

John W. Rogers Middle School Rockland, Massachusetts



Student-Parent Handbook

2013-2014

This agenda belongs to:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/TOWN _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE _____

STUDENT NO. _____



PLEASE NOTE: The front cover is sensitive to extreme heat. Do not leave in direct sunlight!

Printed on recyclable paper 

O documento sera traduzido a pedido. *(This document may be translated upon request.)*

Principal

Elizabeth Bohn

Assistant Principal

Cheryl Schipper

School Guidance Counselors

Gwen Tully

Denise Davidson

Superintendent of Schools

John Retchless

Rockland School Committee

Mark S. Norris, *Chairman*

Michelle E. Pezzella, *Vice Chairman*

Thomas F. Mills, *Secretary*

Daniel Biggins, *Member*

Richard Phelps, *Member*

If you need this handbook translated, please contact the main office of your child's school. Se necessita este livreto traduzido, por favor contata o escritorio principal de sus escola da crianca. THE ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS DO NOT DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF HANDICAP, SEX, RACE, RELIGION CREED, AGE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ALL EMPLOYMENT AND INSTRUCTION PRACTICES ARE INTENDED TO CONFORM TO PREVAILING STATE AND FEDERAL REGULATIONS ON THIS MATTER.

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Mission Statement

*The mission of the
Rockland Public Schools
is to ensure that all students
develop the necessary skills
to think critically,
communicate effectively, and
act responsibly in order to attain their
highest potential.*

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATIONAL INTEGRITY POLICY

Society is profoundly affected by the level of honesty of its citizens; therefore, maintaining the educational integrity of both students and staff is an important goal of the Rockland Public Schools. Cheating in any form is dishonest and erodes the trust among parents, students, and teachers. It is a serious breach of ethics and values and will not be tolerated.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, crib notes, copying homework, computer piracy, and looking at another person's test. Ultimately, however, teachers will set the tone of what is expected and what will not be tolerated in their classrooms. If cheating does occur, it will be dealt with swiftly and confidentially. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, parents and administrators may be involved as determined by the teacher. Consequences may range from receiving a zero on a test, paper, or project, to receiving a zero for a full marking terms or even being suspended from school.

Maintaining the highest ethical standards in teaching and learning in the Rockland Public Schools requires the understanding and cooperative efforts of students, parents, teachers, and administrators. By committing ourselves to the values of honesty and good character and by working together in the best interests of our children and their future, we will ensure the highest standards of educational integrity for the Rockland Public Schools.

CORE VALUES, BELIEFS AND LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

VISION STATEMENT

As we move towards the future, our vision is to foster a community of 21st century learners who seek knowledge and demonstrate global awareness

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the John W. Rogers Middle School is to provide an educational program of the highest quality to enable all students to develop to their full potential emotionally, ethically, intellectually, morally, physically, and socially.

CORE VALUES

At the John W. Rogers Middle School we espouse the following values which shape and guide all our educational practices. We are a school that achieves its results through a collaborative effort of students, teachers, administrators, support staff, families, and community.

We hold high expectations for all members of our school community.

We promote critical thinking and effective communication.

We believe students should be active participants in their own learning. We recognize, respect, and value diversity.

We believe education is a shared responsibility where mutual respect is fundamental.

We value and promote: citizenship, fairness, integrity, kindness, respect, responsibility and trustworthiness. We promote problem solving using creative and critical thinking skills.

We believe technology enriches student learning.

We believe a clean, safe, caring environment is a prerequisite to learning.

To succeed as a school community, we must continue to hold true to our Mission and Core Values.

SCHOOL REGULATIONS

Student Arrival Time 8:00 A.M.

Student Dismissal: 2:35 P.M.

General adult supervision begins at 7:45 A.M. and ends at 2:45 P.M.

BEFORE SCHOOL

Students can enter for breakfast at 7:45 A.M. Students will be allowed in early when the principal deems it necessary.

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drill regulations are different for each classroom. You will find directions for your respective room posted in a conspicuous place. Students are to leave in a quiet and orderly manner. Any student who is unable to access the stairs should report to the Taunton Avenue end of the building. A faculty member will stay with these students until appropriate support arrives.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

One of the most common causes of poor student achievement is excessive absence from school. Absenteeism must be considered a serious matter for all students at any grade level, regardless of ability. Absences can only be approved when a child is ill or involved in an emergency necessitating his or her absence.

The laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts clearly explain the responsibility of the parent and school administrators regarding pupil attendance and what the school department must do to enforce the laws of student attendance.

Chapter 76, section 1, 2 of the General Laws of Education Relating to School Committees.

1. Chapter 76, section 1 Regulation of School Attendance

"...The superintendent or teachers insofar as authorized by him or the school committee, may excuse cases of necessary absence for the other causes not exceeding seven (7) sessions or fourteen (14) half-day sessions in any period of (6) months..."

2. Chapter 76, section 2 Duties of Parent: Penalty

"...Every person in control of a child described in the preceding section shall cause him to attend school as therein required, and, if he fails to do so for seven (7) days sessions or fourteen (14) half-day sessions within any period of six (6) months..."

Therefore, any pupil returning to school after being absent one or more days must present a note from his/her parents or guardian giving the date and reason for the absence. Failure to present a note within 5 school days of an absence may result in notification of the proper agencies. Any student who is on restricted physical activity must present a doctor's certificate stating the cause for such restrictions and the length of the restriction.

A student may be excused from physical activity for a limited amount of time after the parent has consulted with the school nurse.

Any absences from school in excess of 14 days are considered unexcused absences and can only be considered excused absences under the following circumstances:

1. Student returns to school with a certified medical note, e.g. from a physician or hospital stating a medical cause for absence.
2. Death in family.
3. Observance of a religious holiday.
4. Mandated court appearances.

Failure to comply with the fourteen (14) day rule will jeopardize a student's promotion. It will be the student's

responsibility to make up any school work missed during an absence.

The school will after the (5th) unexcused absence, notify the parents in writing of absences.

Any student found to be truant from school will receive any consequences as outlined in the student handbook in regard to truancy, including parental notification. Any student found to be truant from school will have his/her name referred to the **Learning Assistance Team** for further action, including possible court referral.

It is recommended that Perfect Attendance Awards be given out at the end of each school year. Perfect Attendance will include no tardiness and no early releases from school.

Accepted by School Committee 8/18/1997

TARDINESS

1. Students must be in their homerooms at 8:05 A.M. Tardy students must report to the office for a pass.
2. Tardiness is excused only for a student who brings a note from home explaining his/her tardiness.
3. Students will receive a 1/2 hour office detention after 5 unexcused days of tardiness per term.
4. Parents of students, who are frequently tardy, excused or unexcused, will be notified and a parental conference arranged.
5. Excessive tardiness may result in Saturday detention (*when offered*).

DISMISSAL

Early dismissal from school requires a note stating who will pick you up or how you will get home. This note must be brought to the General Office and a dismissal pass will be issued. The dismissal pass must be shown to the classroom teacher at the time of dismissal and turned in to the office before leaving the building.

In case of illness while in school, your parent will be called to have you picked up. You will not be allowed to leave with anyone but your parent or someone who is designated by your parent or recorded on the emergency card. With parental permission, you may be allowed to walk home. **All calls for dismissal shall be made in the main office or Nurse's office.**

ILLNESS

A student who is ill should report to the nurse's office with consent of the classroom teacher. No student should be allowed to visit the nurse's office without a pass from the classroom teacher or administration. Students should remain home for 24 hours if :

- They are running an elevated temperature of 100 F or higher
- Persistent vomiting or diarrhea.

ABSENCE

When a student returns to school after being absent, he/she must present a written excuse to the homeroom teacher, which includes the date or dates of absence, the reason for the absence, and the signature of the parent or legal guardian, even though the school calls home. A parent should call the school to inform them that their child will be absent. After one day's grace, a student will stay after school each day until the note is brought in. If a student is absent five or more consecutive days, he/she is required to submit a doctor's certificate on return to school. Note is to include reason for absence, date, and physician's signature.

MAKE-UP WORK POLICY

If students are absent, parents may call the school to arrange for homework assignments. **Work will be provided at the end of the next school day.** Other arrangements will be made for long term illnesses. When returning to school, it is recommended that students stay after school to obtain assignments and work.

MEDICATIONS

If necessary, medications will be given in school. However, most medications can be arranged time-wise to be given at home. If this is not feasible, the following rules must be followed:

- 1) Note from parent with (a) Name of student, (b) Name of medication and dosage and time to be given.
- 2) Medicine must be in the original container with the student's and physician's name on it.
- 3) Doctor's note giving permission for prescribed medication to be dispensed at school.

This is a safety measure for the student and school nurse. If there are any questions, please contact the nurse at school.

