

Nashoba Regional School District

The Center School

Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook

2016-2017



**The Center School
Grades PK-5
403 Great Road
Stow, MA**

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**Safe Arrival/Absentee:
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Mary O'Brien, Secretary

This handbook is also available online at center.nrsd.net in the school tab under handbooks.



Nashoba Regional School District/Stow Schools

The Stow schools are comprised of The Center School (PK-5), located on Great Road and Hale Middle School (6-8) on Hartley Road.

Students then attend either Nashoba Regional High School located in Bolton or Minuteman Career & Technical High School in Lexington. Stow schools are part of the Nashoba Regional School District, which also includes the towns of Bolton and Lancaster.

The following personnel are located in the Emerson School in Bolton. The telephone number is: 978-779-0539:

Superintendent	Brooke Clenchy
Director of Pupil Personnel Services	Joan DeAngelis
Human Resources Manager	Anne Marie Stoica
Interim Business Manager	Patricia Marone
Extended Day Coordinator	Laura Dwyer

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WELCOME MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



NASHOBA

Regional School District



“Preparing for Tomorrow”

center.nrsd.net

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**THE CENTER
SCHOOL**

403 Great Road
Stow, MA 01775

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September 2016

Welcome Back Center School!

There is so much to take in at the beginning of the school year. I am so proud to be a member of a team where everyone has worked so hard for a successful start. I hope that all children reap the benefits of that work as they begin their school year!

This Parent/Guardian and Student Handbook is a resource for you and your child. I hope that you find the logistical information helpful to start the year and also as a source of reference when a question should arise. The handbook can also be viewed on our website at <http://center.nrsd.net>. *If you require a hardcopy of the handbook, please contact the office and we will supply you with one.* Please complete the form included in the student packet that is distributed on the first day and return it to your child's teacher. This form acknowledges your understanding of the practices and procedures outlined in our handbook.

While this handbook is a great resource, it does not replace open communication between school and home. Please reach out to your child's teacher or any member of the staff that you need to. I look forward to all of our work together for our students.

In partnership,

Ross Mulkerin
Principal

THE CENTER SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY/VISION

EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS – NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Nashoba Regional School District will educate all students to their fullest potential in a safe, caring environment to become critical, creative, reflective thinkers and positive contributors to the global community.

The following beliefs are the basis of the educational process for the school district:

- **Curriculum**, coordinated across the district will be challenging, comprehensive, integrated, standards based, and have real life applications.
- **Instructional Strategies** will be differentiated, student centered, encourage both independent and cooperative learning, and integrate technology as a learning tool.
- **Assessment** will be based on multiple indicators such as individual student assessments, standards based tasks, informal analysis, authentic performance evaluations, MCAS and other standardized tests.
- **Professional Development** will be designed to support the district focus, school improvement plans, and individual professional development plans.
- **School Climate** will foster respect, responsibility, courtesy, cooperation, accountability, honesty, perseverance and tolerance.

THE CENTER SCHOOL VISION STATEMENT

Welcome to The Center School

Where...

students, teachers, parents and members of the community work together to educate each child to his or her fullest potential,
respectful behavior and citizenship are displayed by all members of the school community,
children are encouraged to pursue and express their learning creatively and collaboratively,
and
learning is connected to real-world opportunities positioning children for success in the 21st century.

The Center School

"Preparing for tomorrow!"

THE CENTER SCHOOL COUNCIL

The Education Reform Act, passed by the Massachusetts Legislature, is based on the belief that there must be active involvement by teachers, school administrators, parents/guardians, students, and community members in the establishment of goals and standards for local schools and their school districts. The Act identified these groups as vital components of a partnership, dedicated to education reform, that must work together to identify and achieve the school community's education goals for its children.

As a vehicle for this partnership, the Education Reform Act requires principals to form a School Council at their individual schools. The Councils act in an advisory capacity to the principal. In Stow the committee is comprised of the principal, parents/guardians, teachers, and community members.

The **School Council** meets monthly, and action committees meet on an as needed basis. **Responsibilities** include the following:

- Review and make recommendations regarding the site-based budget.
- Review and make recommendations about the Parent/Guardian/Student Handbook
- Make recommendations and help implement the School Improvement Plan
- Develop "action plans" to support the goals and initiatives outlined in the **School Improvement Plan (SIP)**.
- Develop measures to determine progress relative to **SIP**, goals.

SCHOOL OPERATION

SCHOOL HOURS

Preschool (1/2 Day)	8:45 AM – 11:15 AM
Preschool (Full Day)	8:45 AM - 2:15 PM
Kindergarten (1/2 Day)	8:35 AM – :12:00 PM
Full Day K – Gr. 5	8:35 AM - 3:05 PM

EARLY RELEASE Dismissal Time 12:15 PM
All students Kindergarten - Grade 5 unless otherwise stated.

SCHOOL ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL GUIDELINES (K-5)

If you plan to drop your child off at arrival time, **please do not drop your child off any earlier than 10 minutes prior to school start because supervision is not available until that time.**

1. REMEMBER, TRAFFIC IS VERY HEAVY & MOVES VERY QUICKLY ON RTE. 117
2. NEVER DROP YOUR CHILD OFF ON RTE. 117.
3. DO NOT PARK ON RTE. 117 IN THE MORNING.
4. STOP FOR PEDESTRIANS ENTERING THE CROSSWALK AT THE CENTER SCHOOL
5. PAY ATTENTION TO THE "DO NOT ENTER" AND "ONE WAY" SIGNS.
6. WHEN CHILDREN ARE ENTERING AND EXITING A VEHICLE, THE VEHICLE MUST BE TURNED OFF.

If you plan to meet your child at dismissal time, please provide a dated note **in the AM**; if your dismissal plans occur on a regularly scheduled basis (e.g. Scouts; Day Care) a single note explaining this plan is sufficient. **However, please do not send us notes that have more than one day's plans on them.**

Please do not call the school offices with a change in plans after 1:30 PM (unless you are in an emergency situation).

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS (K-5)

As we prepare for the opening of The Center School for the 2015-2016 school year, Pick-Up procedures have been adjusted accordingly. The loop off of Great Road will be utilized for arrival and dismissal.

Please form **one single line** and pull up as far as possible along the sidewalk. **Do not pass/pull out around cars in line** as this will impede the flow of traffic and create a safety hazard for our students.

Thank you for your cooperation.

PARKING

- Parents and visitors should use the Visitor Parking Lot off of Great Road.
- **Please note:** the Hartley Road parking lot is for staff members, but can be used for events when the main parking lot is full.

PARENT DROP-OFF PROCEDURES (K-5)

8:25-8:35: Parents should utilize the loop off of Great Road. Parents should pull up as far as possible along the sidewalk to let students out, but must **NOT** park in the loop. Parents who wish to walk their children to the front door should park in the Visitor parking lot.

8:35 or later: Parents should park in the visitor lot located off of Great Road and walk their child to the main office and follow the normal sign-in procedures. The office is located straight ahead as you enter.

PARENT PICK-UP PROCEDURE (End of the Day Dismissal) (K-5)

Please note: Bus Dismissal and Parent Pick-up will be simultaneous.

3:05: Students will be brought outside in a line by staff members on duty. Parents should pull into the loop as far along the sidewalk as possible and follow the prompting of staff members to pull forward. Staff members will load children into the first 5 cars along the curb, while assisting with the opening/closing of doors as needed.

Students may not enter a car without a staff member acknowledging the parent/guardian.

Please do not call for your child(ren) to leave the pick-up line.

Cars will remain in single file and pull-up accordingly as far as possible. If there is confusion regarding a student's dismissal that is not in the pick-up line, parents will be directed to park in the Visitor lot and come to the main office. Since bus dismissal is simultaneous to pick-up dismissal, we will do our best to accommodate. To facilitate the process please know your student's bus number and teacher name.

Any remaining students will be brought to the main office.

Early Dismissal (before 3:00PM)

Parents should park in the Visitor lot, enter the Main entrance and proceed to the office. The main office is straight ahead as you enter the building. You may then sign-out your child.

Early Release Day ~12:15 PM

Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures apply.

PK Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures

Please note: When specialized vans have their lights on please do not pass them.

8:45: Parents should utilize the loop off of Great Road. Parents should park and walk their child to the playground using the sidewalk. Please do not leave siblings in the vehicle while

walking child to the playground. If there is inclement weather please bring your child to the door located near the entrance of the playground to meet the teachers.

9:10 or later: Parents should park in the visitor lot located off of Great Road and walk their child to the main office and follow the normal sign-in procedures. The office is located straight ahead as you enter.

PK Parent Pick-up Procedure (End of Day Dismissal)

11:15 or 2:15: Parents should pull into the loop to the end of the playground fence. Parents/guardians are asked to remain in cars until their child is brought to them, teachers will not put a child in the car. Teachers will bring students out to cars in the order they are parked. Please stay in line until the car in front of you has moved then pull-up accordingly. Teachers will only release a student to his or her parent/guardian unless otherwise specified in writing. Any other adult picking up a student will need to provide a photo ID prior to the release of the student.

PK Early Dismissal (before 11:15 or 2:15)

Parents should park in the visitor parking lot, enter the Main entrance and proceed to the office. The main office is straight ahead as you enter the building. You may then sign out your child.

IDLING POLICY

Vehicle idling is no more than 5 minutes on school grounds. (School Committee Policy EEAEF)

EARLY ARRIVAL/EARLY DISMISSAL

*** Please do not drop your child off any earlier than 8:25AM because supervision is not available until that time. If you'd like to enroll in early morning care, please contact Laura Dwyer, Extended Learning Coordinator at Central Office.**

**** Picking a child up early can be disruptive for the class and often causes a child to miss important information shared at the end of the day. We ask that parents/guardians request early dismissal only in unusual circumstances. On occasion a student must be dismissed early from school for an appointment or other family necessity. We require a written note from the parent/guardian on the day of early dismissal to accompany any change in a child's departure plan. This note should include the time at which the child will be picked up, as well as the name and relationship of the person who will come for the child. The adult picking the child up should stop in the school office to identify him/herself.**

EARLY RELEASE DAYS/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our Early Release days are noted on the official school calendar and reminders are put in our School Newsletter. On these days, **all students in Grades K-5 are released at 12:15 PM, after having lunch, unless otherwise stated.** The afternoon is used by the professional staff for meetings and staff development.

