will vary according to grade level, content taught, course descriptions, and student learning needs. The expectation is for all students to complete work independently unless engaged in group work/projects. Homework should promote

responsibility for the students' own learning and help families understand the learning that is occurring in school. Teachers may use homework to help assess if students are able to do previously taught work independently. Homework will also be used to build a home-school connection.

All students are expected to complete assignments at home on a regular basis. Homework requirements are aligned with curriculum course levels and descriptions across all areas. Assignments will be scheduled daily, weekly and/or be project based with a short and/or long-term timeline. Advanced Placement courses also require completion of summer homework prior to the start of the course in September.

### **Summer Reading**

Students at all levels will have summer reading assignments. These will be given to students prior to the last day of school and are to be completed during the summer months and turned in at the beginning of the new school year.

### **Helpful Hints for Success**

- Be prepared:
  - Record all of your assignments at school and be certain you know what materials are needed, the explanations for the assignment and due date.
  - Take home all books and materials you need to complete assignments.
  - Always do your homework. Remember that homework is not only written work due the next day, it can also be long-term assignments, reading, studying, research, or a project. Teachers will strive to help students be successful with homework.
- Keep Organized:
  - Keep your desk and book bag tidy, so you can find books and materials when you need them.
  - Put your schedule on the inside of your desk or inside the front cover of your agenda book/notebook so you will never forget it.
  - Help yourself by creating a quiet study area with a desk/table, good lighting, paper, pen, pencil, calculator, and water to drink.
  - Review all assignments in your agenda and check off what has been completed.
  - When you finish an assignment, place all completed work in your binder to hand in at school.
  - Break larger assignments into smaller, more manageable chunks.
  - Keep a binder or notebook, backpack and materials in the same place.
- Take responsibility:
  - School is a place where we help you to learn to take responsibility for yourself. We will be there to help, but we will also give you the freedom to show us, your parents/guardians, and most of all yourself, how independent you can be and how well you can assume responsibility for yourself and your learning by making a commitment to your work.
  - Remember to plan to study for more than one night when you have a quiz or test. Review all past homework, classroom notes, quizzes and study guides.

- Attend review sessions offered by teachers.
- Always do your best:
  - The students who are most successful are always the students who ask thoughtful questions, work hard, and strive to do better.
  - Pledge to yourself to be a student that goes for extra help or study sessions and gives that extra effort in all that you do.
  - Challenge yourself, strive to work at a level that is challenging to you.
  - Respect people, respect property, respect yourself.

### **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCE AND CURRICULUM NIGHT**

Dracut High School will hold two Parent/Teacher Conferences, one during the first half of the school year and the other during the second half of the school year. Dates will be determined by the Superintendent of Schools and School Principal. Parent-Teacher Conference Night is an individualized appointment for each family to discuss individual progress and growth. A half-day schedule will be in place for the Parent-Teacher Conferences. Given the short duration of these conferences (10 minutes each), parents/guardians with additional specific questions or concerns can schedule a follow up meeting/conference with the teacher at an agreed upon time. More information will be provided during the school year.

<b>ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS</b>
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### **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.**

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

**\*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)		
	F (00-59)		

### 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 ½ 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

## SCHOOL RULES & REGULATIONS

### 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.

## **CELL PHONES**

Cell phone use among students at Dracut High School will adhere to the following practices. Students may access their cell phones at the following times during the school day:

- Before and after school hours, or prior to 7:29 a.m. or after 1:50 p.m.
- During transition periods while in the hallways
- During students' lunch periods when in the cafeteria

At all other times, students must stow their cell phones in a school provided unit at the start of the instructional period and not access them until the transition to the next instructional period.

## **POSSESSION, SOLICITATION, AND DISSEMINATION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

The possession, solicitation, and/or dissemination, of child pornography (depiction of sexually explicit conduct involving someone under 18 years of age, including the dissemination of images taken by oneself) is not permitted and is a crime.

Such material includes, but is not limited to photographs, videos, digital or computer generated images indistinguishable from an actual individual created, adapted, or modified, but appearing to depict an identifiable, actual individual.

Consistent with state law and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Dracut Public Schools and the Dracut Police Department, students suspected to be soliciting, in possession of, or disseminating child pornography and/or computer generated images of any individual will be reported to the Dracut Police Department for investigation.