DRESS CODE

You are expected to dress appropriately. The following guidelines should be followed- To ensure an environment conducive to education is maintained at RMS, students are prohibited from wearing inappropriate clothing that is likely to disrupt our educational climate. The following standards will be observed:

- Pants must be worn at the waist with no undergarments visible.
- Skirts, dresses, shirts and shorts must be a reasonable length and not revealing.
- Head apparel, except for religious or medical purposes, must not be worn inside the school

The administration reserves the right to determine if a student's attire is within the acceptable standard of dress. Any students not properly dressed according to the above standards are subject to the following:

- Correct the violation
- Parent/guardian conference
- Disciplinary action

LOCKERS

Each student will be assigned a locker. The locker's condition, contents and security is your responsibility. The school is not responsible for items taken from a locker. Administration has the right to inspect lockers at any time.

RELEASE OF DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Please be advised that the School Department may release directory information about a student to third parties unless a parent objects in writing pursuant to the provisions of 603 CMR 23.00, Et. Seg.

CAFETERIA PROCEDURES AND REGULATIONS

Students must maintain a calm atmosphere during lunch, and must observe the following rules:

1. No cutting in lines ahead of others.
2. No moving of any furniture.
3. Proper manners must be displayed.
4. No throwing of food around the tables or the cafeteria.
5. Each student is responsible for cleaning his/her own place at table and returning all silverware, tray, dishes, and bottles to their designated places.

Failure by a student to adhere to the above regulations may result in serious disciplinary action and removal of cafeteria privileges.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a **privilege**. A student may not be allowed to participate in a field trip if his/her behavior is a concern. The principal **may** allow the student to participate in a field trip if accompanied by a parent.

BOOKS

Upon issuance of textbooks, students are required to sign a receipt for each one and to indicate its condition. Students are responsible for the care and return of the textbooks. Students must pay according to the schedule below:

Lost or damaged book	New textbook	Net replacement value
	Second year	2/3 of net price
	Third year and thereafter	1/3 of net price

The pupil, after making such payment, shall own the book. All books are expected to be covered. Do not place paper, pencils, etc. on the inside as this causes the binding to tear or break.

SOCIAL REGULATIONS

All dances at Rogers Middle School are for Rogers Middle School students only. There are no “open” dances. Proper dress is required. Students are not allowed to leave the dance until the end. If a student is suspended out of school or absent on the day a dance is held, he or she is not allowed to attend. This applies to all school functions.

HONOR ROLL REQUIREMENTS

1. A student must maintain A- or better (**High Honors**) or a B- or better (**Honors**) at his or her individual achievement and ability level in all academic subjects and all Unified Arts subjects giving a letter grade.
2. A student must maintain Pass or better in all unified arts subjects giving Pass/Fail. This includes band, chorus and instrumentals.
3. A student must have excellent and good in conduct-general deportment and effort for all subjects.
4. Medical excuse in gym does **not** keep off the Honor Roll.
5. Incomplete in any subject **will** keep off the Honor Roll.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

Every student is required to take Physical Education unless excused by his/her doctor.

The rules for the Physical Education classes are as follows:

1. Students are required to change into appropriate attire and footwear for physical education. This may include tee shirts, jerseys, shorts, warm-up suits, sneakers, etc.
2. All jewelry is to be removed during Physical Education class.
3. Students should not remove anything from any locker, other than their own.
4. No one is permitted in the gymnasium or locker room except during class, after school activities, or with special permission.

BICYCLES

Students riding bicycles to school must lock their bicycles in the bicycle rack. Students must assume personal responsibility for their bicycles if taken to school.

SCHOOL EQUIPMENT AND FURNITURE

All desks, file cabinets and other equipment throughout the building are the property of the Rockland Public Schools, and the School Committee and/or Administration reserves the right to change, remove or inspect such items at any time.

GRADING

A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	65-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	F	0-64
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	I	Incomplete

Band, Instruments and Chorus are graded as follows:

H - Honors P - Pass F - Fail I - Incomplete

Effort, Conduct, General Department Marks

The Effort mark is a measure of the pupil's application, industry, and attention to his or her work.

The Conduct mark is a measure of the pupil's behavior while in the classroom.

The General Department mark is a measure of the pupil's behavior and relationship with others in all school activities outside the classroom. The team teachers will determine the general department grade. The evaluation will be based on staff observation and team discretion.

1 - Excellent 2 - Good 3 - Fair 4 - Poor

Scholarship Marks

Scholarship marks indicate the performance of the pupil compared with the average pupil. Pupils on an individualized Educational Plan (I.E.P.) may be graded individually based on their ability level. This may not reflect achievement at grade level.

Incomplete Report Card Grades

Any student who receives an incomplete grade on his/her report card has 2 weeks from the time report cards are issued (unless other arrangements are made) to make up the work. A form letter will be sent out with the report card.

Retention Policy

1. A student must attend at least 85% of the enrolled days within each grading period in order to receive passing report card grades. Any excused absences will be considered per the attendance policy.
2. No student may be retained without a review by the Child Study Team*. The parent will be informed of the child's status prior to the Child Study Team meeting, but, preferably not later than the second week in February.
3. At the close of the school year, a student who was previously discussed at a Child Study Team meeting may be retained, or promoted.
4. It will be the responsibility of the building principal to request, no later than February 15th, a preliminary list of at-risk students who are being considered for retention.
5. The Child Study Team will make a recommendation regarding the promotional status of a student to the building principal.
6. (Middle School) Any student who fails more than one academic subject in a school year may be retained at grade level. Promotion to the next grade level may be accomplished if the following criteria are met.
7. (Middle School) If the student has not failed more than two academic subjects, has not received a final grade below 60, the student would be required to attend a summer school program for remediation. Successful completion of the summer school for each course enrolled would result in the student's promotion to the next grade. Courses in Mathematics, Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science will be offered in the Rockland Summer School Program for middle school students.
8. (Middle School) Any student who fails three or more academic subjects will be retained at grade level at the recommendation of the Child Study Team. The educational program of the student will be determined by the Child Study Team.
9. Any student considered for non-promotion who is promoted will be considered a student at-risk and will be monitored by the Child Study Team.

10. The building principal will have the final authority regarding the retention of students in his/her building.
 11. Parents or guardians of students may appeal the decision of grade level retention, to the building principal **within five (5) school days of being informed.**
 12. If not satisfied with the decision of the building principal, **the parent may appeal to the Superintendent within two school days of the principal's decision.**
 13. If not satisfied with the decision of the Superintendent, **the parent may appeal to the School Committee within two days of the Superintendent's decision.**
 14. **If the parent does not appeal or attend a scheduled meeting, their rights will be deemed waived.**
 15. If a student is retained in grade, that student will not be assigned to the same teacher or team for the following school year.
- * The Child Study Team shall consist of the parents, building principal, guidance and adjustment counselors, school psychologist, teachers of the student, any agencies working with the student.

Approved by School Committee 8/18/1997

HOMEWORK POLICY

Under the homework policy, homework will never be given as busy work. All homework will be checked, reviewed, evaluated, and considered in grading each student. Consideration for the ability and limitations of the individual is to be a concern at all times. Homework will be assigned on the weekend when justified.

Homework may include study for tests, long or short range writing assignments, exercises of basic skills, reading, or any other means necessary and available to the teacher.

Homework that is not passed in on time is a zero. Students may come after school the **same** day to receive credit at the teacher's discretion; however, any work turned in *after* the due day will be graded as a zero. Projects and book reports are exceptions to this grading policy as they generally count more than a regular homework assignment. **No student will be allowed to call home for any school assignments.**

English Department Homework Policy

The English courses have an average frequency of 3-5 times per week.

Mathematics Department Homework Policy

The Mathematics courses will have an average frequency of 3-5 assignments per week.

Social Studies Department Homework Policy

The Social Studies courses will have an average frequency of 2-4 times per week.

Science Department Homework Policy

The Science courses will have an average frequency of 2-5 assignments per week.

Reading Homework Policy

2-4 times per week.

Music Department Homework Policy

Students in the Middle School Band, and Instrumental Classes are expected to practice a minimum of thirty (30) minutes per day in order to develop their skills to a degree necessary for good performance.

Art Department Homework Policy

In Art, research that leads to enrichment is at the discretion of the teacher.

After-School Work Policy

Teachers are available after-school from 2:35- 3:00 P.M. Students should make arrangements with a teacher to come after-school for extra help, to obtain missing assignments, to make-up work, or to work quietly on an assignment. Students who report after-school to a teacher can expect assistance from teachers and aides. If a student misses class, neglects to do an assignment, or is absent from school, he/she should report after-school to the appropriate teacher(s). When a student reports to a teacher after-school, he/she is expected to work, not socialize.

STUDENT USE OF TELEPHONE

A written pass **MUST** be issued by a teacher to give a student permission to use the office phone during school hours (8:00 A.M.- 2:35 P.M.). Students who have to remain after school for a teacher will be allowed to call home.

LOST OR STOLEN PROPERTY

The Rogers Middle School will not be responsible for any lost or stolen property. Every effort will be made to retrieve any lost or stolen items, and return them to their owners.

LIBRARY RULES AND PROCEDURES

Students may use the library if they arrive with a signed library pass from a teacher. The library pass indicates the reason the student is coming to use the library so the library staff knows the purpose of the visit. During SSR two students per classroom are allowed to come to the library at one time.

The library is generally open before and after school for students' academic use. Students sign in at the help desk. See postings for closed times in the Main Street hallway, or ask the library staff. Hours are subject to change due to staff availability.