STUDENT ABSENCE AND SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM

For the safety and protection of the children, parents/guardians must call the Safe Arrival line before 8:45 AM to report their child absent or tardy for the day. Parents/guardians must notify the school daily for absence due to illness. The school will contact the home for any

unreported absence. If no one can be reached at home or work, we will then try to contact those individuals listed on the emergency card. If we are unable to establish contact with any of the before mentioned, we will report the unreported absence to the police department for investigation. *For convenience of parents/guardians, we have a voice mail system in operation at all times for reporting absences.* Absences are monitored by the principal.

TARDINESS

Tardiness is monitored by the principal. If a student is not in his/her classroom by 8:35 AM the student is considered tardy. If a student arrives late to school, he/she must report to the school office to notify the secretary that he/she is present. When a student arrives late, he or she affects the entire class. Invariably, the teacher must take additional time to repeat and review information that has already been covered. This is unfair to the other children in the class and to the teacher. We strongly encourage families to assist their children in developing the habit of arriving to school on time, ready for an active day.

DELAYED OPENING

****Children must not be dropped off at the school before 10:35 AM**.**

A school opening may be delayed two hours due to inclement weather. Lunches will still be served. The school property must be plowed and shoveled. The staff will also be reporting later on these days.

Some weather conditions may still call for entire No-School snow day but, in order to meet school year requirements, we will delay openings whenever appropriate. If it is necessary to change to a No School day after a delayed opening announcement, the decision will be made and announced no later than 7:00 AM.

EMERGENCY DISMISSAL & SCHOOL CANCELLATION

The Nashoba Regional School District website at www.nrsd.net has the most up to date information on emergency dismissals, school cancellations and other school emergencies.

Additionally, a "No School" announcement will be made from 5:30 to 7:00 AM on local radio and television stations: television channels 4, 5, 7 and Fox; radio stations WBZ-AM 1030 and WRKO AM 680. If a snow or ice storm begins after the start of school, school may remain open until the end of the school day. Parents/guardians may pick up their own children from school if they feel it is best to do so.

Occasionally, with school already in session, we may dismiss early due to inclement weather conditions or unforeseen emergency circumstances. You and your designated emergency references will be notified by phone by our automated communication system. You will then call the school to notify the office if there is a change in dismissal plans.

In the event of school cancellation or early dismissal, all after school and evening programs are canceled.

BUILDING EMERGENCY

It is the intention of the Nashoba Regional School Committee to keep the students at school during a building emergency or inclement weather. If the building emergency condition is of a hazardous nature, students may be transported to another Stow school or town building to be either dismissed early or transported home at the normal time. You and your designated emergency references will be notified by phone by our automated communication system of such an emergency before any dismissal takes place.

LUNCH

The school lunch program is offered daily. Children may pre-purchase a hot or cold lunch and/or milk. The lunch menu can be found on the school website, (center.nrsd.net) or in the main lobby of the school. Directions on pre-purchasing a lunch can be found on our home web page, then hit the "PowerLunch" link. **Meals can be pre-purchased on a daily basis or by the week.** Of course, children are welcome to bring their own lunch from home. Milk or juice may be pre-purchased also. The cost for lunch and milk is printed on the monthly menus.

SNACK

All children should bring a healthy snack to school for our snack break. We suggest such items as fruit, vegetables, popcorn, crackers, etc. We discourage soda or candy bars at snack time. Students who are in the full day kindergarten program should bring two snacks with them each day.

FOOD IN SCHOOL PROTOCOL

The Nashoba Regional School District seeks to provide a safe and healthy environment for all students in the school district. This includes promoting healthy eating and managing the school environment to keep all children safe, including those with life threatening allergies and other food issues.

District personnel will adhere to the following guidelines when dealing with food issues. Specific allergy related information is available in the District Life Threatening Allergy protocols.

- Encourage all students to wash their hands before and after eating.
- Provide information to staff, including tutors, aides, and cafeteria employees about food allergies. This will also include epi-pen training.
- When necessary, Individual Student Health Care Plans may be developed by School Nurses, in collaboration with parents/guardians and teachers.
- Establish a communication system (telephones, walkie-talkies, intercom) for staff in the classroom, on the playground, and on trips in case of an allergic reaction or other emergency.
- Provide safe tables in the classroom and cafeteria for students with specific food issues.
- Food products will not be used to support the curriculum.
- The building principal must be consulted and made aware that food is being considered to be part of special events such as cultural fairs. The parents and guardians of all students must receive timely written notification of "the menu"

requesting written permission approving participation. This notice must be approved by an administrator.

- Birthday parties will not include foods. A list of alternative activities will be available to staff and parents/guardians.
- Food will not be used as a reward or incentive in the classroom.
- Food and gum are not to be consumed on the school bus.
- Trading or sharing of food by students is strongly discouraged.

VISITORS/GUESTS

All guests and visitors must sign in and out at the office. Student safety is of primary importance. Please wear a badge when volunteering or visiting for any reason and return it when you sign out.

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit the school. Please “sign in” with the secretary to let us know when you are in the building. **If you would like to visit and see a class in session, please contact the teacher directly to discuss the purpose of your visit. This visit should be scheduled for no longer than thirty minutes as approved by the teacher.** As a rule, an observational session would not occur more than once or twice a year.

From time to time, we are asked if students may bring a friend to school for the day. We have found that the best way to handle this is to invite children who are visiting to join us for lunch or recess. Please call the main office to request such a visit.

BOOKS

Students are responsible for covering all hardcover books and keeping them covered and in good condition throughout the year. They are also responsible for taking good care of library books and returning them on time.

COMMUNICATING INFORMATION AND/OR CONCERNS

As positive partners we must be focused on meeting the individual needs of all of our children. To accomplish this goal, as parents/guardians and educators, we must work together both in good times and difficult times. It is in our children's best interests that we **establish an ongoing and positive dialogue.**

Thus we encourage the active and open communication of all members of our school community. It is only through direct exchange that we can improve our system and have it become more responsive to the needs of parents/guardians and children. Open and empathetic communication is the cornerstone of our important work. Teachers' email addresses can be found on the school's website and is typically the first letter of the first name followed by the last name at nrsd.net. An example would be ateacher@nrsd.net.

In order to accomplish our goal, the following **problem solving guidelines** have been established for parents/guardians and teachers, when either party has a concern, question, or would like to offer input relevant to the child's education and/or welfare.

PARENTS/GUARDIANS AS PARTNERS: PROBLEM SOLVING GUIDELINES

STEP 1 - DIRECT CONTACT, PERSON TO PERSON

Parents/guardians & Teachers must contact each other directly when there is a concern in order to review the situation and possibly schedule a parent/guardian-teacher conference. Conferences should be seen as information gathering sessions where the parties involved discuss the pertinent information or concerns in order to develop deeper understanding or find a solution to a problem. Especially in situations where emotions may run high, we must resolve to listening carefully to each other and to work together toward problem resolution in the best interest of the child.

STEP 2 - MEDIATE DIFFERENCES WHEN NECESSARY

If you are not satisfied with the results of your conference or if an agreement is proving difficult to achieve, then either party should feel free to contact the Principal. The Principal will be happy to serve as a resource or to mediate **during a second problem-solving meeting** (When an issue is of a **school nature**, please contact the Principal directly. It is the administration's goal, when possible, to answer phone calls within the same day.)

STEP 3 - ADDITIONAL CONCERNS

If your concern is of a **system-wide nature**, or if you are not satisfied with the results of the conference with the Principal, then you may contact either the Superintendent of Schools, or when the issue is related to Special Education, the Director of Special Education at (978-779-0539).

NOTIFICATION REGARDING STUDENT IDENTIFICATION

Throughout the year, faculty, staff, and the administration attempt to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements, work, and contributions of students and community members. We do this through the display of work, verbal recognition, and through various printed,

electronic, recorded, and photographic mediums. At times, we also share class lists and phone numbers with parents/guardians for the purpose of communication. Each family is required to sign a release form from the school, which is included in our school packet.

HOMEWORK

Homework is one of the many links forged between home and school. We urge parents/guardians to assist their children in establishing a quiet, well lit area for homework production and to be involved in this aspect of their children's academic lives. We try to be certain that assignments are meaningful and developmentally appropriate. Homework time should not be a time of stress, but rather a time for children to review concepts they are learning in school and/or an opportunity to practice their "new" skills.

The type, amount, and regularity of homework varies with each grade level. Homework will be given as support and enhancement of the regular curriculum. **Homework is not given in every subject, every night.**

Patterns that are established at an early age become habits in adult life. We intend to help children with their everyday and long term planning in order to prepare them for success in the future. The school has made a substantial investment in purchasing assignment books for each child attending the third, fourth and fifth grades. Your child's assignment book is similar to your "to do" list. The staff of Center School will be working with your child to enhance their organizational skills by teaching them how to use their assignment book each day. Students in grades K-2 presently do not use assignment books.

Please show an interest in your child's new assignment book. This is an excellent way for you to check on what your child needs to do for homework. Encourage and expect him/her to use it every day. Support our work in helping your child develop strong independent study skills by checking his/her assignment book and assignments *daily at the beginning of the school year and intermittently later on.*

Children will have homework assignments while attending grades K-2. These may involve practicing spelling words or math facts, observing or gathering materials from home, and interviewing family members for a special project. AT THIS LEVEL ESPECIALLY, READING WITH FAMILY MEMBERS IS ENCOURAGED NIGHTLY!

The amount of homework will vary according to the units of study. Assignments often involve reading and/or writing. Sometimes homework is "artistic" or involves research, and parents/guardians become involved as "research partners."

HOMEWORK SHOULD NOT ENGENDER A POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN PARENTS/GUARDIANS & CHILDREN

Should you experience difficulties, please discuss the situation with your child's teacher. If homework becomes too stressful, our advice is to skip the assignment(s) that evening and contact the teacher the next day to problem solve.

Homework should be done by the child with encouragement and guidance from parents/guardians. We ask that parents/guardians teach their children to be responsible for bringing the work back to school when it is due. We will not allow students to call home from the school office for a parent/guardian to bring the forgotten homework to school unless there are very unusual circumstances.

Our goal is to develop a sense of competence, organization, and responsibility among our students and to help them establish effective work habits that will help them now and in the future.