## **POSSESSION, SOLICITATION, AND DISSEMINATION OF SEXUALLY EXPLICIT COMPUTER-GENERATED IMAGES OF ANY INDIVIDUAL**

The possession, solicitation, and/or dissemination of computer-generated sexually explicit images of any individual is not permitted and is a crime.

Such material includes computer generated images indistinguishable from an actual individual created, adapted, or modified, but appearing to depict an identifiable, actual individual.

Consistent with state law and the Memorandum of Understanding between the Dracut Public Schools and the Dracut Police Department, students suspected to be soliciting, in possession of, or disseminating computer-generated images of any individual will be reported to the Dracut Police Department for investigation.

## **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.

## **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.**

## **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.

*Please note that flip flops are unsafe for a school environment.*

## **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 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>.

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

### **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](http://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.***

### **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

### **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](http://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/VAPING 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.**

#### **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.

#### **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](http://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](http://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.**

### 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.

### HEALTH SERVICES / NURSE

#### School Nurse

The health suite is located on the first floor near the main entrance. Under normal circumstances, students should obtain permission from their classroom teacher before reporting to the school nurse. However, in emergency situations, students may report directly to the nurse. Students who are on medication must store the medication with the nurse in the health office. Medicines must **never** be left in lockers or carried by the student unless permission has been granted by the school nurse. (This includes aspirin, Tylenol/Advil, cough medicine, inhalers and any over-the-counter medicine.)

The school nurse provides preventative and emergency care to students and faculty and works closely with parents/guardians to ensure continued good health of every student. The nurse will provide support for children who become sick during the school day, who may be injured at

school or who may need to have medications/treatments administered during the school day. The nurse will evaluate children who are ill and determine if they should remain in school or be sent home from school. It is extremely important that parents/guardians notify the school nurse should their child have a contagious disease or illness.

### **Illness or Accident**

If a student becomes seriously ill or has a serious accident during school hours, the nurse is contacted. In the case of an accident, an “Incident Form” is completed, signed by the school nurse and principal and kept on file in the nurse’s office. A parent/guardian will be contacted immediately. If neither parent/guardian can be contacted, those persons listed on the emergency form will be contacted and if necessary, the family physician. Should a serious incident occur near the end of the school day, in which the nurse continues to have concerns about the student’s health, the student will remain at school until a parent/guardian can be notified to pick their child up at school.

### **Medication Policy**

Prescription or non-prescription medications required by a student should be administered at home by a parent/guardian whenever possible. Parents/guardians should make every effort to have medication times set for time periods other than school hours. When this is not possible, the school nurse may administer the medication during school hours, subject to the following rules and procedures:

### **Prescription Medications**

Any medications to be administered in school must be brought to the school nurse by a parent or guardian. If someone other than a parent/guardian is delivering the medication, the nurse should be notified in advance by the parent/guardian of the arrangement and the quantity of medication being delivered to the school. The parent/guardian must also provide the school with a written physician and parent/guardian consents giving the nurse permission to administer the medication during the school day. No medication of any kind will be given without this written permission. Please notify the school nurse if your child may be taking medications at home that may cause side effects while your child is in school.

No child will be allowed to transport medication to or from school unless he/she carries an emergency medication due to a life-threatening condition. Students are not allowed to carry any medication of any kind, prescription or nonprescription, while in school unless there is a physician’s order and parent/guardian consent on file in the health office, and the nurse agrees the student is capable of self-administration. Medication must be kept in the nurse’s office where it will be properly stored and secured.

Consent forms for the administration of the prescription medication during the school day can be found on the Dracut Public School web site under the link for Departments, then health services. This consent, valid for one academic year, includes the following information to be completed by the physician or nurse practitioner:

- o Child's name
- o Medication name with route of administration, dosage, frequency, and duration of

- medication to be taken
- o Special care needed to store medication
- o Reasons medication is being taken
- o Side effects
- o Termination date for administering the medication
- o Pertinent medical history
- o Other medication(s) student is taking
- o Signature of physician with phone number

Medication must be supplied in the original prescription labeled container with the student's name, name and dosage of medication, and time of administration. The school nurse shall record the date medication is brought to school, ensure that the required authorization is on file, and count/record the amount of medication.