Students are expected to keep the library neat and clean, to stay engaged in their work, and to allow other students to work without interruption. When a student comes to the library he/she is expected to engage in the activity noted on the library pass. If a student is not engaging in this activity, he/she will return to class.

BOOK LOAN

Students may borrow a total of 2 library books for a 2 week period, and may renew (borrow again) each book for another 2 weeks if needed. If another student is waiting for the same book (it is "on reserve"), only one renewal is allowed, so that the waiting student may borrow the book. Return books in the bin located on the library help desk. If a book is not returned or is damaged beyond reasonable repair, the student will be charged for the replacement of the item(s). Students who have overdue books need to return the books before they can borrow again.

READING DEVICES

The library loans electronic reading devices for one week periods and can be renewed if returned promptly. If a book is not on the library shelves in print, a student may request that the electronic book be added to a reading device. The Library Teacher will then consider the title for purchase using the library's Selection Procedure that includes the consideration of: the popularity of the title, the currency of the title, the connection to the curriculum, the age level of the title, the reading level of the title, the frequency of use for similar titles, the existence of similar titles in our library, and professional reviews of the title. The library generally finishes the approval process within three days. Students may use the devices with a signed Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy and a signed Technology Borrowing Program Agreement. If the device is not returned within the one week period, the student will lose borrowing privileges. If a device is not returned, the student will be charged the replacement cost for the device.

MAGAZINES

Magazines may be borrowed in addition to books, and do not count toward the total borrowing limit of 2 books per student.

COMPUTERS

Students may use the library's computers according to the school's Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy. They are to be used only within the library. The computers along the wall are for use by students visiting from classes, either individually or in a small group. The laptop computers are for use with classroom teachers only. If a student comes with a class, the student will be assigned a numbered laptop computer. This will be the same computer the student will use for the remainder of the school year while visiting the library with the class. If there is any damage to the computer upon receiving it, the student must notify library staff immediately.

POSSESSION, USE, OR SALE OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES, ALCOHOL, STEROIDS, OR DRUGS

A student is prohibited: 1) from being in possession of, from using, from being under the influence of, and from selling, distributing, or intending to sell or distribute a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C of the General Laws (commonly known as the Controlled Substances Act), alcohol, or steroids at any time in school, on school premises or property, and during any school activity or event whether or not during school hours and 2) from misusing, selling, distributing, or intending to sell or distribute prescription or over-the-counter medicines, drugs, or medications at any time in school, on school premises or property, and during any school activity or event whether or not during school hours. The Rockland School Committee may require a student to take a breathalyzer test under any relevant circumstances. The school committee shall deliver to the police any and all controlled substances, steroids, drugs, etc. which the committee obtains from any students under such circumstances.

The Rockland School Committee believes that under any and all of the circumstances hereinabove described, the parents should obtain and provide medical intervention for the student. Additionally, the school department has counseling services available to students who wish to avail themselves of such services. The assistant principal may in his/her sound discretion modify or waive part or all of the discipline of a student who elects to participate in some type of approved drug or alcohol rehabilitation or treatment program.

With respect to the possession of a controlled substance, the relevant provisions of Section 37H of Chapter 71 of the General Laws are applicable, and these provisions are hereinafter set forth. Notwithstanding the provisions of Section 37H of Chapter 71, a student who is disciplined under this statute shall have the right of appeal to the Rockland School Committee in accordance with Part C—Due Process Procedures and Appeal Process.

Section 37H of Chapter 71 of the General Laws reads in relevant part as follows:

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

The provisions of Section 37H1/2 of Chapter 721 of the General Laws read in their entirety as follows:

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

- (1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges*

and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of this right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

- (2) *Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.*

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision of the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Upon expulsion of such student, no school or school district shall be required to provide educational services to such student.

The assistant principal shall take the following disciplinary action with respect to a student who has committed or who is suspected to have committed any of the acts in the paragraphs hereinabove set forth in the determination of the assistant principal.

- a) For the first offense, the assistant principal shall take the student to the school nurse where the student shall remain until the student's parents consult with the assistant principal. Additionally, the assistant principal shall suspend the student from school for a length of time of ten school days and also from any and all extracurricular activities and programs for forty-five days (which may have to be fulfilled in the following school year if they are not satisfied during the previous school year). The assistant principal shall seek to have a conference with the student's parents in an attempt to resolve the matter.
- b) For the second offense, the assistant principal shall take the student to the school nurse where the student shall remain until the student's parents consult with the assistant principal. Additionally, the assistant principal shall suspend the student from school for a length of time of ten school days and also from any and all extracurricular activities and programs for ninety days (which may have to be fulfilled in the following school year if they are not satisfied during the previous school year). The assistant principal shall seek to have a conference with the student's parents in an attempt to resolve the matter.
- c) For the third offense, the assistant principal shall take the student to the school nurse where the student remain until the student's parents consult with the assistant principal. Additionally, the assistant principal shall suspend the student from school for a length of time deemed appropriate by the assistant principal and also from any and all extracurricular activities and programs for one hundred thirty-five days (which may have to be fulfilled in the following school year if they are not satisfied during the previous school year).

Additionally, for the third offense, the Roekland School Committee may suspend the student for the remainder of the school year. The assistant principal shall seek to have a conference with the student's parents in an attempt to resolve the matter.

A student is prohibited: 1) from being in possession of, from using, from being under the influence of, and from selling, distributing, or intending to sell or distribute a controlled substance as defined in Chapter 94C of the General

Laws (commonly known as the Controlled Substances Act), alcohol, or steroids when the student is not in school and 2) from misusing, selling, distributing, or intending to sell or distribute prescription or over-the-counter medicines, drugs, or medications when the student is not in school.

The assistant principal shall take the following disciplinary action with respect to a student who has committed or who is suspect to have committed any of the acts in the paragraph hereinabove set forth as reported and investigated by reliable sources and in the determination of the assistant principal.

- a) For the first offense, the assistant principal shall suspend the student from any and all extracurricular activities and programs for fourteen days (which may have to be fulfilled in the following school year if they are not satisfied during the previous school year).
- b) For the second offense, the assistant principal shall suspend the student from any and all extracurricular activities and programs for eighty-four days (which may have to be fulfilled in the following school year if they are not satisfied during the previous school year).
- c) For the third offense, the assistant principal shall suspend the student from any and all extracurricular activities and programs for one hundred thirty-five days (which may have to be fulfilled in the following school year if they are not satisfied during the previous school year).

The assistant principal may in his sound discretion modify or waive part or all of the discipline of a student under these circumstances if the student elects to participate in some type of an approved drug or alcohol rehabilitation or treatment program.

SMOKING OR POSSESSION OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

A student under the age of eighteen is prohibited from possessing, using, or preparing to use any tobacco product in school, on school premises or property, or during any school activity or event whether or not during school hours. A student over the age of eighteen is prohibited from using or preparing to use any tobacco product in school, on school premises or property, or during any school activity or event whether or not during school hours.

If the assistant principal has determined that a student under the age of eighteen is in possession of any tobacco product, the assistant principal shall remove such product from the student and so inform the student's parents. A student shall not be entitled to retrieve any tobacco product.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Students in the Rockland Public Schools are expected to treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect. The school community is defined as all those people who work or interact in the school.

Each person in the school must have the opportunity to grow personally, socially, and intellectually, as well as the opportunity to exercise his/her rights in a positive and constructive way. Thus, all members of the school community have the responsibility to conduct themselves in a way that demonstrates a respect for all individuals, their rights, and their property. All members of the school community must also understand and support the standards of conduct of the school and assist in the enforcement of rules and regulations. This behavior is expected during all curricular, co-curricular, athletic, and special events of the school both on and off campus, including school-sponsored trips and those times when school buses or other school provided transportation is used.

Students are guaranteed due process and fair treatment at school. Therefore, prior to a school administrator taking disciplinary action against a student, the school administrator shall provide the student with appropriate due process. When the disciplinary action consists of ten days of suspension or a lesser penalty, this process shall consist of informing the student of the charges against him/her and giving the student an opportunity to respond. More formal procedures must be followed when the discipline proposed is greater than ten days suspension.

These rules and regulations may be supplemented by teachers' rules for individual classes. The academic success and the safety of students are contingent on students maintaining appropriate and responsible behavior. Therefore, in addition to disciplinary action imposed by the teacher for inappropriate behavior in class and or the disciplinary action provided in "Rules and Regulations" below, any student reported to be disruptive in class and/or in violation of the safety precautions established by the teacher may be removed from that class for a period of time designated by an administrator. If the student's behavior does not improve after returning to class, a student may be permanently removed from the class by an administrator following a conference with a parent or guardian.

The Principal or Assistant Principal will make a reasonable effort to notify parents by telephone of a student's suspension. All suspensions are confirmed by letter as soon as possible after the penalty is imposed. Because all members of the school

community are subject to both the laws of the Commonwealth and Town Ordinances, the school will report acts which may violate the law to police as appropriate.