The General Expectations/Guidelines for Amount of Time (per night) that children may be expected to put into homework by grade level follow. Some children will require a little more, or a little less time to complete their assignments; however children who regularly exceed these guidelines may need to have the amount or kind of homework adjusted to meet their different needs. When this is the case, the parent/guardian should bring this to the attention of the teacher and the parent/guardian and teacher should develop a plan to meet the needs of the child.

Homework Time - Nightly Guidelines

Kindergarten	5 to 10 minutes
1st grade	10 to 20 minutes
2nd grade	20 to 30 minutes
3rd grade	30 to 40 minutes
4th grade	40 to 50 minutes
5th grade	50 to 60 minutes

STANDARD OF CONDUCT

DEVELOPING A CARING COMMUNITY

All members of the greater school community are expected to treat each other with respect and courtesy at all times. **C.A.R.E.S.**, our core values, are the foundation in the development of caring, mutually satisfying, interpersonal relationships. In our greater school community, all staff members, parents/guardians and students are expected to treat each other respectfully in words and actions, and to work toward resolving problems fairly, cooperatively and peacefully in the best interest of the child.

Cooperation	working, playing, learning together
Assertion	use your words to tell how you feel
Responsibility	taking care of yourself, school, and others
Empathy	understanding how others feel
Self-Control	being in charge of your body and voice

We encourage members of our school community to:

- listen to each other's "point of view"
- be honest and responsible for their own behavior
- be kind to each other, in words and in actions
- solve problems cooperatively, fairly and peacefully
- think about "problem situations" and to consider alternative solutions

All of our staff members strive to remain calm, caring and consistent in our disciplinary interactions with children. When we model respect and empathy, the children will be more likely to treat each other in similar fashion, with the same caring and understanding. We actively look for opportunities to praise and encourage children and "catch them being good," while we balance our positive approach with the following proactive strategies, problem solving, and logical consequences.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Center School implements the non-discrimination policy adopted by the school committee which is consistent with the federal and state requirements. The full policy can be viewed in the appendix of this document.

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. 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, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation. (M.G.L c 76, s.5)

PATHWAYS TO SELF-CONTROL**PROACTIVE STRATEGIES:**

- Develop a list of hopes and dreams with the students for the school year.
- Create classroom rules with the students, and all students sign them.
- Relate the rules to the hopes and dreams; if we follow the rules, then we can all realize our dreams.
- Classes send a representative to the school rule summit to collaborate on combining all class rules and school core values to a set of school rules.
- Relate classroom rules to the school rules and core values.
- Model the rules.
- Practice the rules.
- Establish a positive relationship between the student and the teacher.

REMINDING AND REDIRECTING:

- Send rules home to parents, and communicate the basic classroom management plan.

- Remind children of the rules.
- Ask what the desired action looks like, sounds like, feels like.
- Bring attention to the posted rules.
- Limit the number of reminders.
- Redirect children to the desired behavior or another activity to break a pattern of disruption.

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES:

Logical consequences are ways to help fix problems that result from children's words and actions when they break or forget rules.

Logical consequences help children regain self-control, reflect on their mistakes, and make amends for them.

Logical consequences should be respectful of the child, relevant to the situation, and reasonable in scale.

The goal of logical consequences is never to punish the child for their actions, but to teach them to take responsibility for them.

The Three R's of Logical Consequences:

Relevant- the consequence is related to the child's action.

Realistic-the child must be able to do it

Respectful-focus on behavior, not character, in a firm and caring manner

FOUR TYPES OF LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

“YOU BREAK IT, YOU FIX IT”

- Help others you offend
- Do nice things or kind acts for others you offend
- Apology (with name, eye contact, state a specific reason for the apology)
- Apology of action (add an action to the apology such as writing a note to the person, making a list of nice things about a person, performing kind acts for the person)
- Write a reflection about the misbehavior and the plan so it will not happen the next time

LOSS OF PRIVILEGE

- Take away a privilege temporarily such as working in a group, using certain materials, sit out of an activity
- Make up an activity at another time such as recess
- Loss of recess time because free time was taken during class
- After-school detention to make up the work

TAKE A BREAK IN THE CLASSROOM

- The break is for the purpose of regaining self-control.
- It can happen after several reminders or right away if the action is flagrant.
- The child can initiate the break, also
- The break is in a chair in an area of the room away from the class.
- The chair faces the teacher so the child can still hear/see the lesson.
- The child or the teacher decides when the child rejoins the group after several minutes. The child must be calm and feel ready to re-engage in the learning.

- The teacher will check in briefly to be sure the child understands why the time away was necessary.

TAKE A BREAK IN A BUDDY TEACHER'S CLASSROOM

- If a student continues to behave inappropriately during a take a break in the classroom, the teacher will send for a buddy teacher. The buddy teacher will bring the student to his/her room for the rest of the period.
- The student spends the rest of the period, or one period, in the buddy teacher room to regain self-control.
- He sits in the corner of the buddy teacher's room facing the teacher.
- He can listen to the buddy teacher's class, or bring a book.
- The homeroom teacher comes to get the child at the end of the period.
- The teacher and child talk briefly about the reason for this action, either then or later.
- Parents will be notified.

INVOLVE ADMINISTRATION OR A DESIGNEE:

- If a student is disruptive in a buddy teacher's room, or continues to be disruptive upon returning, an administrator will be called to escort the student to the office.
- The student will stay there until the end of the period or it is determined that the student is ready to re-enter the classroom.
- Before re-entering the classroom, the teacher will talk with the child about the incident.
- Parents will be notified.
- At times, other pathways may be skipped and this one used right away for dangerous or destructive behavior.
- At times, the child may not be allowed to re-enter the classroom the same day if school suspension is warranted.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Nashoba Regional School District is committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere to students, parents, employees, and visitors free from bullying/harassment (sexual harassment, cyber-bullying, hazing and intimidation.) Such action may occur on the basis of age, color, disability, gender identity, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation or for any other reason.

It is a violation for any employee, student, or visitor to engage in or condone bullying/harassment in school or at school related functions, or to fail to report or otherwise take reasonable corrective measures when they become aware of an incident of bullying/harassment.

The school will take remedial and/or disciplinary action when such bullying/harassment occurs in or out of school, but has a nexus to school, or is disruptive to an employee's or student's work or participation in school related activities. This includes reports of bullying/harassment, verbal, physical, electronic or in any other form.

Parents and guardians of students alleged to have engaged in bullying/harassment (verbal, physical or electronic) will be invited to attend a meeting at which the activity, words, or images connected to the complaint will be reviewed. A student disciplined for bullying/harassment will not be readmitted to the regular school program until parents or guardians have come into the school to discuss the circumstances of the event(s).

It is the responsibility of every employee, parent, and student to recognize acts of bullying/harassment and to take every action necessary to see that necessary protocols and procedures are followed. An employee, parent or student who believes they have been the target of bullying/harassment has the right to file a complaint and receive a prompt, confidential response in accordance with district protocol and policy. In some cases, in order to proceed, outside agencies may be contacted and involved so information relating to the complaint may be released.

Definitions:

Gateway Behaviors ~ Isolated, non-repeated behaviors including, but not limited to; teasing, name calling, making fun of, exclusion, spreading rumors, talking about, staring, making faces, mimicking, rough housing, physical altercations, and cyber-issues.

Bullying

- As defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O 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 himself or herself or of damage to his or her property
- Creates a hostile environment; a situation in which the school environment is permeated with intimidation that is sufficiently severe or invasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.
- 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 ~ 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, § 37O for the legal definition of cyber-bullying.

SEVERE DISRESPECT AND DANGEROUS OR DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR

Everyone in our school buildings must feel safe at school. Thus, for transgressions of a very serious nature, such as those involving a threat to the safety of others, property damage,

great interpersonal disrespect, or refusal to follow reasonable adult directions, a child's parent/guardian may be called immediately to remove the child from school. A child may be placed on an in-school suspension or sent home and additional consequences may be imposed when behavior is threatening or found to be dangerous, destructive or severely disruptive. All such decisions are the sole responsibility of the Principal, Assistant Principal (or the discretion of the Building Administrator's designee). (See also "Discipline-Vandalism" and "Possession of a Dangerous Weapon/Physical Aggression Toward School Personnel or Other Students" and "NRSD Positive Climate/Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy" in Appendix)

These consequences apply for infractions that occur anywhere in the school buildings, on the playground, on a school related trip, at the bus stop, on the way to or from school, and on school busses.

SUSPENSIONS (IN-SCHOOL or AT-HOME)

For an in-school suspension, parents/guardians will be notified by phone or e-mail. This call or e-mail will inform parents/guardians of the reason for the suspension and the length of the suspension.

For an at-home suspension, parents/guardians will be notified by phone. This call will inform parents/guardians of the reason(s) for the at-home suspension and the length of the suspension. A letter will also be sent to the parents/guardians identifying the reasons for the suspension. Additional information regarding our policy can be found in the Appendix File JFKA.

Parents/guardians of a student suspended from school are responsible for helping their child keep up with his or her schoolwork during the time of the suspension.

Student Discipline

All students in publicly funded settings are entitled to due process prior to being excluded from school. Prior to imposing disciplinary sanction that will result in a student's suspension for ten (10) consecutive days or less, the principal, or designee, must provide the student with an informal hearing. This means that the student must be provided with notice of the charges and opportunity to respond. Written notice of disciplinary action will take place following informal hearing. Suspension or long term suspension requires the principal to conduct a formal evidentiary hearing of which the parents are provided with prior written notice. Educational services must be provided to the student during this period of suspension and will be decided by the principal.

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

See Appendix File JKG p.40 for additional information/policies regarding disciplining students with special needs.

PHYSICAL RESTRAINT

Nashoba Regional School District supports student learning and the development of a positive school climate through multiple strategies and interventions. If those methods do

not effectively address student behavior, de-escalation techniques are implemented. If behavior poses a threat of imminent, serious, physical harm to the student or others and other non-physical interventions have been tried and failed or are judged to be inadequate to the circumstances, physical restraint is implemented. Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 69, § 1B, and c. 71, § 37G the use of physical restraint on any students in all Massachusetts public school districts, charter schools, collaborative education programs and special education schools shall comply with the restraint requirements under the authority of 603 CMR 46.00 promulgated by the Board of Education. The purpose of 603 CMR 46.00 is to ensure that every student participating in a Massachusetts public education program is free from the unreasonable use of physical restraint. Physical restraint shall be used only in emergency situations, after other less intrusive alternatives have failed or been deemed inappropriate, with extreme caution, and to maintain safety for everyone.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PARTY INVITATIONS AND DELIVERIES

It is our policy not to allow party invitations to be delivered at school. Please send them by mail so as not to hurt any child's feelings. The school will not accept deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. for a student during the school day. Limousine service is not allowed unless authorized by the school administration.