**Over the counter medications:** Per school policy, Tylenol and ibuprofen may be administered in grades 6-12 up to twice a week for simple headaches, minor dental pain, and discomfort from braces or menstrual cramps, providing that a parent/guardian consent is on file in the health office. This medication will be supplied by the school. These consent forms are available from the school nurse and can also be found on the school website. If it is anticipated that the student will need Tylenol/ibuprofen more than twice a week, or will need any other non-prescription medication, a doctor's order is required.

**Retrieving medication:** Medication may be retrieved by a parent/guardian from the school at any time. If the medication is not picked up within one week following the termination of the order or one week beyond the close of school, the medication will be discarded.

### **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.**

### **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.

### **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 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.

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.

## **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.

### **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 changes 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.

## VARIOUS RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND LEGAL REFERENCES

### STUDENT RECORDS

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 transcript is kept by the school system for at least sixty (60) years after the student leaves the system.

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 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 M.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, 75 Pleasant 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. Non-custodial parents seeking access to student records, please refer to Appendix E.

## **AN ACT TO PREVENT ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION**

*Signed into law by Governor Healey on June 20, 2024.*

SECTION 1. Chapter 12 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:-Section 36.

(a) The attorney general, in consultation with the office of the child advocate, the department of elementary and secondary education, the department of youth services, the Massachusetts District Attorneys Association, the committee for public counsel services, the commission on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning youth, Jane Doe Inc.; the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence and MASOC, Inc., shall develop and administer a comprehensive educational diversion program about the activity commonly known as “sexting”. The program shall be designed to provide adolescents with information about: (i) the legal consequences of and penalties for possessing or disseminating visual material in violation of section 29D of chapter 272 and other applicable federal and state laws; (ii) the nonlegal consequences of possessing and disseminating sexual images including, but not limited to, the effect on relationships, loss of educational and employment opportunities and removal, exclusion and expulsion from school programs and extracurricular activities; (iii) how the internet may produce long-term and unforeseen consequences for possessing or disseminating sexual images online, including the health of relationships and risk of trafficking; (iv) the responsible use of visual material digitization; and (v) the connection between adolescents’ possession or dissemination of sexual images and sexual assault, dating violence and bullying.

(b) In designing the program curriculum, the attorney general shall research effective educational diversion programs, including programs in other states and programs on sexting. The office of the child advocate shall annually review the program design and curriculum and recommend to the attorney general updates as needed to improve efficacy.

(c) The educational diversion program created under this section shall be used for any diversion program required pursuant to section 54B of chapter 119; provided, however, that the district attorney or court having jurisdiction may, where appropriate, refer a delinquent child or an alleged delinquent child to the educational diversion program under this section for violations or alleged violations of other laws if the district attorney or court deems such educational diversion program may be beneficial to a delinquent child or an alleged delinquent child.

(d) Educational material from the educational diversion program shall be made available to school districts for use in educational programs on the topic of possessing or disseminating sexual images.

SECTION 2. Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding the following section:- Section 100. The department shall encourage school districts to implement instruction in age-appropriate media literacy skills at all grade levels, including in any of the core subjects under section 1D of chapter 69, life skills programming or other subjects, to equip students with the knowledge and skills for accessing, analyzing, evaluating and creating all types of media. The instruction shall use content from the educational diversion program developed under section 36 of chapter 12.

SECTION 3. Chapter 119 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 54A the following section:- Section 54B.

(a) If a child is alleged to be a delinquent child by reason of a violation of section 29B, 29C or 29D of chapter 272, the court shall, prior to arraignment, indefinitely stay arraignment and direct the child to enter into and complete the educational diversion program developed under section 36 of chapter 12; provided, however, that the district attorney may object in writing to the stay of arraignment. If the district attorney so objects, the court shall consider the objection of the district attorney and shall make a determination on whether to direct the child to enter and complete the educational diversion program. The court may request that the Massachusetts probation service conduct an assessment or that the attorney general make a determination of eligibility to assist the court in making its determination.

(b) The attorney general shall submit to the court a report indicating the child's successful completion of the educational diversion program. If the court finds on its own initiative or by motion of the district attorney that the child has failed to complete the educational diversion program, the court shall bring the case forward, arraign the child and restore the delinquency complaint to the docket for further proceedings; provided, however, that the judge shall first provide an opportunity for both the district attorney and counsel for the child to be heard on any such motion.