Penalties or suspensions will be served on those dates specified by the school principal (or his designee). Suspensions will be served on consecutive days. If a suspension ends on the day prior to a weekend or vacation, then the student is ineligible to participate in or attend any activities on the following day. When a period of suspension includes a weekend or vacation period, the student is ineligible to participate in or attend any activities throughout the entire period. Students who are suspended from school are not allowed to be in school or on school property at any time during the period of suspension or are not allowed to attend any school-sponsored activities. Students who do not fulfill outstanding disciplinary obligations by the last day of school must make arrangements with the principal or assistant principal to serve detentions.

Our rules and regulations are based on a system of progressive discipline. This means that an administrator has the discretion to significantly increase penalties in the cases of second and third offenses.

In determining the severity of the penalty or suspension, the principal or assistant principal may consider all relevant factors, including but not limited to the following:

- a. the student's previous disciplinary record
- b. the severity of the disruption of the educational process
- c. the degree of danger to self, others, and the school in general
- d. the degree to which the student is willing to change his/her inappropriate behavior.

DISCIPLINE APPEAL HEARING PROCESS

The student and parent or guardian will be provided an opportunity for an appeal hearing. Upon notification by the school that the student will be suspended, the parent must request, in writing, an appointment for a hearing within two (2) school days.

Hearing Procedure

- Suspensions of one to four days may be appealed to the principal.
- Suspensions of five to ten days may be appealed first to the principal, and then to the superintendent.
- Suspension of more than ten days may be appealed first to the principal, then to the superintendent.
- The types of behavior that will not be tolerated have been categorized based upon their seriousness.

Group 1

- Assault and/or battery on any member of the school community.
- Possessing, selling, giving, or distributing weapons, fireworks or any other contraband.
- Use or being under the effect following use of a controlled substance or alcoholic beverage.
- Threat of violence directed toward any member of the school community.
- Obtaining money, material goods, or favors by threat of physical harm.
- Willful destruction of or damage to school or personal property.
- An act of arson, use or possession of a weapon (including knife, club, slingshot, or other article that can be deemed dangerous), use of explosives (including fireworks).
- False bomb threat or fire alarm.
- Participation in the act of hazing.

Consequence

If the assistant principal has found a student to have committed any one of the above acts, the assistant principal shall suspend that student(s) for a period of no less than 5 days from all classes and school activities, restitution for any damage, and notify police and/or fire departments as appropriate.

The assistant principal shall make a referral to the principal for a suspension beyond ten (10) days, or expulsion. See section regarding rules pertaining to long term suspension/expulsion for possession of a weapon, controlled substance or assault of educational personnel on school property or at work related events or when student is charged with/convicted of a felony.

Group 2

- Fighting, “self-defense” may be used as a defense in a hearing procedure. However it is the responsibility of the person claiming self-defense to prove that he/she had no route of escape.
- Actions and/or comments that may threaten or incite others to disrupt the good order of the school and or endanger a person(s) or property, including school buses.
- Once students are present in school or on school grounds, they may not leave without permission. This issue presents a serious safety issue to the school.
- Theft of school or personal property or receiving such stolen items (including possession of an answer key, teacher manual, etc.)
- Student smoking is not allowed in the building or on school property, before or after school, or any time during the school day. Tobacco products and or smoking paraphernalia are not allowed on school grounds. Students found in possession of such items will have them confiscated.

Consequence

If the assistant principal finds that a student has committed any one of the above acts, the assistant principal shall suspend that student from classes and school activities for a period of no more than 3 days. Appropriate notifications to the police and fire departments will be made as needed. Restitution for any damages incurred by the student(s) shall be made.

Group 3

- Behavior that disrupts the educational process (e.g. inappropriate classroom behavior, inappropriate physical contact, making noise and misuse of school equipment, etc.)
- Non-compliance with any reasonable request from any member of the school staff. Students are to respond in a courteous and respectful manner. Failure to identify oneself upon request by a staff member. Deliberately giving false or misleading information. When doubt exists as to the reasonableness of a request from a staff member, students are encouraged to consult with a school administrator after compliance with the request.
- Knowingly forging or willfully using a school-related forged document, tampering with a school record or misrepresentation of parental communication.
- Use of language, gestures or other forms of symbolic expressions that substantially disrupt the good order of the educational process. The use of racial, religious, ethnic, or sexual slurs which have any of these effects will not be tolerated.
- Students who fail to attend an assigned class (cutting) will receive a zero for class work due to cutting a class.
- Embarrassment or harassment of any student, staff member or other member of the school community.
- Students who are truant from school.
- Being in an unauthorized area (e.g. any area in the school which is unsupervised or in which the student does not have permission from a staff member to be at that time).
- Student smoking is not allowed on school buses, school property before or after school, or any time during the school day.
- Students who are tardy. (Tardy is arrival at school any time after 8:05 A.M., please refer to tardiness section of handbook.)
- Students who fail to attend teacher detention or a general detention.

Consequence

If the assistant principal finds that a student has violated any one of the above offenses, the assistant principal shall suspend from classes, or assign detention in accordance with the severity of the offense. Suspension from classes may not be for more than three (3) days.

SPECIAL NEEDS STUDENTS (CHAPTER 766)

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in this handbook, subject to any modifications of the school discipline code set forth in the student’s Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.), pursuant to Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws, known as Chapter 766.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as prescribed in this handbook. State and federal special education laws prescribe additional requirements concerning the discipline of students with special needs.

Anytime school personnel seek to remove a student from his or her current educational placement for more than ten (10) school days in any school year, this constitutes a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under the IDEA, the federal special education law. These include, but are not limited to:

The student's Team will convene to determine whether the student's misconduct that led to the change in placement was a manifestation of his/her disability. If the misconduct was a manifestation, the school will conduct a functional behavioral assessment and implement a behavior intervention plan, provided that the school did not already conduct such an assessment before the behavior that resulted in the discipline. If such an assessment was already conducted, the behavior intervention plan will be reviewed and modified as necessary. Additionally, if the behavior was a manifestation, the student will return to the placement from which he/she was removed, unless the school and the parent agree otherwise.

If the behavior was not a manifestation, the school may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to the extent they would be applied to a student not eligible for special education, except that a student eligible for special education who is removed from his/her current educational placement is entitled to continue receiving educational services to enable the student to continue to participate in the general curriculum, although in another setting, and to continue to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the student's IEP.

In special circumstances, the school may move students to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior that led to the removal was a manifestation of the student's disability. These special circumstances are when:

A student carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency, knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or, has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 is a federal statute which prohibits a qualified individual with a disability from being excluded from the participation in, denied, the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance because of his/her disability. 29 U.S.C. &794 and its implementing regulations, 34 C.F.R. 1,04 et seq. School personnel may not suspend a student on a 504 plan for more than ten (10) school days without first conducting a manifestation determination.

STUDENT SUSPENSION

A school principal or assistant principal may suspend a student for not more than ten (10) school days in a year. Suspensions may be served in or out of school at the discretion of the principal or assistant principal. (See exceptions under Section 37H and 37H 1/2 of Chapter 71).

When a student is suspended, the following procedures will be followed:

1. Except in an emergency situation, no student will be suspended prior to having an informal meeting before the assistant principal. At this meeting, the student will be informed of the reasons(s) for the proposed suspension, and will be given an opportunity to respond. In an emergency situation which requires the immediate removal of a student, the informal meeting will be held as soon after the suspension as possible.
2. The assistant principal will make every possible attempt to notify parent(s) or guardian(s) of the student about the suspension and state the cause(s) leading to it. If the suspension is imposed during the school day, the parent(s) or guardian(s) may be required to transport the student home.
3. The assistant principal will send a letter to the parent(s) or guardian(s) confirming the suspension. This notification shall contain:

The number of days of suspension

The re-admittance date

The reason(s) for suspension as provided in the code of conduct.

A request for the re-admission conference, held prior to the student's return to school, the nature of which will be at the administrator's discretion (e.g. phone conference, in person meeting, etc.)

A copy of suspension procedures.

4. The assistant principal shall forward a copy of each suspension to the superintendent by the close of the school day following the suspension.
5. The student will be given an opportunity to complete any class work including, but not limited to, examinations, that may have been missed during the period of suspension. The student is responsible for bringing all books and materials home, obtaining assignments from classmates, and completing school work during the suspension. All assignments are due within two days of when the student returns to school following the suspension. The student is expected to contact each teacher within two days of his/her return to class following suspension. The student will be expected to take all quizzes, tests, writing assignments, etc. within two days of his/her return to school following suspension.
6. A student is required to serve the full number of days of suspension. If school is canceled due to snow (or other reasons), a student cannot count that date for the serving of a suspension.
7. When a parent or guardian of a special needs student chooses to appeal a suspension as provided in the handbook, the student will be allowed to attend classes and participate in all school activities until the process has been completed, unless the principal determines that the student's presence in school will present a danger to him/herself or others or will otherwise cause a substantial disruption to the school environment.

LEAVING SCHOOL GROUNDS

Students may not leave the building or the school grounds during school for any reason without the permission of a school administrator. Students are not to leave school grounds after arrival at school.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Students are discouraged from bringing personal electronic devices to school. If you choose to bring a cell phone or a musical listening device to school and it is visible or disruptive at any time during the day, the device will be confiscated and returned at the end of the day (first offense to student, second offense etc. to parent or guardian). Continued infractions may result in disciplinary action and a parent/guardian conference.