BALLOONS

All balloons in the school building or on school grounds must be latex-free.

CUSTODIAL or GUARDIANSHIP ARRANGEMENTS

If there are any special custodial or guardianship arrangements*** for your child/ren, the **School Principal should have a copy of the court order specifying stipulations as to custody and visiting rights.**

******Without a copy of a valid court order on record, school personnel cannot restrict a parent's / guardian's access to his or her child/ren.***

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Electronic devices, (i.e. iPods, Gameboys), are not allowed to be used on the bus unless authorized by the school administration. They are not to be used at any time during the school day unless approved by an adult. The school is not responsible for any electronic devices that become lost, broken or stolen.

EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES – CLUBS~ INTRAMURALS

Requirements for participation do not limit access on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness.

HATS

Hats are not allowed anywhere in the building except for special occasions as determined or approved by the administration.

ILLNESS AND SCHOOLWORK

When a student has been absent for 3 consecutive day because of illness, parents/guardians may call and request that schoolwork be put together for the child. Please call the secretary the morning of the **3rd** day to make this request. The parent/guardian and teacher should work together to develop a reasonable schedule that will meet the child's needs so as not to overwhelm the child, yet not go beyond the present trimester that the illness takes place in whenever possible.

LOST AND FOUND

We recommend that all items coming to school with your child be well marked with his/her name. There is a Lost and Found in the building. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

PHONE CALLS HOME

As a rule, we limit the use of the phone for non-emergency purposes. We provide students with no more than **two** opportunities to make these non-emergency calls throughout the year. When they make such a call, we will give them a reminder. Please keep in mind that important calls will still be allowed, and, when necessary, **all children will be offered an alternative food selection at lunchtime.**

RECESS PROPER DRESS

The School Policy is to have all students go out for recess except during inclement weather or severe cold. Please be sure children are dressed appropriately for the weather. Early fall and spring require light jackets or sweatshirts. Winter requires a warm jacket, hat, gloves, neck warmer or scarf. It is also recommended that boots and snow pants be worn when there is snow on the ground. If, due to a health related issue, you do not feel your child should go out for recess, a note to the teacher is required to allow the student to remain indoors on that day, and on each subsequent day.

The administration reserves the right to determine if a student's clothing/appearance is appropriate for an elementary school setting. (*See Student Dress Code in the Appendix.*)

SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

Children must be supervised by an adult at all times when attending school functions before, during, and after the school day. Teachers cannot be responsible for children who come to a school function without a parent/guardian for an event. Any student who is recorded as absent from school on a particular day will not be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored activities for that day. A student must attend a minimum of half (0.5) of the school day to be considered present for the day. Students on suspension (internal or external) are not allowed to participate in any after school activities on that day.

SELLING & TRADING

Solicitations and the sale or trading of merchandise by students is prohibited.

TOYS AND GAMES

Toys and games are only allowed with prior approval from the teacher. The school is not responsible for lost, stolen or broken toys. Sports equipment and trading cards are included in this policy.

VACATIONS AND SCHOOL WORK

When family vacations and trips are scheduled while school is in session, teachers are not required to prepare schoolwork, assignments, or projects for the student in advance. The absences will be recorded as “unexcused absences” by the school. Teachers are not required to re-teach or tutor students when they return from vacation. It is solely the responsibility of the parent/guardian to obtain assignments deemed to be appropriate by the teacher upon their return. A time table of when the work is to be completed by the student should be set to not overwhelm the child, yet not go beyond the present trimester that the vacation takes place in whenever possible.

VIDEO TAPING AND PICTURE TAKING

Videotaping and picture taking of children on school grounds or school sponsored events must have prior approval of the Principal, with the exception of special concerts, all school meetings, and performances.

HOME AND COMMUNITY

HOME/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

Research strongly indicates that home/school communication and cooperation is an important factor in school success. The following are some opportunities that The Center School uses to communicate with parents/guardians:

CURRICULUM NIGHT

In the fall, teachers meet with parents/guardians as a group and present an overview discussing curriculum goals, as well as academic and social expectations at each grade level. They also provide a chance for the parents/guardians to explore classrooms and meet the teacher. Because of the specific agenda set for the curriculum nights, we recommend when possible, that the students not attend these evenings.

TRANSLATION

Translation of this handbook and any pertinent communication from the Center School is available. Please contact the office for additional information.

PARENT/GUARDIAN - TEACHER CONFERENCES

One of our goals is to work together with **Parents/Guardians as Partners**. Time is set aside for formal conferences twice a year. Additional meetings should be scheduled as warranted. We encourage clear and meaningful dialogue between parents/guardians and teachers. Accordingly, we encourage both teachers and parents/guardians to respond to each other's telephone calls within the same day, whenever possible.

REPORT CARDS

A progress report (report card) is issued 3 times per year for all grades, K to 5. We ask that the copy be signed and returned back to your child's homeroom teacher within 3 school days. If you have any questions about the report card, please get in touch with your child's teacher.

CLASS/STUDENT ASSIGNMENTS - End of Year Placement Process

It is our goal to place students in classroom environments that are well matched to their individual learning styles. In this way, we hope that we will be able to provide a successful learning experience for all children. While we actively encourage staff and parent/guardian input in order to meet the needs of individual students, we must also meet our overall goal which is to develop well balanced, heterogeneous classroom groups across all grade levels. The variables that we coordinate during placement include the range of ability levels; personality characteristics; learning styles and peer relationships. While we adjust each class' makeup, we also must determine the best way to deliver appropriate special education and remedial services for all children. Clearly, placement is a formidable task and it is not taken lightly. We invest a great deal of time in this process and we value your input. All staff members and parents/guardians are invited to share their insights regarding academic, learning style and social emotional considerations of children.

Please be aware of the following guidelines in order to help us during our placement process and in order to prevent any misunderstandings.

1. Each spring, we give parents/guardians the option to submit in writing insights relative to their child's learning style and/or social emotional needs. **This is the appropriate time for parent/guardian input.**
2. All letters from parents/guardians will be seriously considered if received at this time, but there will be no individual responses to your letters, and **no guarantees can be made.**
3. Students will meet their teacher for the next school year during transition activities on the last day of school whenever possible. Final report cards will provide you with the name of the teacher with whom your child will be placed during the next school year.

HEALTH SERVICES

STAFF

The Center School health room is located near the office. The health room is staffed daily by a registered nurse during the hours that the students are in school.

For health information call the school health office between 8:35 AM and 3:05 PM.

978-461-0009

The Center School

ILLNESS

Health Room Guidelines for when your child is sick are included in the information packet distributed the first week of school. These guidelines are designed to assist you in deciding when it is appropriate for a child to be in school. All communicable diseases should be reported to the school nurse for record keeping and protection of other children.

PHYSICALS

“The School Committee or Board of Health shall cause every child in the public school to be separately and carefully examined by a physician registered in Massachusetts within six months before entrance to school or during the first year after entrance, and at intervals of either three or four years thereafter. A child who transfers from another school system shall be examined as an entering child unless school health records are transferred with the child showing that he has had an adequate appraisal in the school year of transfer.”

Reg. 1, Sect. 57 of chapter 71 of the General Laws

IMMUNIZATION

All immunization requirements as set by the Dept. of Public Health will be required **before** entrance to school. This includes preschool, kindergarten and transfer students. The only accepted exemptions are: medical, signed by a physician, or religious, signed by the parent/guardian.

SUMMARY OF THE MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY IN THE SCHOOL SETTING

1. The Professional Registered Nurse (or delegated Trained School Personnel under the supervision of the School Nurse) must administer all medications/prescriptions or over-the-counter medications.
2. Other than in an emergency situation, the School Nurse will not be authorized to administer any type of medication to school children unless all of the following conditions have been met:
 - A.** A written order signed by a physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant is presented. Directions on prescription medications for 10 days or less will be accepted in place of a written order. Obtain a second prescription container from your pharmacy. We will not accept “As Directed” on prescription labels. All specifications listed below under D must be met.
 - B.** Parents or legal guardians must present a signed consent form. These are available in the school health offices.
 - C.** Over the counter medications must have the child's physician, dentist, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant's written order and a parental or legal guardian's written consent. Over the counter medication provided to the school must be in the original container and marked with the child's name. **The school system does not supply over the counter medications.**

D. Prescription medication provided to the school must be in the original prescription bottle specifying:

- child's name
- name of the medication
- dosage clearly printed
- physician's name
- date

E. All medication must be transported to and from the School Health Office by a parent or legal guardian and can only be received by the school nurse.

F. All medication orders must be renewed annually. (Epi-Pens, Benadryl, inhalers, Tylenol)

G. All unused, discontinued, or outdated medications shall be retrieved by the parent or legal guardian. In extenuating circumstances, with parental or legal guardian's consent, such medications may be destroyed by the School Nurse in accordance with applicable policies of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Division of Food and Drugs. All medication should be retrieved by the parent or legal guardian at the end of the school year.

H. Self-administration of medication will be determined on an individual basis after a written and mutually signed Medication Care Plan is developed by the physician, school nurse, and the parent/guardian.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARDS

Cards are included in yearly packets that children receive the first week of school. Please complete and return immediately. Please keep work phone numbers current and have an emergency back-up phone number that is local.

STATE MANDATED SCREENINGS

Health screenings including vision, hearing, postural, growth, development and body mass index (BMI) will be done for students annually based on M.G.L. Chapter 71, Section 57 and 105 CMR 200.00. A documented lead screening is required for entrance to preschool and kindergarten.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICY AND PROTOCOLS

Please refer to district policy in Appendix File JLG.