(c) If a child is alleged to be a delinquent child by reason of a violation of section 29B, 29C or 29D of chapter 272 and arraignment has already occurred, the court shall, upon consultation with counsel for the child, place the child on pretrial probation pursuant to section 87 of chapter 276. The conditions of such probation shall include, but not be limited to, completion of the educational diversion program developed under section 36 of chapter 12. The district attorney may object in writing to pretrial probation. If the district attorney so objects, the court shall consider the objection of the district attorney and make a determination on whether to place the child on pretrial probation. The court may request that the Massachusetts probation service conduct an assessment or that the attorney general make a determination of eligibility to assist the court in making its determination.

(d) The attorney general shall submit to the court a report indicating the child's successful completion of the educational diversion program. If the court finds on its own initiative or by motion of the district attorney that the child has failed to comply with the conditions of

probation, the court shall restore the delinquency complaint to the docket for trial or further proceedings.

(e) The following shall not be admissible against the child in any proceedings: (i) a decision by the child not to enter into the educational diversion program developed under section 36 of chapter 12; (ii) a district attorney's objection to a stay of arraignment or pretrial probation in order for a child to enter into such educational diversion program; (iii) an assessment by the Massachusetts probation service or a determination of eligibility by the attorney general for a child to enter into such educational diversion program; and (iv) any statement made by the child or the child's family during any assessment, determination of eligibility or hearing by the court to determine whether to divert a child to such educational diversion program. A statement or other disclosure or a record thereof made by a child during the stay of proceedings or pretrial probation shall not be disclosed at any time to a commonwealth or other law enforcement officer in connection with the investigation or prosecution of any charges against the child or a codefendant.

SECTION 4. Section 1 of chapter 209A of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the definition of "Abuse" and inserting in place thereof the following 2 definitions:- "Abuse", the occurrence of any of the following acts between family or household members:

- (a) attempting to cause or causing physical harm;
- (b) placing another in fear of imminent serious physical harm;
- (c) causing another to engage involuntarily in sexual relations by force, threat or duress;
- (d) coercive control.

"Coercive control", either:

(a) a pattern of behavior intended to threaten, intimidate, harass, isolate, control, coerce or compel compliance of a family or household member that causes that family or household member to reasonably fear physical harm or have a reduced sense of physical safety or autonomy, including, but not limited to:

- i. isolating the family or household member from friends, relatives or other sources of support;
- ii. depriving the family or household member of basic needs;
- iii. controlling, regulating or monitoring the family or household member's activities, communications, movements, finances, economic resources or access to services, including through technological means;
- iv. compelling a family or household member to abstain from or engage in a specific behavior or activity, including engaging in criminal activity;

- v. threatening to harm a child or relative of the family or household member;
- vi. threatening to commit cruelty or abuse to an animal connected to the family or household member;
- vii. intentionally damaging property belonging to the family or household member;
- viii. threatening to publish sensitive personal information relating to the family or household member, including sexually explicit images; or
- ix. using repeated court actions found by a court not to be warranted by existing law or good faith argument; or

(b) a single act intended to threaten, intimidate, harass, isolate, control, coerce or compel compliance of a family or household member that causes the family or household member to reasonably fear physical harm or have a reduced sense of physical safety or autonomy of: (i) harming or attempting to harm a child or relative of the family or household member; (ii) committing or attempting to commit abuse to an animal connected to the family or household member; or (iii) publishing or attempting to publish sexually explicit images of the family or household member.

SECTION 5. Section 43A of chapter 265 of the General Laws, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 7, the figure “\$1,000” and inserting in place thereof the following figure:- \$5,000.

SECTION 6. Said section 43A of said chapter 265, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out subsection (b) and inserting in place thereof the following 2 subsections:- (b)(1) As used in this subsection, the following words shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

“Digitization”, the creation or alteration of visual material including, but not limited to, through the use of computer-generated images, in a manner that would falsely appear to a reasonable person to be an authentic representation of the person depicted.

“Distribute”, give, sell, transfer, disseminate, publish, upload, circulate, broadcast or engage in any other form of transmission, electronic or otherwise.

“Identifiable”, recognizable from the visual material itself or from information offered in connection with the visual material.