Cell phones may not be used from 8:00 a.m. -2:30 p.m. Cell phones should not be visible at any time without permission from a school official. Cell phones disrupting class will result in student discipline. Repeated violations may result in permanent loss of cell phone pending a parent conference. See electronic device policy for further clarification.

HARASSMENT POLICY

I. Introduction

It is the goal of the Rockland Public Schools to provide equal employment opportunities for all employees, to prevent any unlawful discrimination or harassment of any individual working at or attending our schools, and to provide a mechanism by which individuals can bring any concerns about discrimination or harassment to our attention.

We expect all individuals to treat each other with dignity and respect. We are committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment in which staff and students are all treated with respect. The Rockland Public Schools will not condone or tolerate any discrimination, or different treatment, of or among staff or students based upon characteristics, which include, but are not limited to: Age, Disability, Sex (including sexual orientation), Race, National Origin, Creed, Color.

Not only does the Rockland Public Schools prohibit discriminatory treatment of its staff and students by supervisors and administrators, we also will not tolerate discriminatory treatment among staff or among students, including harassment.

II. Harassment and Retaliation

Harassment, including sexual harassment, in any form or for any reason is absolutely forbidden and violates Title VI and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Civil Rights Act of 1972, G.L. c. 151B, and c.278s3A of the Acts of 1996. The Rockland Public Schools will not tolerate retaliation against any individual who has brought harassment or other inappropriate behavior to our attention. Retaliation is strictly forbidden, and if any individual is found to have retaliated against any individual for filing a complaint and/or cooperating in the investigation of any complaint, such action shall be grounds for separate discipline.

Harassment includes verbal or physical conduct which may or does offend, denigrate, and belittle any individual because of, or due to, any of the characteristics described above. Such conduct includes pictures, jokes, comments, innuendoes, graffiti, or any other behavior which creates an environment which is offensive and impairs the ability of the employees to work, and

students to learn.

Allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated. Such investigation may include discussions with involved parties, identification and questioning of witnesses, and other appropriate actions. If it is determined that harassment has occurred, administrative action will be taken to ensure that it is not repeated. This action may include, among others, counseling, training, apology, warnings, transfers, probations, suspension, expulsion, and discharge.

III. Definition of Sexual Harassment

While all types of harassment are prohibited, sexual harassment requires particular attention. Sexual harassment includes sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. In Massachusetts, the legal definition for sexual harassment is this:

“Sexual harassment” means sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- a) Submission to or rejection of such advances, requests or conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of employment or as a basis for employment decisions;

or

- b) Such advances, request or conduct have the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance by creating an intimidating, hostile, humiliating, or sexually offensive work environment.

Under these definitions, direct or implied requests by a supervisor for sexual favors in exchange for actual or promised job benefits such as favorable reviews, salary increases, promotions, increased benefits, or continued employment constitutes sexual harassment.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating a work place environment that is hostile, offensive, intimidating, or humiliating to male or female workers may also constitute sexual harassment.

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct which, if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment depending upon the totality of the circumstances including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances—whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one’s sex life; comments on an individual’s body, comment about an individual’s sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one’s sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one’s sexual activities.

All employees and students should take special note that, as stated above, retaliation against an individual who has complained about sexual harassment, and retaliation against individuals for cooperating with an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint, is unlawful and will not be tolerated by this organization.

IV. Complaints of Sexual Harassment

If any of our employees or students believes that he or she has been subjected to sexual harassment, the employee has the right to file a complaint with our organization. This may be done in writing or orally.

If you would like to file a complaint you may do so by contacting any administrator or Mr. John Retchless,, Superintendent of Schools (781) 878-3893. Mr. Retchless and administrators are also available to discuss any concerns you may have and to provide information to you about our policy on sexual harassment and our complaint process.

V. Sexual Harassment Investigation

When we receive the complaint, we will promptly investigate the allegation in a fair and expeditious manner. The investigation will be conducted in such a way as to maintain confidentiality to the extent practicable under the circumstances.

Our investigation will include a private interview with the person filing the complaint and with witnesses. We will also interview the person alleged to have committed sexual harassment. When we have completed our investigation, we will, to the extent appropriate, inform the person filing the complaint and the person alleged to have committed the conduct of the results of that investigation.

If it is determined that inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the offending conduct, and where it is appropriate we will also impose disciplinary action. Disciplinary action could include a range of consequences from verbal or written reprimand to suspension or termination.

VI. Disciplinary Action

In addition to the above, if you believe you have been subjected to sexual harassment, you may file a formal complaint with either or both of the government agencies set forth below. Using our complaint process does not prohibit you from filing a complaint with these agencies. Each of the agencies has a short time period for filing a claim. (EEOC-180 days; MCAD-6 months).

1. The United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commissions (“EEOC”)
1 Congress Street—10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
(617) 565-3200
2. The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (“MCAD”)
Boston Office
One Ashburton Place—Rm. 601
Boston, MA 021080
(617) 727-3990

Approved by Rockland School Committee 12/9/1996

HAZING POLICY

The Rockland School Committee is subject to the provisions of Sections 17, 18 and 19 of Chapter 269 of the General Laws, the provisions of which read in their entirety as follows:

Section 17. Whoever is a principle organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than 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 or 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.

Section 18. 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.

Section 19. Each institution of secondary education and each public and private institution of secondary education shall issue to every student group, student team or student organization which is part of such institution or is recognized by the institution or permitted by the institution to use its name or facilities or is known by the institution to exist as an unaffiliated student group, student team or student organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen; provided, however, that an institution’s compliance with this section’s requirements that an institution issue copies of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen to unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations shall not constitute evidence of the

institution's recognition or endorsement of said unaffiliated student groups, teams or organizations.

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

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

PARENT NOTIFICATION RELATIVE TO SEX EDUCATION

In accordance with General Laws Chapter 71, Section 32A, the Rockland 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 education 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 the 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 sexuality 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 Schools.

A parent/guardian who is dissatisfied with a decision of the principal concerning notice, access to instructional material, 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 dispute.

Approved by Rockland School Committee 6/23/1997

POLICY ON THE TREATMENT OF INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES AS PER SECTION 504 OF THE REHABILITATION ACT OF 1973 AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

It is the policy of the Rockland Public Schools not to discriminate against any otherwise qualified individual with disability, solely by reason of his/her disability, in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, any program or activity sponsored by this school district.

Inquiries regarding compliance with this policy should be directed to the Section 504 Coordinator of the Rockland Public Schools, Superintendent's Office, 34 MacKinlay Way, Rockland, Massachusetts 02370. Telephone: (781) 878-3893

Chapter 164 of the Acts of 2000 added a new law, namely Section 43A of Chapter 265 of the General Laws, which makes it a crime, subject to fine and imprisonment, for an individual to engage in certain conduct of a willful and malicious nature "which seriously alarms" a person and which causes "substantial emotional distress." Section 43A of Chapter 265 provides that such conduct includes, among other things, "acts conducted by mail or by use of a telephonic or telecommunication device including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications or facsimile communications."

PARENT NOTIFICATION "No Child Left Behind Law"

Under the No Child Left Behind Law schools that receive Title I funds are required to notify parents that a parent may request, and the district will provide the parent on request (in a timely manner) information regarding the *professional*

qualifications of the student's classroom teacher(s), including at a minimum the following:

- Whether the teacher has met State qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.
- Whether the teacher is teaching under emergency license or waiver through which the State qualification or licensing criteria has been waived.
- The baccalaureate degree major of the teacher and any other graduate certification or degree held by the teacher, and the field or discipline of the certification or degree.
- Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and if so their qualifications.

In addition, schools that receive Title I funding shall provide each individual parent *timely notice that the parent's child has been assigned or has been taught for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified under NCLB standards.*

NOTIFICATION OF RIGHTS UNDER FERPA For Elementary and Secondary Schools

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

- 1) The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days of the day the school receives a request for access.

Parents or eligible students should submit to the School Principal (or appropriate school official) a written request that identifies the record(s) they wish to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.

- 2) The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate.

Parents or eligible students may ask the school to amend a record that they believe is inaccurate. They should write the School Principal (or appropriate school official), clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate. If the school decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, the school will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent or eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- 3) The right to consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

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

A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibility.

Upon request, the school discloses education records without consent to officials of another school district in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. (NOTE: FERPA requires a school district to make a reasonable attempt to notify the parent or student of the records request unless it states in its annual notification that it intends to forward records on request.)

- 4) The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the School District to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the Office that administers FERPA are:

Family Policy Compliance Office
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-4605

SYNOPSIS OF FEDERAL CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS AND DISTRICT COORDINATOR INFORMATION

SYNOPSIS OF LAWS

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964

Coordinator: Mr. John Retchless

Statute prohibits discrimination on the grounds of race, color or national origin by recipients of federal financial assistance. This statute ensures that individuals are not excluded from participation in programs or activities receiving federal funds (or the benefits of) on account of their membership in one of these protected categories (42 USC S2000d). This statute has been interpreted to prohibit the denial of equal access to education because of a language minority student's limited proficiency in English.