STUDENT RECORDS

STUDENT TRANSFERS

When a family leaves the community for another place of residence, a transfer card will be issued and a release form must be signed by the parent/guardian to permit the transfer of records to the new school. Student records will be sent via the US Postal Service to the new attending school. Duplicated copies of pertinent information from the student records will

be made available to parents/guardians for hand delivering to the new school upon request. Please give a minimum of 48 hours notice to help meet your needs.

Parents/guardians of students transferring into our schools are asked to contact the main office of the appropriate school to get instructions on information that is needed to enter.

STUDENT RECORDS/CONFIDENTIALITY

A. ANNUAL NOTICE OF RIGHTS

The Center School permits parents/guardians to inspect and review any education records pertaining to their child, which are collected, maintained, or used by the school district. Such review is granted within **two complete, consecutive school days** of the request, unless a longer period of time is agreed upon by the parent/guardian and the district. Request for such access is made by the parent/guardian to the Principal or Interventionist for the regular education records maintained in the school building, and to the Director of Pupil Personnel Services or chairperson for the completed special education records which are maintained at Central Administration Office. Parents/guardians also may request that the records be interpreted for them, and that they be allowed to make copies of material within the record, and that a representative of the parent/guardian review and inspect the record. In the latter case a release must be obtained by the parent/guardian.

If you would like to obtain a copy of the Student Record Regulations, you may contact the Massachusetts Department of Education at (781) 338-3000.

B. TYPES AND LOCATION OF STUDENT RECORDS

The Center School will provide, upon request, a complete list of the types and locations of education records collected, maintained, or used by the school district. Each student has a "cumulative record" maintained at the school building. Additionally, health records are maintained by the school nurse. Complete special education records are maintained at the Central Administration Office.

C. DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS

The Center School will inform parents/guardians and students when information collected, maintained, or used by the district is no longer needed to provide educational services. Parents/guardians may also request that information be deleted from the student record. The Principal should be contacted in these cases to inform you of the procedure to be followed.

For students who may leave the district prior to the 8th grade, notice is placed in local newspapers, which informs former students when their records will be destroyed, and that they may request a copy of the record prior to destruction.

D. RIGHTS OF THE STUDENT

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education Student Record Regulations, these rights apply to students upon reaching 14 years old. If the student is age 14, both the student and parent/guardian, or either one acting alone may exercise these rights. The student may not limit the parent's/guardian's rights to inspect the student record.

SAFETY

FIRE DRILLS, BUS EVACUATION AND LOCK-DOWN DRILLS

Fire drills are held during the course of the school year under the direction of the Stow Fire Department. Fire drills are required by state law and the policy of the School Committee. Specific directions for exiting the school building in the event of a fire or fire drill are posted in each room. All persons shall exit quickly, quietly and in an orderly manner. Teachers will take their emergency bags including class lists and basic first aid supplies. They will account for all students immediately upon exit, and report to the administration and fire department.

Any student who communicates or pulls a false alarm will receive disciplinary action.

Children go through two bus evacuation drills and seat belt instruction during the school year under the direction of the bus company.

Lock-down drills will be practiced a minimum of twice a year at each school under the direction of the building administrator or his/her designee with the assistance of the Stow Police and/or Fire Department, (when applicable).

RECESS TOYS/EQUIPMENT

Skateboards and rollerblades are not allowed in the building or on the grounds during school time unless approved by the administration. Students wearing Heelys to school are not allowed to roll on them in the building or on the grounds during school time unless approved by the administration. Hockey sticks, baseball/softball bats, lacrosse sticks and pogo sticks are included in these guidelines. All of the above equipment cannot be transported on the school bus.

DISTRICT WIDE POLICIES

SMOKING POLICY AND USE OF TOBACCO PRODUCTS

Section 37H of the Massachusetts Reform Act prohibits the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities, or on the school grounds.

TEACHER GIFTS

No public employee, including teachers, may accept a gift worth \$50.00 or more. If a gift is greater than that it must be to the employer (the district) for use by the classroom. (MGL c.268a)

CHILD FIND NOTICE

The Nashoba Regional School District has an ongoing goal of locating and identifying all children, aged three through 21, who have special needs. Any child who has a disability and is unable to progress effectively in the general education program without specially designed instruction or related services may be eligible for special education. Children with disabilities are those who have Autism, Developmental Delay, Intellectual Impairment, Sensory Impairment, Neurological Impairment, Emotional Impairment, Communication Impairment, Physical Impairment, Health impairment, or Specific Learning Disability. In

addition, children with a disability which substantially limits a major life activity may receive accommodations to allow them access to an appropriate education (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, as amended).

The Nashoba Regional School District requests your help in locating children who are eligible to benefit from Special Education or 504 services. If you know of a child who is a resident of the District, who may have a disability and may not be receiving needed services, please contact: Tracy Conte, Director of Special Education, 50 Mechanic Street, Bolton, MA 01740 (978-779-0539). Also, if you know of someone who may need this notice translated into another language, given orally, or delivered in some other manner, please contact the same.

Gender Equity

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town of residence, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town, unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly attended public school. 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, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

RESPONDING TO STUDENT NEEDS

If a parent has concerns regarding their child's academic, emotional, or social progress they should contact the classroom teacher to discuss their concerns. Together, with the classroom teacher, they plan what the next steps for school or home should be and monitor progress.

When concerns are raised about a student's progress the teacher begins the process of targeted interventions in the classroom. This may take many forms: incentive chart, pre-teaching or review of concepts, small group instruction, etc. Parents are contacted to discuss these concerns and to outline what support may be necessary at home. If after 6-8 weeks of consistent implementation of the interventions the student continues to struggle, additional interventions may be warranted and/or the child's profile is then discussed at a Student and Teacher Assistant Team (STAT) meeting.

STAT – Student Teacher Assistant Team

After in-class interventions have been documented, implemented and data has been collected, if a student continues to struggle academically, behaviorally, or socially they are brought up for discussion at a STAT meeting.

This team is comprised of an administrator, interventionist, school nurse, classroom teachers, special education teacher, and various service providers.

The individual student's profile is discussed amongst the team, data and work samples are reviewed, and input is given to the classroom teacher. From these meetings a plan is created to address the needs of the child. This may look like informal observation, teacher consultation with a service provider (OT, PT, Speech), reading intervention outside of the classroom, additional small group/individual instruction, in class accommodations, etc.

If a student continues to struggle accessing the grade level curriculum and little to no progress is seen after progressing through the steps as outlined above, a referral may be made for further evaluation through the Special Education Department. Parent/Guardian permission is required for this formal assessment to occur and documentation outlining the process will be sent home.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PLAN (IEP)

A student qualifies for an IEP when a documented disability impacts their ability to access the grade level curriculum and/or make effective progress. Through formal evaluation, teacher input, parent consultation, and service providers as necessary, a plan is developed at a TEAM meeting. This plan outlines the disability, specialized instruction, specific goals to be met, and the modifications and accommodations necessary to meet those goals.

504 Plan

A student with a documented health disability, whether chronic or temporary, may be eligible to receive accommodations to access the curriculum and function at school. A meeting with the Section 504 team, chaired by the school Interventionist, is required and a plan will be developed. The principal must sign the plan prior to implementation.

EXTENDED DAY

An Extended Day program is offered at The Center School daily and on early release days. We currently offer before-school care as well. Contact Laura Dwyer, Extended Day Coordinator, (1-978-779-0539, Ext. 3042), for more information.

MCAS

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is the Commonwealth's student testing program implemented in response to the Education Reform Law of 1993. MCAS tests are based exclusively in the learning standards contained in the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for each content area tested.

The primary purposes of MCAS are:

- To measure the performance of individual students, schools, and districts against the state standards outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum frameworks
- To raise student achievement
- To improve classroom instruction

- To determine competency in content area in order to award high school diplomas

Students in grades 3, 4, and 5 take MCAS in the spring of each year. A specific schedule is published in the school newsletters as soon as it is known.

We ask your cooperation in preparing the children for the test by ensuring they have a good night's sleep, a nutritious breakfast, and arrive at school on time each day. Please inform the school immediately if you know your child will not be in school during any of the testing periods.

SCHOOL BUS INFORMATION

The purpose of our bus service is to provide safe and reliable transportation to and from our students' homes. Bus conduct is related to school conduct and our standards are equal in both places. The Bus Driver is in a position of authority and has an enormous responsibility. **He or she needs to get our children to school and back home safely every day.**

TRANSPORTATION GUIDELINES

1. The District will provide transportation to students residing within the Nashoba Regional School District, from the student's home address to the student's designated district school.
2. The District will provide student transportation from child care locations to school in the morning, and to child care locations from school in the afternoon, whenever it is within reason to provide such services, and providing the child care location falls within the district and student's school boundary.
3. There will be no changes made to any student's bus schedule without the prior approval of the local school office. Should special circumstances occur which require a change in a student's schedule; parents/guardians will be responsible for contacting the local school office in advance to arrange for this accommodation.
4. The District will not provide transportation for individual or one-time "play-dates", private lessons/activities, or for nonschool related events without the permission of the school administration. Parents'/guardians' notes sent to school, stating permission for this purpose, to allow a student to take an alternate bus or change pick-up/drop-off location **will not** be acceptable.
5. The District may provide transportation to and/or from school sponsored athletic events and other activities, at the discretion of the school district, and when it is within reason to provide such services.
6. Questions or concerns relating to student transportation should be directed to First Student Bus Company. Deb Jansky is the dispatcher for the district and can be reached at (978) 365-3262.

SCHOOL BASED BUS SAFETY GUIDELINES

- 1. Follow the Bus Driver's Directions Immediately.**
- 2. Keep your Hands, Feet and Objects to Yourself.**
- 3. Be Kind to Each Other.**
- 4. Stay in Your Seat.**
- 5. Talk Quietly and Respectfully.**
- 6. Keep the Bus Neat and Clean.**
- 7. No eating or drinking on the bus.**

SCHOOL COMMITTEE BUS SAFETY RULES

The following additional rules have been adopted by the Nashoba Regional School Committee:

Students should:

- ◇ stand back from the road, and remain out of the street, waiting at their regularly scheduled bus stops when the bus arrives (allow five minutes waiting time)
- ◇ board the bus in an orderly manner and go directly to their seats and remain seated until dismissed by the bus driver when they have reached their destination;
- ◇ be aware seat belts are available for student use but are not to be played with;
- ◇ keep their feet, books, etc., out of the aisles at all times;
- ◇ unload promptly in an orderly manner, **ONLY** when the bus comes to a full **STOP**, walk five steps ahead of the bus along the edge of the road, stop and look both ways before crossing;

Students cannot:

- ◇ consume any beverages or food on the bus;
- ◇ have pets or animals on the bus;
- ◇ open windows on the bus as this is the responsibility of the driver (when windows are open it is important to stress the fact that the students and their personal belongings are to be kept inside the bus);

PARENTS/GUARDIANS: Please remember to **send a note with your child** at the beginning of the day **only if there is a great need to make a change in his or her routine at dismissal time.** **When making play dates do not plan on using the bus to transport your child** to his or her friend's house (this includes birthday parties and other celebrations). We simply cannot handle the volume of requests for daily and short term play arrangements that either move children from one bus to another, or from one bus stop to another, and still provide for safe bus transportation.