“Partially nude”, the exposure of fully uncovered buttocks or all or part of the human genitals or the female nipple-areolar complex.

“Publish”, (i) disseminate an image with the intent that it be made available by any means to any person or other legal entity; (ii) disseminate an image with the intent that it be sold



by another person or legal entity; (iii) post, present, display, exhibit, circulate, advertise or allow access to an image by any means so as to make such image available to the public; or (iv) disseminate an image with the intent that it be posted, presented, displayed, exhibited, circulated, advertised or made accessible by any means so as to make such image available to the public.

“Visual material”, a photograph, film, video or digital image or recording, whether produced by electronic, mechanical or other means, or any part, representation or reproduction thereof.

(2) Whoever knowingly distributes visual material, including visual material produced by digitization, depicting another person, who is either identifiable in the visual material or identified by the distributing person, who is nude, partially nude or engaged in sexual conduct and to whom the distribution causes physical or economic injury or substantial emotional distress, and distributes such visual material with: (i) the intent to harm, harass, intimidate, threaten, coerce or cause substantial emotional distress; or (ii) reckless disregard for: (A) the likelihood that the person depicted will suffer harm, harassment, intimidation, threat, coercion or substantial emotional distress; (B) the depicted person’s lack of consent to the distribution of such visual material, including material produced by digitization; and (C) the depicted person’s reasonable expectation that the visual material would remain private, shall be guilty of the crime of criminal harassment and shall be punished by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than 2½ years, by a fine of not more than \$10,000 or by both such fine and imprisonment. Nothing in this section shall preclude a prosecution under section 29C of chapter 272.

(3) For the purposes of this subsection, consent to the creation of visual material shall not constitute consent to the distribution of the visual material.

(4) This subsection shall not preclude other remedies available at law or in equity including, but not limited to, the issuance by a court of competent jurisdiction of appropriate orders to restrain or prevent the distribution of visual material in violation of this subsection.

(5) Visual material that is part of any court record arising from a prosecution under this subsection shall not be open to public inspection and, unless otherwise ordered in writing by the court, shall only be made available for inspection by court personnel to a district attorney, a defendant’s attorney, a defendant or a victim connected to such prosecution; provided, however, that this paragraph shall not prohibit disclosure, inspection or other use of the visual material in the underlying prosecution or any related court proceeding in accordance with applicable evidentiary and procedural rules or a court order.

(6) This subsection shall not apply to: (i) visual material involving nudity, partial nudity or sexual conduct that is voluntary or consensual and occurring (A) in a commercial setting, or (B) in a place where a person does not have a reasonable expectation of privacy; (ii) distribution made in the public interest, including the reporting of unlawful conduct; (iii) lawful and common practices of law enforcement, criminal reporting, corrections, legal proceedings or medical treatment, including telemedicine; (iv) distribution of visual material that constitutes a matter of public concern; (v) interactive computer services as defined in 47 U.S.C. 230(f)(2) for content solely provided by another person; or (vi) information services or telecommunications services as defined in 47 U.S.C. 153 for content solely provided by another person. (c) Whoever, after having been convicted of an offense under this section, commits a second or subsequent offense or whoever commits

an offense under this section after having previously been convicted of a violation of section 43, shall be punished by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than 2½ years or in a state prison for not more than 10 years, by a fine of not more than \$15,000 or by both such fine and imprisonment.

SECTION 7. Chapter 272 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 29C the following section:- Section 29D.

(a) Whoever, while under the age of criminal majority, possesses, purchases or disseminates, including by uploading to an internet website, any visual material, as defined in section 31, in violation of section 29B or 29C may be punished in accordance with section 58 of chapter 119.

(b) For the purposes of this section, knowingly disseminating visual material by: (i) reporting the matter to a law enforcement agency, to the department of elementary and secondary education or to a parent, foster parent, guardian, teacher, principal or other relevant school personnel; or (ii) affording a law enforcement agency, the department of elementary and secondary education or a parent, foster parent, guardian, teacher, principal or other relevant school personnel access to the visual material for purposes within the agency's, department's or person's position, authority or capacity shall not constitute dissemination in violation of this section.