Title IX of the Education Amendments

Coordinator: Mrs. Colleen Forlizzi

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 provides that no individual may be discriminated against on the basis of sex in any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance. Title IX requires that schools adopt and publish a policy against sex discrimination and have grievance procedures through which students can complain of alleged sex discrimination, including sex harassment. State law requires Massachusetts employers to have a policy against sexual harassment. (M.G.L. Ch. 151B, S3A)

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Coordinator: Mr. John Retchless

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

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

Coordinator: Mrs. Colleen Forlizzi

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

EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES LAWS

Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974

Coordinator: Mr. John Retchless

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

Massachusetts General Laws CH. 76, S5 (also known as Chapter 622)

Coordinator: Mrs. Colleen Forlizzi

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

Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

Coordinator: Mr. John Retchless

Title I is designed to help disadvantaged children meet challenging content and student performance standards. Staff should know that special education students are not deemed ineligible for Title I services simply because they receive special education services. Also, school districts must ensure that Title I funds are not being misused (e.g. referring a limited English proficient student to a Title I program in order to meet the student's language needs rather than providing an ESL

program/class).

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Chapter 688 (transition planning)

Coordinator: Ms. Kathryn Salem

School districts file a Chapter 688 referral for students with severe disabilities who will need continued services and supports after their eligibility for special ceases. School districts must make Chapter 688 referrals at least 2 years before the student is expected to graduate from school or turn 22 years of age. This allows time to determine the student's eligibility for adult services and for agencies to include the anticipated cost of services for the student in its budget request that it submits to the state legislature each year.

Rockland Public Schools

Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy

Rockland Public Schools believe technology, when used in a responsible, efficient, ethical and legal manner offers valuable, diverse, and unique resources to administrative staff, teachers and students that promote educational excellence. Rockland Public Schools is committed to helping students and staff use technology as an effective educational and administrative tool and to meet state and national educational standards. It is understood that students and staff will use technology in a mature and professional manner in accordance with the district's acceptable use policy.

Technology and electronic communication device (ECD) users (administrative staff, faculty and students) are responsible for appropriate behavior and acceptable use when accessing technology in the schools. General school rules for conduct and communication apply to Internet and network use or the use of any ECD. This includes, but is not limited to computers, scanners, still and video cameras, cell phones, document cameras, SmartBoards, LCD projectors, PDAs, iPads, iPods, Kindles and all electronic devices. Use of technology shall be considered a privilege, not a right of each individual. Failure of a user to follow acceptable use standards may result in termination of technology privileges, appropriate disciplinary action as stated in school policies, and possible notification of law enforcement. The Rockland Public School District will cooperate fully with local, state, or federal officials in any investigation related to illegal activities conducted within or through the school system.

Internet, email and phone use within the district should be used solely for educational purposes, although RPS recognizes that limited personal use, by administrative and faculty staff members, is authorized so long as it does not interfere with the employee's duties or the policies of the Rockland Public Schools. It is important to recognize that traditional instructional resources and library materials can be screened with reasonable selection criteria. Technology that links to any public file server provides access to material that may not be considered educationally sound in the context of the school setting. Rockland Public Schools has taken precautions to restrict access to unacceptable information in accordance with CIPA rules by employing the use of a firewall/filter which is automatically and continuously updated to provide protection against current threats. However, it is important to understand that no solution is 100% perfect, and at times educational sites may be inadvertently blocked and conversely, inappropriate sites may be accessible. Students will be provided with guidance and instruction in the appropriate use of technology resources including the Internet so that responsible choices can be made in the event that such a breach occurs. RPS will make no guarantee relating to the reliability of the data connection and therefore will not be held liable for any data loss or data corruption resulting while using the RPS network.

Students must obtain permission from a staff member each and every time they use technology equipment. Student use of technology will be permitted upon verification of the signing of the technology sign off form. The principal or designee will maintain signature records, and will be responsible for enforcing the Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy. Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to make amendments to the terms and conditions of this policy without notice.

Technology Terms and Conditions

1. User Personal Safety includes, but is not limited to:

- Users will not post personal information about themselves or others. Personal information includes, but is not limited to the following: name, address, profiles, telephone, date of birth, pictures, etc.
- Users will never arrange for meetings with anyone they have met online without the knowledge of the school and permission of a parent/guardian.
- Users will promptly disclose to their teacher or administrator any message they receive that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

- Users will not harass another person or engage in personal attacks, including those prejudicial or discriminatory in nature following the guidelines of the anti-bullying policy.

2. **Respecting Technology Equipment:**

- Users will exercise caution when handling technology devices.
- Users will follow guidelines for proper usage of equipment.
- Users will not use another person's computer resources without authorization.
- Users will not knowingly destroy any Electronic Communication Device technology equipment including but not limited to keyboards, mice and peripherals.

3. **RPS System Security:**

- Users should take all reasonable precautions to prevent others from gaining access to their account(s). (Example: private strong passwords) All users are responsible for their individual account(s).
- If an individual suspects a possible security breach, the user will immediately contact their teacher, the building principal or technology coordinator.
- Users will not disseminate passwords, codes, telephone numbers, account numbers, grades, or other individuals' documents to unauthorized persons.
- The Rockland Public Schools' network and related technologies are the property of the school department and its storage systems, subject to inspection by administration at any time. Users should not have a privacy expectation in the contents of their personal files on the district network including all ECDs or on web-based systems that Rockland Public Schools has contracted with to provide storage or services (Google Apps for Education/offsite backup facility).
- Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to monitor, or spot check, any Internet or ECD activities occurring on school equipment or accounts.

4. **Illegal Activities (includes but not limited to):**

- Users will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to the RPS system(s), or to go beyond their authorized access.
- Users will not deliberately attempt to disrupt the performance of any computer system or destroy data via a virus or any other means.
- Users will not use the RPS system to engage in any illegal act.
- Vandalism of any kind will require restitution for costs associated with hardware, software and system restoration and cancellation of ECD privileges.

5. **Plagiarism and Copyright Infringement:**

- Users will respect the rights of all copyright owners, recognizing that infringement occurs when a person reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. Students should check with teachers and support staff regarding laws.
- Users will not plagiarize; therefore, they should cite all quotes, references, and sources. Acknowledging the source of a copyrighted material does not substitute for obtaining reproduction rights.
- Users may reproduce copyrighted works within the limits of fair use, and using proper citation. Fair use is explained at: <http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>
- Users of Rockland Public Schools ECD's will not install pirated software. All users should be aware that disseminating illegally obtained software (pirated) is a federal offense which is punishable by imprisonment, fine or both.

6. **Technology Etiquette:**

- *Technology Etiquette includes*, but is not limited to the following:
 - Be polite! Do not get abusive in your messages to others.
 - Exercise caution when using sarcasm and humor. Without face-to-face communications, a joke or statement may be misunderstood.
 - Show consideration and respect for others at all times.
 - Be respectful of the rights of other network users and do not violate their privacy.
 - Be aware of the intent and function of an individual or group before sending a message.
 - Deliberately posing as a user other than yourself is prohibited.
 - At the conclusion of a user's session that user will log off the system he/she is using.
- *Inappropriate Language includes*, but is not limited to:

- Posting of public and private messages on web pages, PDAs, cell phones, and other devices.
 - Users will not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, offensive, inflammatory, threatening, or disrespectful language.
 - Users will not participate in hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, and other harmful or inappropriate behaviors.
- *Respect for Privacy includes*, but is not limited to:
 - Users will not forward or post a message that was sent to them privately without the consent of the person who sent it.
 - Users will not post private information about another person.
 - Users will not interfere with other users ECD work or files.

7. **Inappropriate Access to Material includes, but is not limited to:**

- Users will not use district technology to access material that:
 - is profane or obscene (pornography),
 - advocates illegal or violent activities, or
 - advocates discrimination towards other individuals or groups.
- If a user inadvertently accesses inappropriate material, he/she should immediately notify his/her teacher or administrator, thereby avoiding an allegation of intentional violation of the *Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy*.
- Users will not deliberately attempt to override or circumvent the firewall or encourage others to do so.

8. **Respecting Resource Limits:**

- Users will use technology specifically for educational or career development activities.
- Users will not download large files or software programs without the authorization of the systems administrator. Software, particularly if it is offered as “free”, comes with undetectable spyware and advertising that can disable a computer or an entire system.
- Users will not post chain letters or engage in “spamming” (sending unnecessary messages to a large number of people).
- Users will not create a website using district technology. Exception: A website created under the direct supervision of a teacher as part of a school-related project.
- Users may not use the network for personal and commercial purposes, such as, but not limited to, offering or purchasing goods and/or services for personal use.
- Users will not alter in any way the configuration of a computer or network without permission of authorized staff.
- Users will not intentionally waste resources such as paper, ink cartridges, storage space, batteries, etc.
- Users acknowledge that data will be retained only until August of their graduation year and it is their responsibility for transferring data off any Rockland Public Schools system.