DISCIPLINARY ACTION PLAN - SCHOOL BUS SAFETY

We cannot expect children to sit silently with their hands crossed on their laps all the way home. **However, safety rules must be followed by all students and will be enforced by all bus drivers!**

When Bus Safety Guidelines are violated, after addressing the issue on her/his own, the bus driver is encouraged to **complete a bus behavior ticket in writing**, in a timely fashion, and forward it to the principal.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

School volunteers play a key role in meeting the needs of Stow students. When parents/guardians or other community residents work with the children or faculty at the school, a number of benefits are derived. These include:

- ◇ increased school/community awareness of the role the school plays in the community and the role the community plays in the school
- ◇ increased awareness on the part of the children of the cooperative relationship between the school and the community
- ◇ an opportunity to utilize the skills and interests of parents/guardians and other community residents in relating the experience of those outside of the school to that which is taught within the school
- ◇ increased sense of active participation in the educational process.

Volunteers provide services by: working with small groups of students in the classroom, by reading to students, by working in the school library cataloging, shelving and checking out books, by chaperoning class field trips, by adding to the experience of children by sharing interests, hobbies, and skills with them, by supporting activity centers and classroom projects, and by lending support and assistance on school and SPTO sponsored programs and activities. These activities require the volunteer's complete attention. Thus, volunteers cannot be accompanied by siblings or other children.

Parents/guardians and community residents are encouraged to contact the school office in order to volunteer their time or services. To insure the safety of our children, all volunteers must agree to a CORI check. CORI is an acronym for *Criminal Offender Record Information*. It must be filled out and passed in at least 2 weeks before you begin to volunteer. For parents/guardians who volunteer on a regular basis, this form has to be filled out and filed with the school system every 3 years according to Mass. General Law c. 71 sec. 38R. The CORI forms are also available in the main office at both schools. To help in this process, we will begin this upcoming school year asking all parents who may volunteer to fill out a CORI form when their oldest child is entering kindergarten and third grade. We appreciate your time and assistance for the benefit and protection of our children.

Please understand that it has been our teachers' experience that younger siblings often require additional supervision in order to be certain that they are safe. **Thus, younger siblings are not allowed to accompany parents/guardians who volunteer in the classroom setting.**

Please refer to *The Center School Volunteer Handbook* for further volunteer guidelines.

ROOM PARENT GUIDELINES

The Room Parent is an important volunteer role for the purpose of coordinating classroom events and acting as a liaison to the SPTO. We ask the parent to be familiar with the following guidelines:

1. The classroom teacher will solicit and choose room representatives based on interest and availability.

2. Class projects, field trips, class celebrations, and SPTO-related activities will be jointly planned with the classroom teacher and the room representative.
3. Communication between the room representative and the teacher should be arranged at a mutually convenient time.
4. Room volunteers will not divulge confidential information to which they have access. Children's behavior, needs, and interactions must not be discussed outside of school.
5. All communications sent home by the room representative must be approved by the teacher or an administrator. All verbal solicitations to parent/guardian must also have prior approval.
6. All volunteers are required to sign in and out of the office and wear a volunteer badge when in the building.

Please refer to *The Center School Room Parent Handbook* for further information. The handbook is available at center.nrsd.net in the Home tab under Handbooks.

STOW PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION (SPTO)

The Stow Parent Teacher Organization (SPTO) is an all volunteer organization composed of active parent/guardian groups at both Center School and Hale School.

The Center committee is composed of parents/guardians who support the Center School community through planning and organizing a variety of events, fundraisers, parent/guardian education programs and school support volunteer activities. Meetings are held once monthly at Center School. Meeting time and location are always posted in the school newsletter or on the SPTO website. As a parent/guardian of Center School, you are automatically a member of the SPTO.

Events include the annual Halloween Dance and Party, January Science Festival, February Lip Sync, March Arts Buffet Festival, March Music Festival, and June Picnic. A bi-annual event is a school auction in April. In addition, the SPTO sponsors parent/guardian education programs, including curriculum presentations, and participation in a statewide children's book collection/literacy project. Volunteer support of school activities includes the ProjectPrep Service so that teachers can spend more time with students and less time doing document preparation. The SPTO also publishes the annual Stow School Directory.

Funds raised are allocated annually and support all portions of the curriculum in addition to providing Arts and Cultural enrichment activities for students in grades K-5.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to become actively involved in the SPTO. Feel free to contact one of this year's officers and/or attend the monthly meetings. The PTO also is located at the website: www.centerhalepto.org

Stow PTO Executive Board

Kristen DeLuco, Web Admin/Co-Chair

Courtney Cratty, Co-Chair

Jennifer Morhous, Fundraising Chair

Kara Herbertz, Treasurer

Jessica Manger, Secretary

Fundraising Committee

Chair: Jennifer Morhous

Lip Sync

Chair: Nicole Hatlevig and Kristen DeLuco

Spirit Committee

Chair: Kristen DeLuco

APPENDIX



NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

The Nashoba Regional School District does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation in admission to, access to, treatment in, or employment in its programs or activities.

All students, regardless of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or homelessness, have equal access to the general education program and the full range of any occupational/vocational education programs offered by the District.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies:

Anne Marie Stoica, HR Manager
Title IX Coordinator
NASHOBA REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
50 Mechanic Street
Bolton, MA 01740
Tel: (978) 779-0539 ext. 3009
Fax: (978) 779-6812

Inquiries concerning the application of nondiscrimination policies may also be referred to the Regional Director, Office for Civil Rights, US Department of Education, J.W. McCormack Post Office and Courthouse, Room 701,01-0061 Boston, MA 02109-4557.

THE CENTER SCHOOL BUILDING COORDINATORS TITLE IX

978-897-0290

Ross Mulkerin	Principal
Kim Terwilliger	Interventionist
Alison Quinn	Interventionist



Nashoba Regional School District

STUDENT DRESS CODE

It is commonly accepted that student behavior and the school environment are strongly influenced by the dress and appearance of students. Students should maintain a clean and neat appearance, and their clothing should be in good taste at all times.

The following list of inappropriate attire includes, but is not limited to the following:

- any article of clothing that does not cover or reveals underwear,
- clothes that reveal the midriff or buttock,
- underwear worn as outer wear,
- tops that are low cut and/or with straps less than 2 inches in width,
- chains worn as jewelry or on pants,
- articles, which display drug, alcohol, or tobacco logos or depict the use of same.

Shorts and skirts should be at least at the level of the fingertips when a student stands with arms fully extended. Words, drawings, or symbols considered to be disruptive to the educational process or school activities are not permitted on any article of clothing, bags, back-packs, etc.

Hats may be worn at the discretion of the teacher and the principal. (***Hats are not allowed indoors at The Center School w/out prior approval of the administration.***) Footwear must be worn at all times. Any item of clothing that is substantially or materially disruptive to the activities of the school will be considered to be inappropriate.

The parents/guardians of students who are not appropriately dressed will be contacted and asked to bring an acceptable change of clothing to school.

Repeated violations will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken for those who do not follow the dress code policy as interpreted by each school building administration.



NRSD Policy File: IJNDB

INTERNET POLICY USE OF NETWORKED INFORMATION RESOURCES

The Nashoba Regional School District recognizes the value and importance of network information sources and related technologies for a well-rounded education. The District supports access of students and staff within appropriate bounds.

The District makes telecommunications, electronic information sources, and networked services available for the enhancement of learning and teaching within various curricula. The District expects the staff to blend thoughtful use of these educational avenues throughout the school experience and provide guidance and instruction to all students in the appropriate use of these resources.

The District realizes the positive and constructive use of these resources; it also recognizes the potential for possible misuse. Therefore, individual users must take full responsibility for their own actions. All users shall assume full liability, legal, financial or otherwise, for their actions. The District reserves the right to access, audit, and review usage. Use shall be governed by administrative regulations, procedures, user guidelines and user agreements. Information stored or transmitted on NRSD computer systems is the property of NRSD and may be reviewed by the District at any time.

In order to comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA), this document will serve as Nashoba Regional School District's Internet Safety Policy. Nashoba Regional School District has a content filter in place that blocks and filters Internet sites that are obscene, contain pornography, or contain any material deemed to be inappropriate or harmful to minors as defined by CIPA [Pub.L.No.106-554 and 47 USC 254(h)].

Nashoba Regional School District includes in its curriculum Internet safety. The curriculum includes teaching students about appropriate and safe online behavior, including intellectual property, personal safety, and cyber-bullying awareness and response. To the extent practical, staff supervises and monitors appropriate usage of the online computer network and access to the Internet in accordance with this policy.

The district takes cyber-bullying seriously and appropriate action will be taken to protect students and staff from any form of cyber-bullying. Cyber-bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic means, and includes the distribution of electronic communications or the posting of electronic material that may be accessed by one or more persons.

Bullying is defined as the repeated use of a written, verbal, or electronic communication, or a physical act or gesture, or any combination thereof, by one or more students directed at another student that has the effect of:

- causing physical or emotional harm to the other student or damage to his or her property;
- placing the other student in reasonable fear of harm to him or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- creating a hostile environment at school for the bullied student;
- infringing on the rights of the other student at school; or
- materially and substantially disrupting the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Ethical participation in academic interactive web resources and electronic forms of communication is expected of all students and staff. Any text, voice or image that is considered inappropriate in the classroom is also inappropriate in all uses of interactive web resources and any electronic communications. This includes, but is not limited to, profanity, racist, sexist or other threatening or discriminatory remarks. Students should promptly inform a staff member if any messages received or material reviewed is inappropriate.