(c) A person who has been adjudicated under this section shall not be required to register with the sex offender registry board and no data relating to such adjudication shall be transmitted to the board pursuant to section 178E of chapter 6. A person who has been adjudicated under this section shall not be subject to section 100J of chapter 276 and shall be eligible for expungement of any criminal records of such adjudication.

(d) The juvenile court department shall have exclusive jurisdiction of proceedings under this section.

(e) It shall be an affirmative defense for any crime alleged to have been committed by a juvenile under section 29A, 29B, 29C or this section that: (i) the visual material portrays no person other than the juvenile; or (ii)(A) the juvenile was under 18 years of age at the time of the alleged offense; (B) the visual material portrays only an individual age 16 or older; (C) the visual material was knowingly and voluntarily created and provided to the juvenile by the individual in the image; and (D) the juvenile has not provided or made available the material to another person except the individual depicted who originally sent the material to the juvenile.

(f) Nothing in this section shall prohibit a prosecution for disorderly conduct, public indecency, child pornography or any other applicable provision of law.

(g) The Massachusetts District Attorneys Association, with assistance from the 11 district attorneys' offices, shall annually, not later than February 15, report on its actions under section 29D of chapter 272 of the General Laws to the clerks of the house of representatives and senate and the chairs of the joint committee on the judiciary. The report shall include, for each office: (i) the number of cases under section 29D referred to

that office; (ii) the number of arraignments conducted for an alleged violation of section 29D; (iii) the number of cases under section 29D where no action was taken; (iv) the number of cases under section 29D where the alleged offender was directed to enter into the educational diversion program developed under section 15 of chapter 18C; (v) the number of cases under section 29D in which the district attorney objected to diversion pursuant to section 54B of chapter 119 and, of those, the number of cases in which the court proceeded with diversion over the district attorney's objection; (vi) the number of arraignments conducted for an alleged violation of section 29D after the alleged offender failed to complete the educational diversion program developed under section 15 of chapter 18C; and (vii) to the extent feasible, the age, gender identity and race of each person diverted or arraigned for alleged violations of section 29D; provided, however, that all personally identifiable information published in said report shall be deidentified.

SECTION 8. Section 63 of chapter 277 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2022 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 13, the word "sections" and inserting in place thereof the following words:- clause (iii) of subsection (b) of section 13A, sections 237 13M,.

## **STUDENT SUSPENSIONS**

### **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 a 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<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>2</sup> and the superintendent and superintendent's designees<sup>3</sup> 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.

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<sup>2</sup>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.

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

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

**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 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.

**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.

### **Opportunity to Make Academic Progress**

The Dracut Public Schools shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion in a manner consistent with M.G.L. c. 76, § 21. If the student moves to another school district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new school district shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan under M.G.L. c. 76, § 21.

For all suspensions, students will be entitled to the following in terms of the opportunity to make academic progress:

Less Than 10 Consecutive Days - Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of their removal from the classroom or school.

More than 10 Consecutive Days - 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, earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work, and make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, in accordance with the school's education service plan.

The school-wide education service plan will be provided to the parent and student at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension.

## **BULLYING AND HAZING**

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 an 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.

## **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.

## **RESTRAINT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

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.
- 1 of 2  
File: JKAA



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".

### **MCKINNEY-VENTO HOMELESS EDUCATION ASSISTANCE ACT**

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act requires that schools immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment, such as school records, medical records or proof of residency, as long as the student has been properly immunized. Information on lead screenings as well as immunization records may be transferred over the phone. Parents or Guardians intending to register students who are homeless should be aware of the following guidelines:

1. Homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing;
2. Children who move from a homeless situation into a permanent residence during the course of a school year have the right to stay in the school they were attending while they were temporarily homeless. Transportation may not be provided once permanent housing is found;
3. Students who chose to enroll in school where they are temporarily residing must be enrolled immediately, even if they do not bring the records usually required for enrollment with them;

If a homeless student arrives without records, the school district's designated Homeless Education Liaison will assist the family and contact the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.

A child who is homeless and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for Title I services. A child who is homeless and attending any school served by the local educational agency is eligible for the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

For further information, please contact Sarah Slautterback, Homeless Education Specialist with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education at 781-338-6330 or visit the following website: <https://www.doe.mass.edu/sfs/mv/default.html>

## **ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

The District shall provide suitable research-based language instructional programs for all identified English language learners in grades Kindergarten through 12 in accordance with the requirements of state and federal statutes and Massachusetts Department of Education regulations and guidance.