9. **Unacceptable Use**

Unacceptable use can be defined as but not limited to:

- Furthering personal causes such as political, religious or commercial views
- Disseminating threatening or harassing messages
- Disseminating sexually explicit or otherwise inappropriate material
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to computers, servers, Google Apps for Education accounts, voicemails or other ECD’s
- Purposely infecting the network or computers with spyware, malware or viruses
- Gaining access by using another’s credentials
- Using the Internet to access bandwidth grabbing programs unless authorized to do so
- Violating copyright laws (anything from the Internet should be regarded as copyright protected)
- Downloading or uploading any data or material not specifically related to your job function
- Users will not download, store, create or forward any information/data that is inflammatory, or defamatory to any race, creed, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation or political beliefs of any individual or group
- Users will not download any unauthorized software, file or program
- Users will not download, store, create or forward any information regarding explosives or weapons unless as information for a specific class assignment.

10. Appropriate / Inappropriate Use of Educational Technology:

- Users will not use any district technology to play games that have been downloaded onto a technology device, or that are played on the Internet. Assigned, teacher approved interactive tools, which are directly related to the curriculum, are permitted.
- Users will not use the Internet or other technology media to access chat rooms or any type of instant messaging.
- Users will not access personal accounts including, but not limited to email, music, banking, shopping and other personal accounts.
- Users will not access the Internet or other technology media for financial or commercial gain. Ex. gambling, E-Bay
- Users' activities, projects, or materials developed with technology and ECDs of the Rockland Public Schools must reflect our educational standards and policies. This includes, but is not limited to web page designs, PowerPoint presentations, radio broadcasts, etc.
- Users will not impersonate other individuals real or fictional.

Social Networking Sites:

- As a teaching professional your reputation can be affected. Be aware that as teachers, in the public eye you are held to a higher standard and you should use caution with text and photos that you may display.
- Access to social networking sites is prohibited through the Rockland Public Schools network/system and ECD's unless under the direction of a teacher or staff member.

Google Apps For Education:

- Google Apps is currently provided to all staff, faculty members and students in grades 3 through 12. Email is enabled for students in grades 9 through 12. Email that originates from or is received by a school owned computer or its contracted hosting company, in our case Google Apps For Education, is the property of the Rockland Public Schools and can be used for or against during a legal proceeding. The same holds true for voicemails stored on RPS phones and systems.
- All users of Rockland Public Schools email system should know that when writing or responding via email, please remember that the Secretary of State's Office has determined that email is a public record. All e-mail communications sent or received by persons using the Rockland Public Schools network are subject to disclosure under the Massachusetts Public Records Law (M.G.L. Chapter 66, Section 10) and the Federal Freedom of Information Act.
- All student Google accounts are the property of the Rockland Public Schools.
- Student accounts will be deleted in August of their graduation year and the student is solely responsible for transferring any data in their account to a personal, non-RPS account.
- The sole purpose of the student assigned Google account is for students to communicate and collaborate with school staff and fellow students.
- Use of the district's Google account is a privilege.
- Use of RPS Google accounts by students will align with the student handbook's code of conduct and the code will be used for discipline purposes. Students who use RPS assigned Google accounts will exhibit maturity and common sense.
- Students are responsible for messages sent from their accounts. Students should exercise extreme caution with their passwords and never let a fellow student use their account.
- No student shall use their RPS Google account to operate a personal business.
- The Rockland Public School district reserves the right to terminate either temporarily or permanently a Google account if used inappropriately.
- Students will not identify their home telephone numbers, home addresses or any personal information in any email correspondence.
- No assumption of privacy should be assumed with a RPS assigned Google accounts. RPS administrative and technology staff reserves the right to go into a user's mailbox to find lost messages, to conduct lawful investigations, or to comply with investigations of wrongful acts. RPS will cooperate fully with any law enforcement investigation. Illegal activities on the system will be referred to law enforcement authorities for appropriate legal action.
- Rockland Public Schools reserves the right to change email providers without prior notice.
- Following usage of a Rockland Public School ECD the user will log off so as to prevent another user from using his/her account.
- Since RPS assigned Google accounts can be accessed outside the boundaries of our schools (web-based accounts) students are required to maintain the same behavior that is expected of them while in school.

Removable Media:

- Removable media can be defined as but not limited to: CD, DVD, USB devices, camera flash media cards, hard drives physically removed from their laptop or computer based machine.
- RPS has the right to pre-scan any removable media that an individual wants to bring into the RPS network, for viruses and other unwanted malware and spyware. Extreme caution is to be exercised by any individual who uses removable media with regards to the safe handling and security of the removable device and its contents. No confidential data is to be transported using removable media.

Laptops:

- Defined as small portable computers: Even when removed from the premises they are considered the property of the Rockland Public Schools and all policies and good faith efforts as previously outlined apply to using them away from the classroom.

11. District Limitation of Liability:

- The Rockland Public Schools makes no expressed or implied guarantees that the activities or services provided by district technology or ECDs will be error-free or without defect. The RPS district will not be responsible for any damages to users including, but not limited to loss of data, interruptions of service, personal or psychological damages, or financial losses. The district is not responsible for the accuracy or quality of content obtained through our network or stored on our systems. Finally, the district will not be responsible for unauthorized financial obligations incurred from use of our ECDs or any components of our technology system.

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS BULLYING PLAN

Position Statement

Rockland Public Schools will not tolerate any unlawful or disruptive behavior, including any form of bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation, in our school buildings, on school grounds, or in school related activities. We will investigate promptly all reports and complaints of bullying, cyber bullying, and retaliation, and take prompt action to end that behavior and restore the target’s sense of safety. We will support this commitment in all aspects of our school community, including curricula, instructional programs, staff development, extracurricular activities, and parent or guardian involvement.

Definitions

“**Bullying**” is the repeated use by one or more students 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 him/herself, or of damage to his/her property;
- Creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- Infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- Materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school

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

- Wire
- Radio
- Electromagnetic
- Photo-electronic or photo-optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber bullying shall also include the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or knowingly impersonates another person as 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.

Parental Cooperation

The prevention of bullying in our schools must be a joint effort involving both school staff and parent/guardians. The role of the parent of the target and or aggressor in understanding the bullying situation and working with their child and the schools is crucial to the student's development of appropriate social skills. Parents/guardians will be notified at the beginning of each year of the bullying curriculum in place for their child. This notice will include information about the dynamics of bullying including cyber-bullying and online safety. All notifications will be made available to parents/guardians in hard copy and electronic formats and will be posted on the districts website. The district will provide information evenings to educate parent/guardians about the dynamics of bullying and how they can reinforce the anti-bullying curriculum.

Investigation Process

Reporting bullying or retaliation: Reports of bullying or retaliation may be made by staff, students, parents or guardians, or others, and may be oral or written. Oral reports made by or to a staff member shall be recorded in writing. A school district staff member is required to report immediately to the principal or designee any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member becomes aware of or witnesses. Reports made by students, parents or guardians, or other individuals who are not school or district staff members, may be made anonymously.

Use of an incident Reporting Form is not required as a condition of making a report. The school or district will: 1) include a copy of the Incident Reporting Form in the beginning of the year packets for students and parents or guardians; 2) make it available in the school's main office, the counseling office, the school nurse's office, and other locations determined by the school administration and 3) post it on the school's website. The Incident Reporting Form will be made available in the most prevalent language(s) of origin of students and parents or guardians.

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

Reporting by Staff

A staff member will report immediately to the school administration when he/she witnesses or becomes aware of conduct that may be bullying or retaliation. The requirement to report to the school administration does not limit the authority of the staff member to respond to behavioral or disciplinary incidents consistent with school or district policies and procedures for behavior management and discipline.

For isolated incidents of peer aggression, staff will use the schools incident form. The school administration will monitor all incident forms to determine if there is repeated behavior. If repetition is determined, then the Bullying Incident Reporting Form will be used.

Reporting by Student, Parents or Guardians, and Others

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

Responding to a Report of Bullying

Prior to fully investigating the school administration will ensure the safety of the alleged target and/or protect the target from possible further incidents. The school administration will also ensure that all parties understand the definition and prohibition of retaliation. The school administration will implement appropriate strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a student who has witnessed bullying or retaliation: a student who provides information during an investigation; or a student who has reliable information about a reported act of bullying or retaliation. This protection extends to all students regardless of their status under the law.

Investigation

The school administration will use the Bullying Investigation Form as a template for the investigation process.

Interviews may be conducted by the school administration, other staff members as determined by the principal and in consultation with the school counselor, as appropriate. To the extent practicable, and given his/her obligation to investigate and address the matter, the school administration will maintain confidentiality during the investigative process. The school administration will maintain a written record of the investigation.

A copy of the completed Bullying Investigation Form will be sent to the Superintendent's office.

Determinations

The school administration will make a determination based upon all of the facts and circumstances. If, after investigation, bullying or retaliation is substantiated, the administration will take steps reasonably calculated to prevent recurrence and to ensure that the target is not restricted in participating in school or in benefiting from school activities. The school administration will: 1) determine what remedial action is required, if any, and 2) determine what responsive actions and/or disciplinary action is necessary.