All personal or school-owned technology and electronic devices shall be monitored. All technology and electronic devices should be used primarily for academic purposes during official school hours. Use of the network, technology and electronic devices shall be permitted only upon submission of signed agreement forms by both parents/guardians and students. Some networks may require an additional agreement by users; i.e. outlining standards for behavior and communication. User accounts shall be limited, suspended, or revoked if these resources are misused.

The following are not permitted:

1. Sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
2. Using obscene language
3. Harassing, insulting or attacking others
4. Unauthorized access, including so-called "hacking" and other unlawful activities by minors online
5. Trespassing in others' electronic files or plagiarizing others' work as their own
6. Violating copyright laws
7. Revealing identifying information such as first and last names, ages, addresses, phone numbers, parents' names, parents' employers or work addresses, or photographs, unless approved by a teacher for the purpose of meeting course requirements.
8. Unauthorized disclosure, use, and dissemination of person identification information regarding minors
9. Sharing a password or using others' accounts and passwords
10. Intentionally wasting limited resources (i.e. excessive printing, downloading or online streaming)
11. Employing the network for commercial or other non-academic purpose
12. Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks

Publication of information shall be in accordance with the Nashoba Regional School District Publication of Personal Information Policy.

Ref: E-Rate Primer Central, 2009
Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
M.G.L.; Chapter 71, Section



DISCIPLINE - VANDALISM

Vandalism {def.} - *The willful or malicious defacement or destruction of public or private property.*

School buildings and grounds are built and maintained with taxes levied on the community's taxpayers. It is in the best interests of students as well as taxpayers to protect that important investment.

Anyone found willfully or maliciously defacing or destroying school property through vandalism or arson, or who creates a safety hazard to other people on school property as a result of the above actions, may be referred to law enforcement authorities. All citizens, students, school employees and police officials are urged to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism and the name(s) of person(s) believed to be responsible.

Anyone found defacing or damaging school property will be responsible for its repair or replacement; police will be notified if necessary. It is the intention of the Nashoba Regional School district to seek damages as permitted by law from anyone, including students and/or their parents or guardians, who vandalize school property.

1. Students and other individuals who are caught vandalizing school property may receive any or all of the following consequences, as appropriate:
2. expectation to repair, replace and otherwise make restitution for any property damaged as a result of his/her actions
3. referral to law enforcement authorities
4. additional consequences as determined by the principal or his/her designee
5. suspension or expulsion from school



POSSESSION OF A DANGEROUS WEAPON/PHYSICAL AGGRESSION TOWARD SCHOOL PERSONNEL OR OTHER STUDENTS

The following provisions are enacted for handbook inclusion through the 1993 Massachusetts Education Reform Act:

- a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school sponsored or school related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or knife; or a controlled substance as defined in Chapter (94 - C), including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the Principal. Please see policy #JIC and JICH.
- b) Any student who assaults a Principal, Assistant Principal, teacher, teacher's aide, tutor or other educational staff/volunteer or student 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.

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

Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the Superintendent of said school, who shall file copies of said weapon report with the local Chief of Police, the Department of Social Services, the Office of Student Services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local School Committee. Said Superintendent, police chief, and representative from the Department of Social Services, together with a representative from the Office of Student Services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program: provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the Board of Education. Upon completion of counseling sessions, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment.

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

See: Discipline-Vandalism in the Appendix

See: Policy JKFA "Right to Notice and Hearing for Suspension or Expulsion" in the Appendix



File: JKFA

RIGHT TO NOTICE AND HEARING FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION

The Nashoba Regional School District shall ensure every student due process under the law regarding disciplinary actions. Upon determination that a disciplinary action is required that would result in a student being suspended or expelled, the following procedure shall be followed:

1. Temporary Disposition - The student shall remain in school and under supervision of school authorities on the day of the suspension until the end of the school day or until the parent, guardian, or his/her designee takes physical custody of the student.
2. Notification of Students – Upon completion of the investigation written notification will be provided to the student and mailed to the parent/guardian of the student explaining the charges against the student, the reasons for the charges, the disciplinary action proposed, and the student’s rights to a hearing(M.G.L. 71:37H).
3. Opportunity for a Hearing – Upon notification of the suspension, a student has the opportunity for a hearing with the principal if charged with any of the following: found on school premises, or at school – sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, possession of a controlled substance, or charged with assault of a school employee. At this hearing, he/she shall receive the following:
 - a. oral notice of charges against him/her
 - b. an explanation of the basis for the accusation, and
 - c. the opportunity to present his/her defense.

The hearing shall take place before a suspension begins, unless the student’s presence at the school or in the classroom is considered dangerous or substantially disruptive to the academic process. If immediate suspension is necessary, the hearing must follow as soon as possible.

4. Expulsion: As is provided by law, a hearing must occur prior to the expulsion. An expulsion may not occur without first giving the student and his/her parent or guardian an opportunity to be heard. Once the expulsion has occurred, it shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted according to the statutes.

5. Appeals - The student shall have the right to appeal the decision of a principal to the Superintendent of Schools. The shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her appeal no later than ten day calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The Superintendent shall hold an appeal hearing with the student in accordance with the state law. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his/her behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The Superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. The Superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. Such decision shall be the final disciplinary action within the school community.

6. Civil and Criminal Offenses - In serious cases requiring legal action students may be remanded to the custody of the police. Parents/guardians will be notified of this decision as stated herein. Upon the issuance of the criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony conviction, the student shall be given due process according to M.G.L. 71:37 or 71:37H ½. Under this law, if the principal has deemed that the presence of the student would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, the principal may suspend the student. The student may appeal this decision to the Superintendent of Schools, but shall notify the Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the disciplinary action. Such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the Superintendent of Schools.

NOTE: Under this law, the student shall notify Superintendent in writing of his/her request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the disciplinary action.

First Reading: July 8, 1999

Adopted: August 19, 1999

Amended: May 5, 2005



Policy File: JKG

DISCIPLINE OF STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) and related regulations provide eligible students with certain procedural rights and protections in the context of student discipline. A brief overview of these rights is provided below.

In general, special education students may be excluded from their programs, just as any other student can be, for up to ten school days per year. However, when a special education student is excluded from his/her program for more than ten school days in a school year, the student's special education Team must develop a functional behavioral assessment plan. In many instances, the Team may also be required to determine whether the student's behavior was related to his/her disability (a "manifestation determination").

If the Team determines the behavior was not related to the student's disability, the school may discipline the student according to the school's code of student conduct, except that the district must continue to provide the student with educational services during the period of suspension or expulsion. However, if the Team determines that the behavior was related to the disability, the student may not be excluded from the current educational placement (except in the case of weapons or drugs) until the Team develops and the parent/guardian(s) consent(s) to a new IEP.

In the event a student possesses, uses, sells or solicits a controlled substance or possesses a weapon at school or a school function, a school may place a student in an interim alternative education setting for up to 45 days. Hearing officers may also order the placement of a student in an appropriate interim setting for up to 45 days upon determination that the current placement is substantially likely to result in injury to the student or others.

When a parent/guardian disagrees with the Teams decision on the "manifestation determination" or with a decision regarding placement, the parent/guardian has a right to request an expedited due process hearing from the Bureau of Special Education Appeals.

Additional information regarding procedural protections for special education students can be obtained from the Director of Special Education, who can be reached at the Nashoba Regional School District Offices.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. c71B,603 CMR28: Special Education
I.D.E.A.

First Reading: July 8, 1999
Adopted: August 19, 1999
Revised: July 23, 2003



Policy File: JLG

POLICY ON HEALTH and WELLNESS

It is the policy of the Nashoba Regional School District to promote actions that create a healthy and safe environment for all students, faculty, staff and citizens. The school district is committed to taking the necessary precautions that will enable all users of the schools to learn, teach, and visit in our schools.

It is our goal to promote the students' physical, emotional, and social well being through a coordinated school health program. This includes providing a healthy environment, school nurse services, nutritious school meals, health education and opportunities for physical activity. It is the intent of this policy to enable students to become independent and self directed learners by taking initiative to meet their own health and nutritional needs as developmentally appropriate.

Furthermore, it is our expectation that specific actions will take into account the health needs and well being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the School Committee's belief that education and open informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the School Committee that the guidelines reflect student development as children advance from the primary grades through secondary school.

First Reading: August 26, 2004
Adopted: September 9, 2004



GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES FOR FILING, PROCESSING, AND RESOLVING ALLEGED DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS

Procedural Requirements Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, ADA (Students, Applicants, Employees)

I. Definitions:

A. *Discrimination Complaint* - A written complaint alleging any policy, procedure or practice that discriminates on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender or disability.

B. *Student Grievant* - A student of the Nashoba Regional School District who submits a complaint alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, gender or disability.

C. *Employee Grievant* - An employee of the Nashoba Regional School District who submits a complaint alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability, or veteran status.

D. *Applicant Grievant (under ADA)* - An applicant for employment of the Nashoba Regional School District or applicant for admission to postsecondary education who submits a complaint alleging discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, disability or veteran status.

E. *Title VI (if applicable), Title IX, Section 504, and ADA Coordinator* - The person(s) designated to coordinate efforts to comply with and carry out responsibilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and other state and federal laws addressing equal educational opportunity. The compliance coordinator is responsible for processing complaints and services as moderator and recorder during hearings.

F. *Respondent* - The person alleged to be responsible for the violation alleged in a complaint. The term may be used to designate persons with responsibility for a particular action or those persons with supervisory responsibility for procedures and policies in those areas covered in the complaint.

G. *Day* - Day means a working day. The calculation of days in complaint processing shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays.

II. Pre-Filing Procedures

Prior to the filing of a written complaint, the student or employee is encouraged to visit with the Compliance Coordinator and reasonable effort should be made to resolve the problem or complaint.