The District shall identify students whose dominant language may not be English through home language surveys that identify a primary home language other than English (PHLOTE), observations, intake assessments, and recommendations of parents, teachers and other persons. Identified students shall be assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency in the English language.

The District shall certify to the Massachusetts Department of Education each year those students whose dominant language is not English, including specification of the number of non-English languages identified as dominant languages and the number and percent of students who speak each non-English language as their dominant language.

The District shall provide additional information as required by the Massachusetts Department of Education to comply with the No Child Left Behind Act.

Adopted by Dracut School Committee:

### **Legal Ref.:**

20 U.S.C. 3001 et seq. (language instruction for limited English proficient and immigrant students contained in No Child Left Behind Act of 2001)  
42 U.S.C. 2000d (Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964) 603 CMR 14.00)

## **NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION**

The School Committee, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, declares that the school district does not and will not discriminate on the basis of sex, sexual orientation or gender identity in the educational programs and activities of the public schools. This policy will extend not only to students with regard to educational opportunities, but also to employees with regard to employment opportunities.

The School Committee will continue to ensure fair and equitable educational and employment opportunities, without regard to sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, to all of its students and employees.

The Committee will designate an individual to act as the school district's Title IX compliance officer. All students and employees will be notified of the name and office address and telephone number of the compliance officer.

### **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 Dracut Public Schools File: AC-R

- 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

## **SERVICE AND ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

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.

## **WELLNESS PROGRAM**

The School Committee recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive district wellness program. Therefore, the school district will provide developmentally appropriate nutrition and physical education as well as opportunities for physical activity. The wellness program will be implemented in a multidisciplinary fashion and will be evidence based.

### Wellness Committee

The school district wellness committee consists of a chair, parent/guardian, student, nurse, school food service representative, school committee member, school administrator, member of the public, teacher(s) of health and/or physical education, and other community members as appropriate.

### Nutrition Guidelines

Guidelines for reimbursable school meals will not be less restrictive than regulations and guidance issued by the Secretary of Agriculture pursuant to law. The district will maintain procedures that address all foods available to students throughout the school day in the following areas:

- guidelines for maximizing nutritional value by decreasing fat and added sugars, increasing nutrition density and moderating portion size of each individual food or beverage sold within the school environment
- foods and beverages included in a la carte sales in the food service program on school campuses
- foods and beverages sold in vending machines and school stores
- refreshments served at parties, celebrations, and meetings during the school day

### Nutrition and Physical Education

The school district will provide nutrition education consistent with the Massachusetts State Curriculum Frameworks. The school district will provide physical education training aligned with the standards established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

### Nutrition Education, Physical Education, and Other School-Based Activities Goals

The Wellness Committee will assess the need for and provide recommendations for goals to the Superintendent of Schools related for nutrition education, physical education, and other school-based activities. Those goals may be subsequently included in this policy.

### Evaluation

The wellness committee will assess all education curricula and materials pertaining to wellness for accuracy, completeness, balance and consistency with the state and district's educational goals and standards. The Wellness Program Chair and/or Coordinator shall be responsible for devising a plan for implementation and evaluation of the district wellness policy and are charged with operational responsibility for ensuring that schools meet the goals of the district wellness policy. The Wellness Program Chair and/or Coordinator will report to the School Committee annually.

## **THE PROTECTION 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

## **THE FAMILY AND EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND 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.

## STUDENT/GUARDIAN STATEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

### Digital Use / Digital Resources Use Policy Signature

#### Student Expectations

I have read, understand and will follow the [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' [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 [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 2024-2025 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;

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Student Name - Printed

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Student Signature

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Date

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Parent/Guardian Signature

---

Date

**DRACUT HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT  
STUDENT HANDBOOK PARENT SIGN OFF SHEET**

I have read the Dracut High School Student-Parent/Guardian Handbook at <https://www.dracutps.org/o/dhs> and I am familiar with its policies and regulations, including the bullying policy and all other policies of the Dracut Public Schools.

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Student Name/Signature

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Homeroom

---

Parent/Guardian Signature

---

Date

---

Student Name - Printed

---

Student Signature

---

Date

---

Parent/Guardian Signature

---

Date