Notifications

The school administration will promptly notify the parents or guardians of the target and the aggressor about the results of the investigation and, if bullying or retaliation is found, what action is being taken to prevent further acts of bullying or retaliation. All notice to parents must comply with applicable state and federal privacy laws and regulations. Because of the legal requirements regarding the confidentiality of student records, the school administration cannot report specific information to the target's parent or guardian about the disciplinary action taken unless it involves a "stay away" order or other directive that the target must be aware of in order to report violations. In the case of Cyberbullying, the parents of any student mentioned in/on the bullying medium (text, social networking page, etc) will be notified.

Notice to Another School or District

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

Notice to Law Enforcement

At any point after receiving a report of bullying or retaliation, including after an investigation, if the principal has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor, the principal will notify the local law enforcement agency. Notice will be consistent with the requirements of 603 CMR 49.00 and locally established agreements with the local law enforcement agency. Also, if an incident occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in school, the principal shall contact the local law enforcement agency if he or she has a reasonable basis to believe that criminal charges may be pursued against the aggressor.

Responses to Bullying

Teaching Appropriate Behavior

The teaching of appropriate social skills is a key part of preventing future bullying incidents. The school may:

- Offer individualized skill-building sessions based on the school's/district's anti-bullying curricula;
- Provide relevant educational activities for individual students or groups of students, in consultation with guidance counselors and other appropriate school personnel;
- Implement a range of academic and nonacademic positive behavioral supports to help students understand pro-social ways to achieve their goals;
- Meet with parents and guardians to engage parental support and to reinforce the anti-bullying curricula and social skills building activities at home;
- Adopt behavioral plans to include a focus on developing specific social skills; and
- Make a referral for evaluation

Access to Resources and Services

A key aspect to promoting positive school climate is ensuring that the underlying emotional needs of targets, aggressors, families and others are addressed. The district will provide or facilitate the following services:

- A anti-bullying coordinator position will be created to coordinate efforts between schools
- Guidance counselors, school psychologists and school social workers will be available to intervene with students and families at the request of school administration
- Schools in the district will work together to coordinate an approach that may include siblings at different schools.
- The district will followed established procedures for referral of students and families to local social services agencies.

Students with disabilities: As required by M.G.L. c. 71B, section 3, as amended by chapter 92 of the acts of 2010, when the I.E.P. Team determines the student has a disability that affects social skills development or the student may participate in or is vulnerable to bullying, teasing, or harassment because of his/her disability, the team will consider what should be included in the I.E.P. to develop the student's skills and proficiencies to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment, or teasing.

Discipline

Discipline will be administered according to the school's handbook. All discipline must be balanced with the requirement to teach appropriate behavior.

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

Sanctions may include:

- Detention
- Loss of privileges to participate in school activities
- Suspension

Discipline procedures for students with disabilities are governed by the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education

Improvement Act (IDEA), which should be read in cooperation with state laws regarding discipline.

If the principal or designee determines that a student knowingly made a false allegation of bullying or retaliation, that student may be subject to disciplinary action.

Professional Development

The district will provide professional development to its staff that includes the following components:

- Developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents
- Developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents
- Information regarding complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, victim and witnesses to the bullying
- Research finds on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment
- Information on the incidence and nature of cyber bullying
- Internet safety issues as they relate to cyber bullying

Curriculum

The district will develop or purchase age appropriate curriculum to be incorporated into the districts academic offerings.

Instruction will take place at the class level in elementary schools and will be coordinated by the school psychologists.

At the Middle and High Schools, the curriculum will be taught by the health teachers. This will be supplemented by individual or group activities supervised by the guidance departments and social workers.

General Teaching Approaches That Support Bullying Prevention Efforts

The following approaches are integral to establishing a safe and supportive school environment. These underscore the importance of our bullying intervention and prevention initiatives:

- Setting clear expectations for students and establishing school and classroom routines
- Creating safe school and classroom environments for all students
- Using appropriate and positive responses and reinforcement, even when students require discipline
- Using positive behavioral supports
- Encouraging adults to develop positive relationships with students
- Modeling, teaching and rewarding pro-social, healthy and respectful behaviors
- Using positive approaches to behavioral health, including collaborative problem-solving conflict resolution training, teamwork, and positive behavioral supports that aid in social and emotional development
- Using the Internet safely
- Supporting students' interest and participation in non-academic and extracurricular activities, particularly in their areas of strength

Appendix A

Definitions

Several of the following definitions are copied directly from M.G.L. c. 71 § 370, as noted below. Schools or districts may add specific language to these definitions to clarify them, but may not alter their meaning or scope. Plans may also include additional definitions that are aligned with local policies and procedures.

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying or retaliation.

Bullying as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is the repeated use of one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

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

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

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeate with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student’s education.

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

Staff includes, but is not limited to, educators, administrators, counselors, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities, support staff, or paraprofessionals.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Appendix B

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INCIDENT REPORTING FORM

1. **Name of Reporter/Person Filing the report:** _____
 (Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. **Check whether you are the:** Target of the behavior Reporter (not the target)

3. **Check whether you are a:** Student Staff member (specify role) _____
 Parent Administrator Other (specify) _____

Your contact information/telephone number: _____

1. **If student, state your school:** _____ **Grade:** _____
2. **If staff member, state your school or work site:** _____

3. Information about the Incident:

Name of Target (of behavior): _____

Name of Aggressor (Person who engaged in the behavior): _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time When Incident(s) Occurred: _____

Location of Incident(s) (Be as specific as possible): _____

4. **Witnesses** (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ Student Staff Other

Name: _____ Student Staff Other

Name: _____ Student Staff Other

5. **Describe the details of the incident** (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used). **Please use additional space on back if necessary.**

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

6. **Signature of Person Filing this Report:** _____ **Date:** _____
(Note: Reports may be filed anonymously)

10. **Form given to:** _____ **Position:** _____ **Date:** _____

Appendix C

ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION INVESTIGATION REPORT

INVESTIGATION

1. **Investigator(s):** _____ **Position(s):** _____

2. **Interviews:**

Interviewed aggressor Name: _____ Date: _____

Interviewed target Name: _____ Date: _____

Interviewed witnesses Name: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

3. **Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor?** Yes No

If yes, have incidents involved target or target group previously? Yes No

Any previous incidents with findings of BULLYING, RETALIATION? Yes No

Summary of Investigation:

(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

- 1. Finding of bullying or retaliation: YES NO
 - Bullying Incident documented as _____
 - Retaliation Discipline referral only _____
- 2. Contacts:
 - Target's parent/guardian Date: _____ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: _____
 - District Equity Coordinator (DEC_) Date: _____ Law Enforcement Date _____
 - Other parents/guardians (please list on additional page) Date: _____
- 3. Action Taken:
 - Loss of Privileges Detention STEP referral Suspension
 - Community Service Education Other _____
- 4. Describe Safety Planning: _____
 - Follow-up with Target: scheduled for _____ Initial and date when completed: _____
 - Follow-Up with Aggressor: scheduled for _____ Initial and date when completed: _____

Report forwarded to Principal: Date _____ Report forwarded to Superintendent: Date _____
(If principal was not the investigator)

Signature and Title: _____ Date: _____

Approved by Rockland School Committee December 13, 2010

STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGN OFF

Dear Parent/Guardian,

Your child has received the Student Handbook/Agenda Book of school regulations for the current school year. For your own information, and in order to stress the importance of good conduct, we would like you to read and review this handbook with your child.

The Rockland Public Schools Internet Policy is also included in the Student Handbook. It is important that you review this policy with your child.

To indicate that you have received and read the handbook and the Internet Policy, please sign below and have your child return it to their homeroom teacher no later than Friday September 20, 2013.

I have read the Rogers Middle School Student Handbook of school regulations for the 2013-2014 school year.

Student Name /Homeroom

Parent/Guardian Signature /Date

Technology Sign-Off Form

EACH SIGNATURE INDICATES THAT THE PARTY HAS READ THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR USE OF THE INTERNET IN THE ROCKLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

STUDENT

I understand and will abide by the Rockland Public Schools' Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy. Should I commit any violation, my access privileges will be revoked and school disciplinary action and /or appropriated legal action may be taken.

User's Name (please print): _____

User's Signature: _____ Date: _____

PARENT OR GUARDIAN

As the parent or guardian of _____, I have read the Rockland Public Schools' Technology & Electronic Communication Device Acceptable Use Policy. I understand that this access is designed for educational purposes. However, I also recognize it is impossible for the Rockland Public Schools to restrict access to all controversial materials and I will not hold them responsible for materials acquired on the network. Further, I accept full responsibility for supervision if and when my child's use is not a school setting. I hereby give permission for use of network services.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Approved by Rockland School Committee

Media Release Form

Dear Parent/Guardians:

We request permission to have your child photographed and/or videotaped in the classroom or at various non-public functions during the school year, including general crowd shots, for local cable and newspaper use and on the district's website, PAC websites and Rockland Education Foundation. Some photographs may be used for publicity or to model different aspects of the education program.

I give my permission for my child, _____ to be photographed and or videotaped.

I **DO NOT** give permission for my child _____, to be photographed or videotaped.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print) _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____