III. Filing and Processing Discrimination Complaints

A. Grievant submits written complaint to compliance coordinator stating name, nature, and date of alleged violation; names of persons responsible (where known); and requested action. Complaint must be submitted within 30 days of alleged violation. Complaint forms are available in the school office

- B. Compliance Coordinator notifies respondent within 10 days and asks respondent to:
1. Confirm or deny facts;
 2. Indicate acceptance or rejection of student's, employee's, or applicant's requested action; or
 3. Outline alternatives.
- C. Respondent submits answer within 10 days to Compliance Coordinator.
- D. Within 10 days after receiving respondent's answer, the Compliance Coordinator refers the written complaint and respondent's answer to the Principal. The Compliance Coordinator also schedules a hearing with the grievant, the respondent, and the Principal.
- E. The Compliance Coordinator conducts the hearing.
- F. The Compliance Coordinator issues within 10 days after the hearing a written decision to the student, employee, or applicant, and the compliance coordinator.
- G. If the grievant or respondent is not satisfied with the decision, they must notify the Compliance Coordinator within 10 days and request a hearing with the superintendent.
- H. Compliance Coordinator schedules, within 10 days of request, a hearing with the grievant, respondent, and superintendent.
- I. The Superintendent conducts a hearing.
- J. The Superintendent issues a decision within 10 days following the hearing.
- K. If the grievant or respondent is not satisfied with the decision, they must notify the Compliance Coordinator within 10 days and request a hearing.
- L. Compliance Coordinator notifies the Principal within 10 days after receiving request. Compliance coordinator schedules hearing with the governing board. Hearing is to be conducted within 30 days from the date of notification to the Compliance Coordinator.
- M. The Compliance Coordinator conducts hearing.
- N. The Compliance Coordinator issues a final written decision within 10 days after the hearing regarding the validity of the grievance and any action to be taken.

IV. General Provisions

- A. Extension of time: Any time limits set by those procedures may be extended by mutual consent of parties involved. The total number of days from date that complaint is filed until complaint is resolved shall be no more than 180 days.
- B. Access to regulations: The Nashoba Regional School District shall provide copies of all regulations prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, qualified disability, or veteran status upon request.
- C. Confidentiality of records: Complaint records will remain confidential unless permission is given by the parties involved to release such information. No complaint record shall be entered in the personnel file. Complaint records shall be maintained on file for three years after complaint resolution.



File: EEAE

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. **Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for using seat belts, however, there will be no expectation that they are used.**
3. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
4. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
5. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986
M.G.L. 90:1 et seq.; 713:2; 713:7L
Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17

CROSS REF.: EB, Safety Program

Adopted: April 26, 2001

Draft Edit: February 9, 2005



School Ceremonies and Observances

File: IMD

We live in a pluralistic society founded on principles of justice, liberty, equality and religious freedom. Our society is firmly rooted in a clear separation between government and the religious beliefs and practices of its citizens. Knowledge and understanding of these many and varied beliefs and practices can greatly enhance an individual's life and strengthen the society as a whole.

Our schools offer students a unique opportunity to discuss and learn about religions in our country and throughout the world. In this way, the schools teach mutual understanding, sensitivity, and respect for the beliefs and traditions of all persons.

The schools also recognize that the expression of each student's traditions and beliefs, whether religious or secular, through student art, music, writing, and discourse, is a part of the open, positive, and inclusive environment, which the schools seek to foster. However, the schools shall not participate in the teaching or recognition of any religion in such a way as to endorse or deprecate any particular religious dogma, and the schools shall likewise respect the fact that some individuals' beliefs do not include religious observances.

The policy governs all school-sponsored activities and programs. It is the responsibility of teachers and school administrators to notify outside speakers and performers of the District's policy and guidelines.

Curriculum

As one aspect of a well-rounded education, it is important to include teaching about the role religion plays in history, culture, and the arts. When instruction about religion and religious holidays is included in the District's curriculum, the goals shall include appreciation and respect for religious differences and religious liberty.

In determining all course content and curriculum, care and sensitivity shall be shown for the religious or non-religious beliefs, attitudes, and feelings of the students. Special attention shall be given to the developmental difference between elementary and secondary students. However, the decision to include or exclude material from the curriculum must be based on secular, not religious, reasons. Materials should not be added or deleted only because someone's religious or non religious sensibilities may be offended.

Student Assignments and Religion

Students may express their religious beliefs in the form of reports, homework, and artwork. Teachers may not reject or correct submissions simply because they include a religious symbol or address religious themes. Likewise, teachers may not require students to include religious views in their assignments or require them to modify or remove religious views, if germane. These assignments should be judged by ordinary academic standards.

Excused Absences from Classroom Discussion and Activities

Some holidays considered by many people to be secular are viewed by others as having religious overtones. Recognizing the importance of religious liberty and freedom of conscience, school administrators and teachers

will either allow students to be excused from classroom celebrations related to such holidays, or offer alternative activities. Parent/guardian are responsible for notifying school officials in advance and arranging for make-up work within a reasonable time period to allow accommodations to be made.

Excused Absences from School Attendance

The rights of parent/guardian to excuse their children from school attendance for the purposes of religious observance is understood; such an absence shall be recognized as an excused absence, without a penalty on District academic and attendance records. Parent/guardian are responsible for notifying school officials in writing a reasonable time in advance of their child's absence. This may be done with a letter detailing a student's anticipated absences for religious observances for the entire year. All students are required to make up work covered and assignments made during their excused absence from school. Any student who is unable to complete a homework assignment due to religious observance shall arrange with the teacher an alternate time for completion of the work without loss of credit.

Parent/guardian may also excuse their children from participation in any athletic practice or competition for the purpose of religious holiday observance. Such an absence will incur no penalty on future participation on an athletic team not any other penalty. Parent/guardian are responsible for notifying coaches in writing a reasonable time in advance of their child's absence from a practice or game.

At the beginning of the school year, the Superintendent shall make available to teachers and parent/guardian a calendar listing major religious holidays for the District. The Administration and staff shall attempt to avoid scheduling examinations, assemblies, field trips, graduation exercises, and other unique and unrepeatable educational events on those days. Teachers shall also take these religious holidays into consideration when making homework assignments.

Holiday Celebrations and Religious Symbols

Religious holidays may be noted or recognized in the schools, but they may not be celebrated. Seasonal parties are appropriate insofar as the curriculum allows, but they may not be used as celebrations of any religious holiday.

Religious holidays provide opportunities for educating students about history and cultures, as well as traditions of particular religious groups within a pluralistic society. Presentation of materials dealing with religious holidays must be accurate, informed, and descriptive. The focus should be on the origins, history, and generally agreed upon meanings of the holidays. Teachers must be aware of the diversity of religious beliefs in their classroom and in the District at large and be particularly sensitive to the rights of religious minorities as well as those who hold no religious belief.

The use of religious symbols, provided they are used only as an example of cultural and religious heritage, is permitted as a teaching aid or resource. These symbols shall be displayed only for the length of time that the instructional activity requires. Any non-instructional display of religious symbols of any kind by the District is prohibited. Religious symbols include, but are not limited to, any object or objects of worship, crosses, crucifixes, Islamic crescents, nativity scenes, Christmas trees, Menorahs, and Stars of David.

Music Program

At all levels, the study of religious music as part of a music appreciation course, as a musical experience, or as part of a study of various lands and cultures is to be encouraged.

Musical programs shall not be religious in nature or celebrations of a religious holiday; however, seasonal programs may include religious music. An example of an acceptable program is a winter concert that includes Hanukkah and Christmas music or a program of holiday music from around the world, including music from religious and non-religious holidays.

Teachers must be aware of the significance of certain music during religious holiday seasons. They should attempt to choose music, which enable every child to feel included in some way. They must be especially sensitive to the feelings of students who may not wish to participate for religious reasons.

Prayer at School Events and Baccalaureate Ceremonies

School officials may not mandate or organize prayer at graduation or any other school sponsored event, including athletic events, or organize a religious baccalaureate ceremony.

Student Religious Clubs Meeting on School Property

On the high school level, religious clubs that are exclusively organized by, led by, and made up of students may meet on school property subject to the guidelines set out in the District's policy on the use of school facilities. Teachers and other school employees may not initiate or direct such meetings but may be present as non-participating monitors. Other adults may be invited to speak at a meeting of such a group but may not act as advisors or leaders of the group.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR 26:05
403 US 602, 1971 (Lemon vs Kurtzman)

First Reading: 10/9/97 Approved
Adopted 10/23/97



Religious Holidays Protocol

File: IMD-R

The Nashoba Regional School District observes the establishment clause of the first amendment of the Constitution which guarantees both the separation of church and state and also the right of an individual to free speech. The School Committee understands that there can be a tension between these two parts of the first amendment. The schools must also respect the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In addition, we recognize that in our communities there are diverse cultural, ethnic, religious and social traditions which should be understood through educational practice. We shall recognize and honor our differences, not ignore them. Students and staff will be encouraged to appreciate and accept ethnic and religious diversity. We shall be respectful of the beliefs and practices of others.

Instructional Practices:

- 1) Teachers will be sensitive and knowledgeable about the diversity of religious beliefs of students in their classes. Instructional practices will balance religious beliefs so that all students will feel included; no student will be asked to participate in class activities associated with religion if unwilling, or if a parent/guardian expresses unwillingness.
- 2) The school system calendar will indicate religious holidays affecting a significant proportion of our population. The school system will indicate holidays that will have an impact upon student participation in school activities. ¹
- 3) Students will be accommodated if they request of the teacher that they be excused from participating in activities involving religion and/or if they are unable to participate in regular activities due to religious observances. Written parent/guardian permission should accompany such student requests.
- 4) Students' observance of a religious holiday may have an impact on their ability to prepare work for the school day. Students and parents are encouraged to communicate with teachers in advance regarding any and all planned excused absences. Students will not be expected to complete daily homework assigned the evening before, or the day of the religious holiday. Assignments and tests should be made up in a time span that is reasonable to both students and teachers. Typically for every day of a religious holiday there should be an opportunity for at least one makeup day. In addition, teachers will make every effort to plan for tests, quizzes or the introduction of major new concepts and/or applications with the possibility of student observance of the religious holidays. Long-term assignments, however, may be due the day before or the day after the religious holiday.

Adopted: March, 2005

Updated: March, 2007

¹ This will begin with the 2005-2006 calendar. A revised 2004-2005 will show the holidays.

HANDBOOK SIGN-OFF SHEET
2016-2017 The Center School
Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____

Homeroom Teacher: _____

___ I have read the 2015-2016 Parent/Guardian-Student Handbook

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: (Print) _____

Date: _____

**PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN TO YOUR CHILD'S HOMEROOM
TEACHER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**